



The **ספר הזוהר**
ZOHAR

PRITZKER EDITION

VIII

*Leviticus—
 Numbers*

Translation and Commentary by

DANIEL C. MATT

ספר הזוהר

The ספר הזוהר
Z O H A R
Pritzker Edition
VOLUME EIGHT

Translation and Commentary by
Daniel C. Matt

STANFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
STANFORD, CALIFORNIA
2014

The translation and publication of the Zohar is made possible through the thoughtful and generous support of the Pritzker Family Philanthropic Fund.

Stanford University Press
Stanford, California

© 2014 by Zohar Education Project, Inc.
All rights reserved.

For further information, including the Aramaic text of the *Zohar*, please visit www.sup.org/zohar

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Zohar. English.

The Zohar/translation and commentary by Daniel C. Matt.-
Pritzker ed.
v. cm.

Text includes some words in Hebrew and Aramaic.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 978-0-8047-8726-0 (cloth)--

ISBN 978-1-5036-0346-2 (electronic) (vol. 8)

1. Bible. O.T. Pentateuch--Commentaries--Early works to 1800. 2. Cabala--Early works to 1800. 3. Zohar. I. Matt, Daniel Chanan.

II. Title.

BM525.A52 M37 2003

296.1'62-dc22

2003014884

Printed in the United States of America
on acid-free, archival-quality paper.

Designed by Rob Ehle
Typeset by El Ot Pre Press & Computing Ltd., Tel Aviv,
in 10.5/14 Minion.

Academic Committee
for the Translation of the Zohar

Daniel Abrams
Bar-Ilan University

Joseph Dan
Hebrew University

Rachel Elijor
Hebrew University

Asi Farber-Ginat
University of Haifa

Michael Fishbane
University of Chicago

Pinchas Giller
American Jewish University

Amos Goldreich
Tel Aviv University

Moshe Hallamish
Bar-Ilan University

Melila Hellner-Eshed
Hebrew University

Boaz Huss
Ben-Gurion University

Moshe Idel
Hebrew University

Esther Liebes
*Gershom Scholem Collection,
Jewish National and University Library*

Yehuda Liebes
Hebrew University

Bernard McGinn
University of Chicago

Ronit Meroz
Tel Aviv University

Charles Mopsik, ל"ר
*Centre National de la
Recherche Scientifique*

Michal Oron
Tel Aviv University

Haviva Pedaya
Ben-Gurion University

Bracha Sack
Ben-Gurion University

Elliot R. Wolfson
New York University

Arthur Green
*Co-Chair
Brandeis University*

Rabbi Yehiel Poupko
*Co-Chair
Jewish Federation of Chicago*

Margot Pritzker
Chair, Zohar Education Project, Inc.

Daniel C. Matt
Translator, Zohar Education Project, Inc.

Contents

[Copyright](#)

[Diagram of the Ten Sefirot](#)

[Preface](#)

DANIEL C. MATT

[פרשת קדושים](#) [Parashat Qedoshim](#)
([Leviticus 19:1-20:27](#)).

[פרשת אמור](#) [Parashat Emor](#)
([Leviticus 21:1-24:23](#)).

[פרשת בהר](#) [Parashat Be-Har](#)
([Leviticus 25:1-26:2](#)).

[פרשת בחקותי](#) [Parashat Be-Huqqotai](#)
([Leviticus 26:3-27:34](#)).

[פרשת במדבר](#) [Parashat Be-Midbar](#)
([Numbers 1:1-4:20](#)).

[פרשת נשא](#) [Parashat Naso](#)
([Numbers 4:21-7:89](#)).

[Commentary on Naso](#)

[אדרא רבא](#) *Idra Rabba*

[Commentary on Naso, continued](#)

[פרשת בהעלותך](#) [Parashat Be-Ha'alotekha](#)
([Numbers 8:1-12:16](#)).

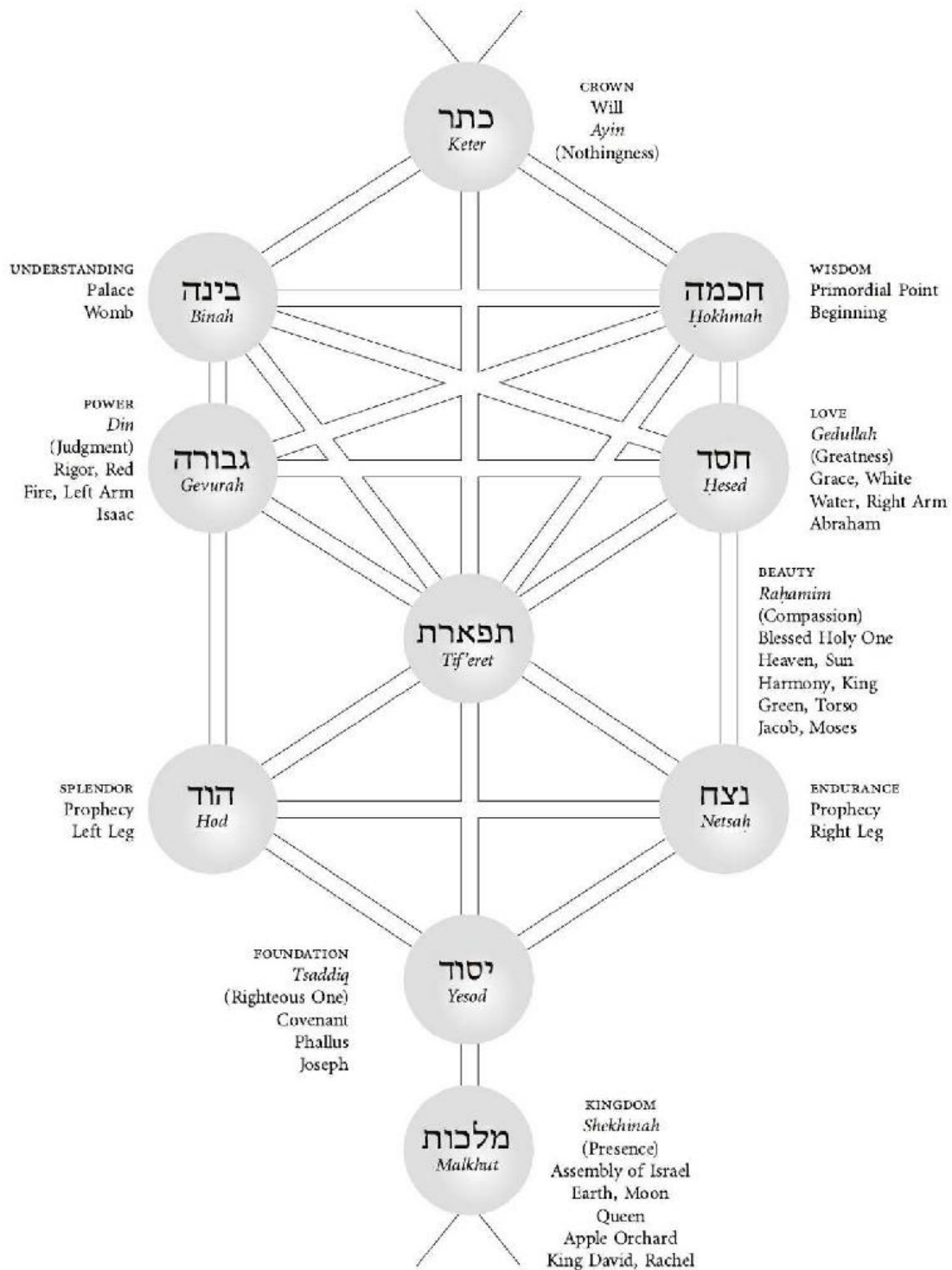
[Abbreviations](#)

Transliteration of Hebrew and Aramaic

Glossary

Bibliography

Index of Sources



The Ten Sefirot

Preface

This volume covers the last third of the *Zohar's* commentary on the book of Leviticus and the first third of its commentary on the book of Numbers. Among the notable passages is the discussion of the scapegoat on Yom Kippur, bearing Israel's sins, which is to be sent off *to Azazel into the desert* (Leviticus 16:10). Azazel is likely the name of a demon. Drawing on a midrashic source, the *Zohar* teaches that something must be offered to demonic powers in order to assuage them. Ignoring or simply opposing such negative forces is not always effective.¹

Leviticus includes a detailed list of the holidays. In discussing the festival of *Sukkot* (Booths), the *Zohar* introduces the custom of inviting *ushpizin* (holy "guests") into the sukkah. On each successive night of *Sukkot*, a different guest is invited: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph, and King David. These biblical heroes represent respectively the seven lower *sefirot* (divine qualities), from *Hesed* through *Shekhinah*. But unless one also invites a poor or needy person into his sukkah, the holy guests flee.² Based on the *Zohar*, the custom of inviting the *ushpizin* spread to wider circles under the influence of Lurianic Kabbalah and has become an integral part of the celebration of *Sukkot*.

Toward the end of this volume appears a famous passage about the apparent meaning of Scripture as opposed to its deeper layers. Although this is a frequent theme in the *Zohar*, here we find a particularly radical formulation in the name of Rabbi Shim'on: "Woe to the

person who says that Torah intended to present a mere story and ordinary words! For if so, we could compose a Torah right now with ordinary words, and more laudable than all of them.” Of course, Rabbi Shim’on proceeds to explain that beneath the superficial sense of Scripture lie countless hidden secrets. But even so, it is startling to hear him say that, were this not the case, he and his associates could write a better Torah.³

The most remarkable section of this volume is *Idra Rabba* (The Great Assembly), extending over nearly 150 pages. In this dramatic narrative, Rabbi Shim’on and his nine Companions gather to explore the deepest secrets of God’s nature. Taking turns, they describe two divine configurations: *Arikh Anpin* (the Compassionate One) and *Ze’eir Anpin* (the Short-Tempered One). There is a state of emergency, because due to human misconduct the world is vulnerable to divine wrath. The mystical heroes set out on a dangerous mission to restore the balance in the upper worlds. By penetrating the hidden realms and conveying their insights, they seek to enhance God Himself. They aim to stimulate a radiant flow from the Compassionate One, which can soothe the aroused and irascible divine force and thereby save the world. The quest is perilous, and three of the Companions tragically perish.

The *Idra Rabba* is filled with descriptions of the divine face: the forehead, ears, eyes, nose—and especially the beard. Appropriately, this section appears in *Parashat Naso* of the *Zohar*, immediately after a discussion of the Nazirite. According to the Bible, a male Nazirite was forbidden to cut his hair or trim his beard. This emphasis on the beard reflects the fact that in many cultures it represents masculine beauty and virility. According to the Talmud, “The glory of a face is the beard.” Based on the *Zohar*’s extended description of the divine beard, kabbalists (and subsequently Hasidim) insisted on not trimming their own beards at all—or even removing a single strand—since the

human beard symbolizes the divine beard, each strand of which conveys the flow of emanation.⁴

The detailed descriptions of the divine face and beard can be seen, in part, as a reaction against Maimonides, who insisted on God's incorporeality and tried to explain away the numerous anthropomorphisms in the Bible. For the kabbalist, Maimonides' God has become too abstract. The author of *Idra Rabba* seeks "to restore God's face." Yet, at the same time, this mystical writer is indebted to Maimonides—for example, in equating God's eyes with divine providence. This unique and challenging Zoharic composition combines abstract philosophical insights with graphic physical depictions. At times, the depictions seem intended to outdo—or perhaps to parody—those of *Shi'ur Qomah*, the ancient portrayal of the divine body.⁵

Kabbalists and scholars have wrestled with *Idra Rabba* ever since it first emerged over seven hundred years ago in medieval Spain. I have borrowed freely from their insights and commentaries, to which I often refer in the notes to this volume. The work of Yehuda Liebes has once again proven invaluable, especially because he has often focused on this astonishing narrative.⁶

Dr. Melila Hellner-Eshed generously shared with me her current research on *Idra Rabba*, which includes a forthcoming annotated Hebrew translation (co-authored with Avraham Leader) and an accompanying analytical study. These have deepened my understanding of the text and its significance. Sitting with her both in Jerusalem and in Berkeley, delving together into *Idra Rabba*, was a joy.⁷

I wish to thank Professor Ronit Meroz of Tel Aviv University, whose work has dramatically advanced the study of the manuscripts of the *Zohar*. She has generously shared with me the data that she has collected relating to hundreds of these manuscripts, along with her analysis. Her research has provided me with a panoramic

perspective on the manuscripts, helping me to determine their reliability.

I am grateful as well to Merav Carmeli, who continues to comb Aramaic manuscripts of the *Zohar*, preparing lists of variants. This precious material enables me to establish a critical Aramaic text, upon which this translation is based.

I want to thank Dr. Jonatan Benarroch for preparing digital copies and precise lists of numerous *Zohar* manuscripts.

The critical Aramaic text corresponding to the first eight volumes of *The Zohar: Pritzker Edition* is available on the website of Stanford University Press. My brother, Rabbi Jonathan Matt, has kindly and meticulously edited a user-friendly version of this text.⁸

D.C.M.

¹. See *Zohar* 3:101b-102a; below, [pp. 145-50](#).

². See *Zohar* 3:103b-104a; below, [pp. 163-68](#).

³. See *Zohar* 3:152a; below, [pp. 518-22](#).

⁴. On the location of *Idra Rabba* immediately after the discussion of the Nazirite, see *Zohar* 3:127b; below, [pp. 316-17](#), and [nn. 82-84](#). In fact, some kabbalists refer to *Idra Rabba* as *Idra de-Nazir* (*Idra* of the Nazirite). See Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 121.

On the beard's significance, see below, [pp. 346-47](#), [n. 82](#); [pp. 349-50](#), [n. 99](#). The Talmudic statement on the glorious beard appears in BT *Shabbat* 152a, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Korḥah.

⁵. On the element of parody, see Volume 5, p. xii. On restoring God's face, see Liebes, "Lehaḥazir la-El et Panav."

Regarding Maimonides, one could argue conversely that he actually *freed up* the kabbalists to use vividly graphic descriptions of God, because—in light of his

explanations of metaphoric imagery—the new descriptions would be understood as no more or less literal than the biblical ones. In effect, Maimonides gave license to such artistry: “Every mention of seeing, when referring to God,... refers to intellectual apprehension.... If, however, an individual... consider[s] that all the [figures in the Bible] ... are indicative of sensual perception..., there is no harm in his thinking this.” (*Guide of the Perplexed* 1:4-5). I would like to thank Rabbi David E. S. Stein for this insight.

6. For surveys of modern research on *Idra Rabba*, see Sobol, “Ḥativat ha-Idrot be-Sifrut ha-Zohar,” 4-9; and the first chapter of Hellner-Eshed, *Qeri’ah ba-Idra Rabba*.

7. In the notes I refer to the annotated Hebrew translation as “Hellner-Eshed and Leader, *Idra Rabba*,” and to the analytical study as “Hellner-Eshed, *Qeri’ah ba-Idra Rabba*.” Both of these titles are tentative.

8. The site is www.sup.org/zohar. For a description of the various online versions of the critical text, see the website. For my methodology in constructing this text, see the website and Volume 1, Translator’s Introduction, pp. xv-xviii.

THE ZOHAR

Parashat Qedoshim

“HOLY” (LEVITICUS 19:1-20:27)

Rabbi El’azar opened, “*Be not like a horse, like a mule, without sense...* (Psalms 32:9). How often does Torah arouse human beings, how often does she raise her voice in every direction to awaken them! Yet they all sleep, with slumber in their sockets, neither observing nor caring. With what countenance will they rise on the day of supreme judgment when the supernal King demands requital for the humiliation of Torah—when she cried out to them and they did not turn their faces to her? For they are all totally defective, not knowing faith of the supernal King. Woe to them, woe to their souls! For Torah admonishes them, saying, ‘*Whoever is a fool, let him turn aside here; חסר לב (hasar lev), he who lacks sense*’—*she says to him* (Proverbs 9:4).”¹

What is *hasar lev, he who lacks heart*? Rabbi El’azar said, “Lacking faith, for one who has no faith surely *lacks heart*; and one who does not engage in Torah has no faith and is totally defective.”²

“ואמרה (ve-amerah), *And she says, to him*—the verse should read אומר (omerah), *I will say, to him*, as is written: *Omerah, I will say, to God, my Rock* (Psalms 42:10). Why *ve-amerah, And she says, to him*? Well, to include and add Torah above, who calls him ‘*he who lacks heart, defective in faith*.’”³

“For we have learned as follows: If anyone does not engage in Torah, it is forbidden to approach him or do

business with him, all the more so to travel with him, for he lacks faith. Thus we have learned: Whoever walks on the way, unaccompanied by words of Torah, forfeits his soul—all the more so, one who joins on the way with someone who values neither the honor of his Lord nor his own, being careless of his soul."⁴

Rabbi Yehudah said, "How can one who is careless of his soul draw a worthy soul to his son?"⁵

Rabbi El'azar said, "I am astonished at this, and surely the matter has already been discussed. Thus it is written *Be not like a horse, like a mule, without sense.*⁶

"Happy are the righteous, who engage in Torah, know the ways of the blessed Holy One, and sanctify themselves with holiness of the King, becoming completely holy! Thereby, they draw a holy spirit from above, and all their children are truly virtuous and called 'children of the King,' 'holy children.'⁷

"Woe to the wicked, who are all impudent, and their deeds impudent! Thereby, their children inherit an impudent soul from the side of impurity, as is written: *Becoming impure through them* (Leviticus 11:43)—if one comes to defile himself, he is defiled.⁸

"*Be not like a horse, like a mule*—who are more lustful than all.⁹

"*Without sense*—for people should not delve into this way. Consequently, here is written *without* הָבִין (*havin*), *sense*, and there is written *The dogs are greedy for souls; they never know satiety*—that is, those called *greedy for souls* appear. Why? Because *they are incapable* הָבִין (*havin*), *of understanding* (Isaiah 56:11).¹⁰

"*They are shepherds* (ibid.). What is meant by [80b] *they are shepherds*? Well, they lead and conduct a person to Hell.¹¹

"*They never know satiety*—as is said: *The leech has two daughters—'Give!' 'Give!'* (Proverbs 30:15). Since they are *Give! Give!*, *they never know satiety.*¹²

“Each of them has turned his own way, every last one for his own gain (Isaiah 56:11)—for they are scouts of Hell.

“What inflicts all this upon them? That they did not sanctify themselves in coupling as they should have. Thus it is written *You shall be holy, for I, YHVH, am holy* (Leviticus 19:2). The blessed Holy One said, ‘Of all nations of the earth, I desired to cleave only to Israel,’ as is written: *You, cleaving to YHVH your God, [are alive every one of you today!]* (Deuteronomy 4:4)—*you*, and not other nations. Thus it is written *for I, YHVH, am holy—I am holy, therefore you shall be holy:”*¹³

Rabbi Yitshak opened, *“Alas for the land of whirring wings, beyond the rivers of Nubia! (Isaiah 18:1). Now, just because it is a land of whirring wings, should reproach loom there?”*¹⁴

Well, Rabbi Yitshak said, “When the blessed Holy One unveiled the world and sought to reveal the deep from within the hidden and light from within darkness, they were intermingled—for out of darkness issued light, and out of the hidden was revealed the deep, one issuing from the other. Out of good issues evil, out of Compassion issues Judgment. All is interwoven—the good impulse and the evil impulse, right and left, Israel and the other nations, white and black, all suspended in oneness.”¹⁵

It has been taught: Rabbi Yitshak said in the name of Rabbi Yehudah, “The entire world appears as a single clustered garland interlaced; and when the world is tried, it is judged with mingled Judgment. Otherwise the world could not endure even one moment. We have already established this matter: *For when Your judgments reach the earth, inhabitants of the world learn righteousness (Isaiah 26:9).*”¹⁶

“It has been taught: When Judgment looms over the world, and Righteousness is crowned with its judgments, many winged ones are aroused, facing masters of harsh

Judgment, to gain dominion over the world. They spread wings from one side to the other, to sweep over the world; then wings stir, spreading, absorbing harsh Judgment, and they roam through the world, empowered to inflict harm. Then it is written: *Alas for the land of whirring wings...*"¹⁷

Rabbi Yehudah said, "I see inhabitants of the world being shameless, except for the truly virtuous. So, as it were, all transpires like this. 'If one comes to purify himself, they assist him; if one comes to defile himself...,' as we have established, for it is written *becoming impure through them* (Leviticus 11:43)." ¹⁸

Rabbi Yose was walking on the way and he encountered Rabbi Hiyya, who said to him, "As you know, the Companions have established what is written of Eli: *Therefore I have sworn against the house of Eli, that the sin of the house of Eli will not be purged by sacrifice and offering forever* (1 Samuel 3:14)—*by sacrifice and offering* it cannot be purged, but by words of Torah it can. Why? Because words of Torah transcend all offerings of the world, as we have established, for it is written *This is the Torah for the ascent offering, for the grain offering, [for the purification offering, for the guilt offering, for the ordination offering, and for the sacrifice of well-being]* (Leviticus 7:37)—Torah is equivalent to all offerings of the world." ¹⁹

He replied, "Certainly so! For even if punishment is decreed upon someone from above, if he has engaged in Torah, this is better for him than all offerings and sacrifices of the world, and that punishment is torn up. Because he studies [Torah] for her own sake, the blessed Holy One is reconciled with him.

"Come and see: A person is never purified except by words of Torah. Consequently, words of Torah are not susceptible to impurity, since she is capable of purifying the impure. Healing inheres in Torah, as is written: *It will be*

healing for your flesh (Proverbs 3:8). Purity, as is written: *The awe of YHVH is pure, enduring forever* (Psalms 19:10). What is meant by *enduring forever*? Enduring always in that purity, never departing."²⁰

He said to him, "It is written *the awe of YHVH*, not *Torah!*"²¹

He replied, "Certainly so! For Torah derives from the side of *Gevurah*, and purity issues from there—as is written: *The beginning of wisdom is awe of YHVH* (Psalms 111:10), and it is written *The awe of YHVH is pure.*"²²

"It is called holiness: *For I, YHVH, am holy* (Leviticus 19:2)—and this is Torah, which is the supernal holy Name. Therefore, [81a] one who engages in her is purified and then sanctified, as is written: *You will be holy* (ibid.)—it is not written *Be holy*, but rather *You will be*, surely!"²³

He said to him, "So it is—and from here, as is written: *As for you, you will become for Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation* (Exodus 19:6), and it is written *These are the words...* (ibid.)."²⁴

"It has been taught: Holiness of Torah is a holiness transcending all others, and holiness of supernal concealed Wisdom surpasses all."²⁵

He said to him, "There is no Torah without Wisdom, and no Wisdom without Torah; all occupies a single rung, and all is one. Yet Torah inheres in supernal Wisdom, subsisting there, her roots implanted on all sides."²⁶

As they were going along, they found a man in a remote village dump, riding on a horse, and he released his hand toward the branch of a tree."²⁷

Rabbi Yose said, "This accords with what is written: *You shall hallow yourselves and become holy* (Leviticus 11:44)—if a person sanctifies himself below, he is sanctified from above, as is written: *You shall be holy, for I, YHVH, am holy...* (Leviticus 19:2)."²⁸

Rabbi Abba teaches, “This portion is the entirety of Torah and the signet ring’s seal of truth. In this portion sublime mysteries of Torah have been innovated—and Ten Utterances, decrees, punishments, and supernal commandments. When the Companions reached this portion, they would rejoice.”²⁹

Rabbi Abba said, “Why are the portion of sexual licentiousness and the portion of *Qedoshim* adjacent to one another? Well, it has been taught as follows: Whoever is vigilant toward such licentiousness has surely been generated in holiness—all the more so, if he sanctifies himself with the holiness of his Lord. The Companions have already educed the proper time of everyone’s conjugal duty, for a person to become sanctified.”³⁰

“Come and see: One who desires to sanctify himself according to the will of his Lord should perform conjugal union only from midnight on, or at midnight; for at that hour the blessed Holy One appears in the Garden of Eden, and supernal holiness is aroused, so that is the time to sanctify oneself.”³¹

“This is for other people. As for disciples of the wise, who know the ways of Torah—midnight is their time to rise and study Torah, coupling with Assembly of Israel to praise the Holy King. And on Sabbath eve, when complete favor prevails, then is their coupling—to bring forth the fervor of the blessed Holy One and Assembly of Israel, as is written: *You are children of YHVH your God* (Deuteronomy 14:1). These are called holy, as is written: *You shall be holy, for I, YHVH your God, am holy* (Leviticus 19:2).”³²

Rabbi Abba opened, “*Who is like Your people Israel, one nation on earth?* (2 Samuel 7:23). Come and see: Among all nations of the world, the blessed Holy One desired only Israel, making them *one nation*, calling them by His name: *Ehad*, One. He adorned them with many crowns, with many commandments, by which a person is

adorned, corresponding to the pattern above, becoming 'one,' complete.³³

"When a person is adorned with them and sanctified by them, he becomes complete and is called *one*—for he is called *one* only when he is complete, and whoever is defective is not called *one*. Thus the blessed Holy One is called *one*, in total perfection, in perfection of the Patriarchs, in perfection of Assembly of Israel. Consequently, Israel below is called *one*. When a person grasps and puts on tefillin, and wraps himself in a covering of *mitsvah*, he is adorned with holy crowns, corresponding to the pattern above, and is called *one*.³⁴

"Accordingly, let the One come and engage with *one*—the blessed Holy One, who is One, will engage with *one*; for the King engages only with what befits Him. Thus it is written *He is with one, and who can turn Him back?* (Job 23:13)—the blessed Holy One dwells and appears only *with one*. If a person is arrayed in supernal holiness, becoming 'one,' then He dwells *with one*, and nowhere else. When is a person called *one*? When he is sanctified by supernal holiness.³⁵

"Come and see: When [81b] a person appears in a single coupling, male and female, intending to be sanctified fittingly, then he is complete and called *one*, without defect. Therefore, a man should delight with his wife at that time, inviting her to share a single desire, so that they both focus as one on that event. When they both occupy this state, all is *one*, in soul and body. In soul—cleaving to one another in single desire. In body—as we have learned: A human being is like someone divided in half, and when male and female join, they become one body. So they are one soul and one body, a human being called *one*. Then the blessed Holy One dwells *with one*, generating a holy spirit into that *one*. These are called children of the blessed Holy One, as we have said. Therefore, *You shall be holy, for I [YHVH your God] am holy* (Leviticus 19:2).³⁶

“Happy are Israel, for He established this matter nowhere else but in His very being, as is written: *for I, YHVH, am holy*—to cleave to Him, to no other. Thus, *You shall be holy, for I, YHVH your God, am holy.*”³⁷

Every man shall revere his mother and his father, and My Sabbaths you shall keep (Leviticus 19:3). We have learned that this portion is the entirety of Torah. Scripture likens reverence for father and mother to the Sabbath. Well, Rabbi Yose said, “All is one. Whoever reveres the former keeps the latter.”³⁸

“*Every man shall revere his mother and his father*—regarding reverence, Scripture placed *his mother* before *his father*. Why? This has already been established: since one’s mother has less power than his father in this regard, Scripture gave precedence to revering her.”³⁹

Rabbi Yitshak said, “What is written before? *You shall be holy* (Leviticus 19:2). If a man comes to be sanctified with his wife as one, who deserves greater praise for that sanctification? You must say, the female. Therefore, *Every man shall revere his mother and his father.*”⁴⁰

Rabbi Yehudah said, “*Every man shall revere his mother and his father*—similarly, *on the day that YHVH Elohim made earth and heaven* (Genesis 2:4), and elsewhere Scripture places *heaven* before *earth*, demonstrating that both of them were formed as one. Here, too, Scripture places mother before father, while elsewhere placing father before mother, to demonstrate that both of them engaged as one in forming him.”⁴¹

“*And My Sabbaths you shall keep*—one is equivalent to the other, all evenly balanced. It is written: *You shall keep the Sabbath, for it is holy to you* (Exodus 31:14), and it is written *Remember the Sabbath day to hallow it* (ibid. 20:8). Well, one for Father and one for Mother.”⁴²

“Here is written *Every man shall revere his mother and his father, and My Sabbaths you shall keep*, and there is

written *My Sabbaths you shall keep, and My sanctuary you shall revere* (Leviticus 19:30). What is meant by *My sanctuary*? [82a] Literally.

“Alternatively, מקדשי (*miqdashi*), *My sanctuary*—those דמקדשי (*di-mqaddeshei*), who sanctify, themselves at that time. Similarly, *Begin ממקדשי* (*mi-miqdashi*), *with My sanctuary* (Ezekiel 9:6)—do not read *mi-miqdashi, with My sanctuary*, but rather ממקודשי (*mi-mequddashai*), *with My sanctified ones*. Just as there, *miqdashi, My sanctuary; mequddashai, My sanctified ones*—so here, *mequddashai, My sanctified ones*, namely father and mother.”⁴³

Every man shall revere his mother and his father. Rabbi Shim'on said, “It is written *You, cleaving to YHVH your God, [are alive every one of you today!]* (Deuteronomy 4:4). Happy are Israel, for they cleave to the blessed Holy One—they and not other nations inhabiting the world. Because they cleave to the blessed Holy One, all cleave to one another.”⁴⁴

“Come and see: When a man is sanctified below with his wife—for example, the Companions who sanctify themselves from Sabbath to Sabbath, at a time of favor, when blessing is available—then all cleave as one: the soul of Sabbath and the body prepared on Sabbath.”⁴⁵

“Thus it is written *Every man shall revere his mother and his father*—who form one coupling for the body at that time, to be sanctified. *And My Sabbaths you shall keep*—who invite the soul into that body. So, *My Sabbaths you shall keep.*”⁴⁶

“Alternatively, *And My Sabbaths you shall keep*—an admonition to those who wait for their coupling from Sabbath to Sabbath, as we have established, for it is written: *As for the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths...* (Isaiah 56:4). Who are *eunuchs*? Those Companions who emasculate themselves all the other days, in order to study Torah, waiting from Sabbath to Sabbath, as is written: *who keep My Sabbaths*—as is said: *His father שמר את הדבר* (*shamar*

et ha-davar), kept the matter in mind (Genesis 37:11). Therefore, *And My Sabbaths you shall keep.*⁴⁷

“Every man shall revere his mother and his father—the body. *And My Sabbaths you shall keep*—the soul. All cleaves, one with the other. Happy is the share of Israel!”⁴⁸ [83b]

Do not turn to idols, and do not make molten gods for yourselves... (Leviticus 19:4).

Rabbi Hiyya opened, “*Do not turn to the stiffness of this people nor to its wickedness and its sin*

(Deuteronomy 9:27). *Do not turn*—now, who would ever tell the King, ‘*Do not turn,*’ seeing that it is written *For the eyes of YHVH are on a man’s ways* (Job 34:21), and ‘*If a man hides in secret places, will I not see him?*’ declares YHVH (Jeremiah 23:24)? The blessed Holy One observes all, seeing all deeds and bringing them all to judgment, whether good or evil, as is said: *For God will bring every deed to judgment, including everything hidden, whether good or evil* (Ecclesiastes 12:14). Yet Moses said *Do not turn?*⁴⁹

“However, we have learned as follows: Every person must be vigilant against sinning, so as not to transgress before the Holy King. Come and see: If a person performs a single *mitsvah*, that *mitsvah* ascends and stands before the blessed Holy One and says, ‘I am from so-and-so who performed me.’ And the blessed Holy One sets her before Him, to gaze upon her every day, to benefit him on account of her.”⁵⁰

“If he transgresses the commandments of Torah, that transgression ascends and stands before Him and says, ‘I am from so-and-so who performed me.’ And the blessed Holy One sets her before Him, and she stays there to be gazed upon every day—to harm him on account of her and destroy him. As is written: *YHVH saw and He spurned, [from the vexation of His sons and His daughters]* (Deuteronomy

32:19). What is meant by *saw*? The one standing before Him.⁵¹

“If he turns back in *teshuvah*, what is written? *YHVH has also removed your sin; you will not die* (2 Samuel 12:13)—removing that sin from before Him so that He not see it, in order to benefit him. Therefore, *Do not turn to the stiffness of this people....*”⁵²

Rabbi Yose said, “This is also implied from here, as is written: *Your iniquity is stained before Me—declares YHVH* (Jeremiah 2:22).”⁵³

One day Rabbi Yeisa the Younger entered the presence of Rabbi Shim’on, and found him sitting and reciting: “*The woman whom You gave with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate* (Genesis 3:12)—implying that Adam and Eve were created together in one body, as is written: *whom You gave* עמדי (*immadi*), *with me*, and it is not written *whom You gave* לי (*li*), *to me*.”⁵⁴

He said to him, “If so, look at what is written: *I am the woman who was standing with you here* (1 Samuel 1:26), and it is not written *who was standing before you!*”⁵⁵

He replied, “If it were written *with you*, and nothing more, we would say so—as is written: *whom You gave with me*. But it is written *who was standing*.”⁵⁶

He said to him, “But look at what is written: *YHVH Elohim said, ‘It is not good for the human to be alone; I will make him a helper alongside him’* (Genesis 2:18)—*I will make him, now!*”⁵⁷

He replied, “Certainly so! For Adam was *alone*, with no help from his female, since she was of his side, as we have established. As for His saying *I will make him a helper*, so it is—for it is not written *I will create him a helper*, because it is written *Male and female He created them* (Genesis 5:2); rather it is written *I will make*. And what is *I will make*? This implies ‘I will prepare,’ for He took her from his side and arrayed her perfectly and brought her before him.

Then Adam joined conjugally with Eve, and she became his helpmate.⁵⁸

“We have learned: The stunning beauty of Adam was a raiment of the supernal cluster, from radiant splendor. The beauty of Eve, no creature could behold. Even Adam did not look at her, until the time when they sinned and their beauty diminished. Then Adam gazed upon her and knew her intimately, joining with her conjugally, as is written: *Adam knew Eve his wife* (Genesis 4:1)—*knew* entirely, *knew* in union, *knew* her intimately and gazed upon her.⁵⁹

“And we have learned: A man is forbidden to gaze at the beauty of a woman, so that he not have evil fantasies and be uprooted [84a] to something else.”⁶⁰

This is how Rabbi Shim'on acted when he was walking through town, followed by the Companions, and they saw beautiful women. He would lower his eyes and say to the Companions, “*Do not turn to idols* (Leviticus 19:4).” For whoever gazes at a woman's beauty during the day will have fantasies at night; and if they overwhelm him, he transgresses *Do not make molten gods for yourselves* (ibid.). Furthermore, if he has intercourse with his wife while those evil imaginings arise within him, the children they engender are called *molten gods*.⁶¹

Do not turn to idols. Rabbi Abba said, “A person is forbidden to look at idols of the nations or to derive benefit from them—all the more so, to look at a place that should not be seen.”⁶²

Rabbi Abba opened, saying, “*Turn to me and grant me grace. Give Your strength to Your servant...* (Psalms 86:16). Now, didn't the blessed Holy One have anyone in the world as beautiful as David, that he said *Turn to me and grant me grace*? However, we have learned as follows: The blessed Holy One has another David, who is appointed over many supernal cohorts and camps. When the blessed Holy One wishes to be compassionate to the world, He gazes upon this one, shines His countenance upon him, and has mercy

upon the world, and the beauty of this David illumines all worlds.⁶³

“His head is a skull of gold, embellished with seven variegated golden arrangements, as has been established. The affection of the blessed Holy One is toward him, and in His great love for him, the blessed Holy One tells him to turn his eyes toward Him and gaze upon Him, for they are utterly beautiful. As is written: *Turn your eyes away from me, [for they overwhelm me!]* (Song of Songs 6:5). *Turn your eyes away*—for when these eyes gaze at the blessed Holy One, catapulted arrows pierce His heart in supernal love; and from the intense flame of supernal passion toward Him, He says, *‘Turn your eyes away from me—turn your eyes in a different direction away from Me, for they are burning Me with flames of love!’*⁶⁴

“Therefore, of David is written *He was ruddy, with fine eyes and goodly to look on* (1 Samuel 16:12). Because that supernal David is beautiful, the blessed Holy One yearns to cling to him. So David said, *Turn to me and grant me grace.*⁶⁵

“*He said, ‘See, the fragrance of my son is like the fragrance of a field blessed by YHVH’* (Genesis 27:27)—implying that along with Jacob the Garden of Eden entered, which is the Holy Apple Orchard. Now, how could the Garden of Eden enter with him, seeing that the Garden is so immense in width and length, with so many magnificent supernal species there?⁶⁶

“Well, the blessed Holy One has another holy Garden of Eden, and that Garden is His love—He clings to it, and it is reserved for the blessed Holy One alone, for Him to enter. This the blessed Holy One bestows to be constantly with the righteous—especially with Jacob, to enter with him and help him.⁶⁷

“*I am YHVH, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie, [to you I will give it and to your seed]* (Genesis 28:13)—we have learned: “This

implies that the land of Israel was rolled up for him.’ Now, the land of Israel is four hundred parasangs by four hundred parasangs—how was it uprooted from its place and set beneath him?⁶⁸

“Well, the blessed Holy One has another holy supernal land, called ‘the land of Israel,’ which is beneath the rung of Jacob, who stands upon it. He bestowed it to Israel out of His love for them, to abide with them, lead them, and protect them from all. It is called Land of the Living.⁶⁹

“Come and see: A person is forbidden to gaze upon a place that the blessed Holy One loathes, that is distant from His soul. Now, if it is forbidden to gaze at what the blessed Holy One loves, then at something that He distances, all the more so!⁷⁰

“Come and see: A person is forbidden to gaze upon a rainbow, since it reflects the supernal image. And one is forbidden to gaze upon the fingers of the priests when they spread their hands, since the glory of the supernal King settles there. Now, if it is forbidden to gaze at a supernal holy place, [84b] then at an impure, distant place, all the more so! Therefore, *Do not turn to idols.*”⁷¹

Rabbi Yitshak said, “Now, if it is forbidden to look at them, then to worship them or make them, how much more so! Therefore, *Do not turn to idols.*

“Here Scripture comes to warn Israel as originally, corresponding to *You shall have no other gods beside Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image or any form* (Exodus 20:3-4).⁷²

“*I, YHVH, your God* (Leviticus 19:2)—*I am YHVH your God* (Exodus 20:2).

“*Every man shall revere his mother and his father* (Leviticus 19:3)—*Honor your father and your mother* (Exodus 20:12).

“*And My Sabbaths you shall keep* (Leviticus 19:3)—*Remember the Sabbath day to hallow it* (Exodus 20:8).

“You shall not swear falsely by My name (Leviticus 19:12)—You shall not take the name of YHVH your God in vain (Exodus 20:7).

“You shall not steal; you shall not deny and you shall not lie... (Leviticus 19:11)—You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your fellow (Exodus 20:13).⁷³

“You shall not stand over the blood of your fellow (Leviticus 19:16)—You shall not murder (Exodus 20:13).⁷⁴

“This has already been established; so this portion includes the entirety of Torah.”⁷⁵

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “Originally it is written *I am YHVH אלהיך (Elohekha), your God; זכור (Zakhor), Remember, the Sabbath day; לא תשא (Lo tissa), You shall not swear; לא תרצח (Lo tirtsaḥ), You shall not murder; לא תנאף (Lo tin’af), You shall not commit adultery; לא תגנוב (Lo tignov), You shall not steal (Exodus 20)—in the singular. Yet here: I, YHVH, אלהיכם (Eloheikhem), your God; Every man תיראו (tira’u), shall revere, his mother and his father, and My Sabbaths תשמרו (tishmoru), you shall keep; Do not תפנו (tifnu), turn [to idols] (Leviticus 19)—in the plural.⁷⁶*

“Well, come and see: Since the day that Israel existed in the world, they were never so unified in heart and will before the blessed Holy One as on that day when they stood at Mount Sinai; so everything was spoken in the singular. Later, it was spoken in the plural, because they no longer shared such unified will.”⁷⁷ Rabbi El’azar was going to see Rabbi Yose son of Rabbi Shim’on son of Lekonya, his father-in-law, accompanied by Rabbi Ḥiyya and Rabbi Yose. When they reached a certain field, they sat down beneath a tree. Rabbi El’azar said, “Let each one of us say a word of Torah.”⁷⁸

Rabbi El’azar opened, saying, *“I am YHVH your God since the land of Egypt, and you know no God but Me... (Hosea 13:4). Now, was He their King only since the land of Egypt and not previously? Look at what is written: Jacob said to*

his household and to all who were with him, 'Get rid of the alien gods in your midst... Let us rise and go up to Bethel...' (Genesis 35:2-3)! Yet you say *since the land of Egypt?*⁷⁹

“However, from the first day that Israel existed in the world, they never recognized the glory of the blessed Holy One except in the land of Egypt—where they were in harsh bondage and cried out to Him and never changed their customs. There they were refined, like smelting gold from dross. Furthermore, every day they would see many sorcerers, many evil types misleading human beings; yet they did not stray from the path, neither right nor left—even though they knew little about the glory of their Lord, but simply followed the customs of their fathers.⁸⁰

“Afterward, they saw many signs, many mighty acts, and therefore He said, *I am YHVH your God since the land of Egypt...*, for there His glory was revealed. Then He manifested Himself to them at the sea, where they saw the splendor of His glory face-to-face.⁸¹

“Do not say, “It was another God who spoke with us.” Rather, it is I whom you saw in the land of Egypt, I who slew your enemies in the land of Egypt; thus, *You know no God but Me*—do not say that it is another; rather it is I entirely.’”⁸²

He opened again, saying, *“You shall not exploit your fellow and you shall not rob. The wages of a hired man shall not remain with you through the night till morning* (Leviticus 19:13). Why? Well, this is indicated by another verse, as is written: *On his day you shall give his wage, and the sun shall not set on him—for he is poor [and toward it he lifts his soul...]* (Deuteronomy 24:15). But there, ‘Be careful that you not be gathered from the world on account of him before your time comes, as is said: *Before the sun darkens...* (Ecclesiastes 12:2).’⁸³

“From here we learn something else: If one restores the soul of a poor person, even [85a] if his own time has

come to depart from the world, the blessed Holy One restores *his* soul, extending his life.⁸⁴

“The wages of a hired man shall not remain with you through the night. Come and see: One who withholds the wage of a poor person is as though he takes his life and the life of his household. As he diminishes their lives, so the blessed Holy One diminishes his days and cuts his soul from that world. For all the breaths that issued from [the poor worker’s] mouth that whole day ascend and stand before the blessed Holy One; afterward, his soul and the souls of his household ascend and stand within those breaths of his mouth. Then, even if length of days and much goodness have been decreed for that person, they are all uprooted and removed from him. Moreover, his soul does not ascend. This corresponds to what Rabbi Abba said: ‘May the Compassionate One save us from them and from their humiliation!’⁸⁵

“It has been established: Even if he is rich? Well, *and toward it he lifts his soul* (Deuteronomy 24:15)—precisely, including every person, though especially the poor.⁸⁶

“This corresponds to what Rav Hamnuna used to do when a hired man would leave his work: he would give him his wage and say to him, ‘Take your soul that was deposited in my hand, take your deposit!’⁸⁷

“Even if [the worker] said, ‘Let it remain with you for safekeeping,’ he would refuse, and say, ‘It is not fitting that a body be deposited with me, much less a soul! For a soul should be deposited only with the blessed Holy One, as is written: *In Your hand I deposit my spirit* (Psalms 31:6).’”⁸⁸

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “And is it permitted [to be deposited] with someone else?”⁸⁹

He replied, “Even with [his employer], once it has been given.”⁹⁰

“It is written: *The wages of a hired man shall not remain with you through the night,* and it is written *and the sun shall not set on him* (Deuteronomy 24:15). Well, this

has already been established. But come and see: You cannot find a single day that is not ruled by another, supernal Day; and if he does not give him his soul, it is as if he spoils that Day. Therefore, *On his day you shall give his wage, and the sun shall not set on him.*⁹¹

“As for what is said: *shall not remain with you through the night*—because [the employer’s] soul does not ascend, whereas those of the poor person and his household do, as we have established.”⁹²

Rabbi Ḥiyya opened with the following verse: “*You shall not curse the deaf...* (Leviticus 19:14)—according to its literal meaning, but from this entire portion we learn other matters, and all are interdependent.”⁹³

“Come and see: Whoever curses his fellow in his presence, humiliating him, is as though he spills his blood, as we have established. This verse, however, refers to when one’s fellow is not with him and he curses him—that word ascends.”⁹⁴

“There is not a single word issuing from one’s mouth that lacks a voice. This voice ascends and is joined by many quaestors, until it rises and arouses the place of the Great Abyss, as has been established. How many are roused against that person! Woe to one from whose mouth issues an evil word, as has been established!”⁹⁵

“*Before the blind you shall not put a stumbling block*—according to its literal meaning; and they have established it as referring to one who causes another to sin, and also to one who strikes his grown son. *Before the blind you shall not put a stumbling block*—referring to one who has not attained the qualification to render legal decisions and yet does so, as we have learned, for it is written *For many the victims she has felled...* (Proverbs 7:26). This one transgresses *and before the blind you shall not put a stumbling block*, for he causes his fellow to stumble in the world that is coming.”⁹⁶

“For we have learned: One who follows a straight path in Torah and engages in Torah fittingly has a constant share in the world that is coming. That word of Torah issuing from his mouth goes roaming through the world and ascends above. Many supernal holy ones join that word, and it rises along a straight path, is adorned with a holy crown, and bathed in the river of the World that is Coming, flowing and gushing from Eden, where it is welcomed and saturated. Around that river is planted a supernal tree. Then a supernal light flows forth and crowns that person all day long, as has been said.⁹⁷

“If one toils in Torah without knowing how to engage in her [85b] properly, that word ascends and strays from the path, and no one joins it—all thrust it away, and it goes roaming through the world without finding a place. Who causes this? The one who leads him astray from the right path, as is written: *Before the blind you shall not put a stumbling block.* Therefore, *You shall revere your God* (Leviticus 19:14).⁹⁸

“And if a person desires to delve into Torah but cannot find anyone to teach him, and out of his love for Torah he pores over her and stammers in her ignorantly, every single word ascends and the blessed Holy One delights in each one, receiving it and planting it around that stream. From those words are formed magnificent trees, called ‘willows of the stream,’ as is written: *Lose yourself always in her love* (Proverbs 5:19).⁹⁹

“King David said, *Teach me, O YHVH, Your way. I will walk in Your truth...* (Psalms 86:11), and it is written: *Lead me on a level path because of my adversaries* (ibid. 27:11). Happy are those who know the ways of Torah and engage in her on a straight path, for they plant magnificent trees, trees of life above, entirely healing!

“Therefore it is written: *A Torah of truth was in his mouth* (Malachi 2:6). Now, is there a Torah that is not truth? Yes, like we said: if one teaches what he doesn’t

know, which isn't true—then the one who learns, learns something untrue. So it is written *A Torah of truth was in his mouth.*¹⁰⁰

“Nonetheless, a person should learn a word of Torah from anyone, even from someone who does not know, since thereby he will be aroused by Torah and come to learn from one who does know, and eventually it will turn out that he is walking in the true path of Torah.”¹⁰¹

“Come and see: A person should always engage in Torah and her commandments even if he does so not for her own sake, because by engaging in her not for her own sake, he will come to do so for her own sake.”¹⁰²

Rabbi Yose opened with the following verse, saying: “*You shall not do wrong במשפט (ba-mishpat), in justice. You shall not favor the poor and you shall not defer to the rich; בצדק תשפוט (be-tsedeq tishpot), in righteousness you shall judge, your fellow (Leviticus 19:15). You shall not do wrong ba-mishpat, in justice—according to its literal meaning; but as has been said, this portion contains supernal precious words regarding the commandments of Torah. This verse is explained by its conclusion, as is written: Be-tsedeq tishpot, In righteousness you shall judge, your fellow.*”¹⁰³

“Come and see: There are two rungs here: *mishpat, justice*, and *tsedeq, righteousness*. What is the difference between them? Well, one is Compassion and one is Judgment, turning each other fragrantly firm.”¹⁰⁴

“When *righteousness* is aroused, it renders judgment to all equally, for it contains no compassion or leniency. And when *justice* is aroused, it contains compassion. You might think that there is *justice* entirely—but Scripture comes and says, *In righteousness you shall judge*. Why? Because *righteousness* does not punish one and forgive the other; rather all of them equally, evenly balanced. Similarly, *You shall not favor the poor and you shall not defer to the rich—rather all of them evenly balanced.*”¹⁰⁵

“*Be-tsedeq, In righteousness.* You might think there should be judgment entirely, *in righteousness* alone—but Scripture comes and says, תשפוט (*tishpot*), *you shall judge*, for they must be joined as one, so that neither appears without the other. This is perfection of judgment.¹⁰⁶

“Why all this? Because the blessed Holy One is found there, so judgment must be perfected—just as He does, following His pattern precisely.¹⁰⁷

“Come and see: The blessed Holy One sets His throne for Judgment when the judges sit, as is written: *He sets up His throne למשפט (la-mishpat), for justice* (Psalms 9:8)—from there the Throne of the blessed Holy One is established. Who constitutes the Throne? צדק ומשפט (*Tsedeq u-mishpat*), *Righteousness and justice*, as is written: *Tsedeq u-mishpat, Righteousness and justice, are the foundation of Your throne...* (ibid. 89:15). Whoever renders judgment must do so on the Throne of the King, and if he damages one of them, it is as if he damages the Throne of the King. Then the blessed Holy One withdraws from the judges and remains no longer in their adjudication. What does He say? ‘*Now will I rise,*’ says YHVH... (ibid. 12:6). And the Holy Spirit says, *Rise above the heavens, O God!* (ibid. 57:6).¹⁰⁸ [86a]

They rose. As they were walking, Rabbi El’azar said, “It is written: *You shall not go about as a slanderer among your kin.... You shall not hate your brother in your heart.... You shall not take vengeance or harbor a grudge...* (Leviticus 19:16–18). We have already established these, and all have been discussed arousingly by the Companions.¹⁰⁹

“*My statutes you shall keep. Your cattle you shall not mate כלאיִם (kil’ayim), with a different kind; your field you shall not sow kil’ayim, with two kinds; and a garment of kil’ayim, two kinds of thread—שעטנֵי (sha’atnez)—shall not come upon you* (Leviticus 19:19).¹¹⁰

Rabbi El'azar opened, saying, "*You are My witnesses—declares YHVH—My servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe Me and understand that I am He. Before Me no God was formed, and after Me none shall exist* (Isaiah 43:10). *You are My witnesses—Israel*. We have learned: These are heaven and earth, as is written: *I call to witness against you today heaven and earth* (Deuteronomy 30:19). However, the people of Israel witness against one another, while heaven and all witness against them.^{[111](#)}

"*My servant whom I have chosen—Jacob*, as is written: *He said to me, 'You are My servant, Israel, in whom I glory'* (Isaiah 49:3), and it is written *But you, Jacob, My servant* (ibid. 41:8). Some say this is David, who is called *My servant*, as is written: *for the sake of David, My servant* (ibid. 37:35). *Whom I have chosen—supernal David*.^{[112](#)}

"What is meant by *I am He*? *I am He* who delighted to choose in David and Jacob. I am *He*—they, really!^{[113](#)}

"*Before Me no God was formed*—for we have learned: The blessed Holy One called Jacob *God*, as is written: *The God of Israel called him God* (Genesis 33:20); the blessed Holy One called Jacob *God*, as is written: *Before Me no God was formed*. Thus, *I am He*—all, as has been said. *And after Me none shall exist*—for David is called so, and after him there is no other God.^{[114](#)}

"Come and see: When the blessed Holy One created the world, He arranged every single thing in its own aspect and appointed over them supernal forces. You cannot find even a tiny blade of grass in the earth without a celestial force above, and whatever is made from each and every thing, and whatever each thing does, derives from the potency of the supernal force appointed over it above. All are laws decreed in Judgment; by Judgment they move, and by Judgment they stay. Not one ventures [86b] beyond its station.^{[115](#)}

"All of them have been appointed since the day that the world was created, designated to rule over every single

thing. They all move according to another, higher law, impelling each one, as is written: *She rises while it is still night, and provides food for her household* וְחֹק (ve-ḥoq), *and a portion, for her maidens* (Proverbs 31:15). Once they receive that ḥoq, *portion*, they are all called חֻקוֹתַי (ḥuqqotai), *My statutes* (Leviticus 19:19). This ḥoq that is given to them comes from heaven, so they are called חֻקוֹת שָׁמַיִם (ḥuqqot shamayim), *the statutes of heaven* (Job 38:33). How do we know that they come from heaven? As is written: *For it is ḥoq, a statute, for Israel* (Psalms 81:5).¹¹⁶

“Thus it is written *Ḥuqqotai, My statutes, you shall keep. [Your cattle you shall not mate kil’ayim, with a different kind; your field you shall not sow kil’ayim, with two kinds; and a garment of kil’ayim, two kinds of thread—sha’atnez—shall not come upon you]* (Leviticus 19:19)—because every single one is appointed over a specific object in the world by that ḥoq. Consequently, it is forbidden to switch species, to insert one species into another, because one thereby uproots each power from its place and negates the celestial Family, falsifying the royal solemnity.¹¹⁷

“*כִּלְאִים (Kil’ayim), a different kind.* What is *kil’ayim*? One who puts another into prison, as is said: *to בית הכלא (beit ha-kele), prison* (Jeremiah 37:18), so that he won’t do anything.¹¹⁸

“*Kil’ayim—prevention, preventing all those powers from doing their work.*¹¹⁹

“*Kil’ayim—confusion, injecting confusion into supernal power, falsifying the royal solemnity, as is said: A garment of kil’ayim, two kinds of thread—sha’atnez—shall not come upon you.*¹²⁰

“Come and see: It is written *But from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat...* (Genesis 2:17). As has been said, he altered the command of the King, replacing the Tree of Life—by which all is perfected, on which faith of all depends—and cleaving to another place.¹²¹

“We have learned that in all things one must demonstrate action corresponding to action above, performing action as required; and if it is exchanged for something else, he draws upon himself something else, undesirable.¹²²

“Come and see: When a person demonstrates an action below in the right way, as it should be, a supernal holy spirit flows forth and settles upon him. But when he demonstrates an action below in a crooked way, not right, then another spirit, undesirable, flows forth and settles upon him, leading him astray to the side of evil. Who draws that spirit upon him? You must admit, the action that he demonstrated on the Other Side.

“It is written: *She seeks out wool and flax...* (Proverbs 31:13). What does this mean? She searches and seeks for *wool and flax*—whoever joins them as one.¹²³

“Now, you might say, ‘Why is it permitted in tzitzit?’ Well, this has already been established. But there, that garment is perfected, in consummate action fittingly.¹²⁴

“Furthermore, *She seeks out wool and flax*—to wreak vengeance. But when is it permitted? When it is in perfection, as is written: *and performs with willing hands* (Proverbs 31:13). Regarding tzitzit, as we have explained, there it is in the category of perfection, and does nothing [wrong]. But when it is not in perfection, whoever tries to join them as one arouses an undesirable spirit.¹²⁵

“Who proves this matter? Abel and Cain prove it, for the former comes from one side and the latter from the Other Side. Therefore they must not be joined as one, and the offering of Cain was distanced from that of Abel.¹²⁶

“Thus, *A garment of kil'ayim, two kinds of thread—sha'atnez—shall not come upon you*—unspecified. Another spirit *shall not come upon you*, dominating you. A person must demonstrate worthy action, fittingly, and through that action a holy spirit settles upon him, a supernal spirit by which he is sanctified. If one comes to sanctify himself, he

is sanctified, as is written: *You shall hallow yourselves and become holy, for I, YHVH, am holy.*¹²⁷

“*But from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, [you shall not eat...]* (Genesis 2:17). Now, if on account of this, Adam brought death into the world, then how much more so, one who demonstrates another action, which must not be done!¹²⁸

“An ox and a donkey prove this, as is written: *Do not plow with an ox and a donkey together* (Deuteronomy 22:10)—because it arouses the Other Side to be joined as one, harming the world. And whoever separates them increases peace in the world. Here, too, whoever separates them, in the manner that has been explained—so that they not be carded, [87a] spun, and woven together—such a person increases peace for himself and for the world.¹²⁹

“So, what was Cain’s offering? Flax; whereas Abel’s offering was wool. Each was unlike the other. Mystery of all: Cain was *kil’ayim, of two kinds*, an undesirable confused mixture—the Other Side, not the species of Eve and Adam—and his offering came from that side. Abel was of one aspect—Adam and Eve. In Eve’s womb these two aspects joined, and because they joined together, no benefit came to the world from them and they perished.¹³⁰

“Still to this day, their aspect endures, and whoever exhibits the behavior of this combination arouses those aspects together upon himself and can be harmed, and another, undesirable spirit settles upon him. Israel must rouse upon themselves a spirit of holiness, to become holy and attain perfection in this world and in the world that is coming.¹³¹

“*The priest shall wear* מִדּוֹ בָד (middo vad), *his linen raiment* (Leviticus 6:3). Why is it called *vad*, alone? Because this flax must not be combined with another kind. Therefore it is not written מִדּוֹ פִּשְׁתִּים (middo phishtim), *his flax raiment*, but rather *middo vad*, alone.¹³²

“Why must the priest display himself in this? Well, he must be displayed in these linen garments by the altar of the ascent offering when he clears away the fatty ashes of this offering, because the ascent offering comes from the aspect of idolatry and evil imagining. So he must be displayed in them alone—not in confused mixture, as we have said—in order for a person to be purged of all those sins deriving from that side.¹³³

“But when he enters the Sanctuary, the site of completeness and all those rituals of wholeness, even though [wool and flax] are combined, this poses no problem for us—just as we said regarding tzitzit—because there all those supernal species are found joined together, and in all those vessels of the Sanctuary appear many species differing from one another, all included there corresponding to the pattern above.¹³⁴

“Happy are Israel, for the blessed Holy One has given them a Torah of truth, a faithful Torah, and He loves them above all other nations, as is written: ‘*I have loved you,*’ says YHVH (Malachi 1:2).”

Rabbi Ḥiyya opened following him, saying, “*When you come to the land and plant any fruit-bearing tree... [Three years it shall be forbidden to you; it shall not be eaten.] In the fourth year all its fruit shall be sacred, a jubilation before YHVH* (Leviticus 19:23–24). *When you come to the land*—the Companions have already established this. But come and see that a tree yields fruit only from the earth, and the earth generates it, displaying that fruit to the world. The earth produces fruit through another power above her, just as the female produces fruit only through the power of the male.¹³⁵

“That fruit is not perfectly completed until three years, nor is a power appointed over it above until it is complete. After completion, a power is appointed over it and the earth is perfected by it. For until three years, the earth is not

perfected by it nor harmonized with it. After it is completed and they are perfected together, then is consummation.

“Come and see: Until a female conceives three times, the fruit of her womb is not complete. After three pregnancies, a female is perfected by that fruit and they harmonize as one; then that fruit is consummation of all and beauty of all. After it issues, until three years it has no power from above, for then its ripening is complete. Levi was select of all, third to his mother, who was perfected by him and harmonized with him. After three years, a supernal power above was appointed over him above.¹³⁶

“*In the fourth year all its fruit shall be sacred, a jubilation before YHVH* (Leviticus 19:24). What is meant by *sacred, a jubilation*? Praises, offered to the blessed Holy One. Until here.¹³⁷

“From here on, mystery of the matter. For *in the fourth year* [87b] Assembly of Israel couples with the blessed Holy One, and unified wedding jubilation prevails, as is written: *sacred, הלולים (hillulim), a jubilation—הלולא (hillula), wedding celebration, and joy in single coupling.*¹³⁸

“Who is *the fourth year*? The blessed Holy One. And we have learned: *The fourth year* is Assembly of Israel, who is the fourth leg of the Throne. Then it is *sacred, a jubilation*—a sacred wedding celebration takes place, and the blessed Holy One couples with Her. Then powers are appointed over the world, over every single thing fittingly. From here on, all are blessed, and all is permitted to be eaten, in total completeness, in perfection above and below.¹³⁹

“Until [the fruit] is entirely completed, below and above, one must not eat of it. Whoever does so is like one who has no share in the blessed Holy One, since that fruit is not under supernal holy dominion, which does not prevail until [the fruit] is completed; nor is it under lower dominion, since the power of the earth has not harmonized with it. So one who eats of it shows that he has no share

above or below. And if he utters a blessing over it, that blessing is in vain; for the blessed Holy One does not yet settle upon it, and he has no share in Him. May the Compassionate One save us from those who do not care about the glory of their Lord! Happy are the righteous in this world and in the world that is coming! Of them is written *The path of the righteous is like gleaming light, [shining ever brighter until full day]* (Proverbs 4:18).¹⁴⁰

Rabbi Yose opened with a verse: “*You shall not eat over the blood...* (Leviticus 19:26). This verse has been established by the Companions in various places, along with all these following verses, each and every one in a revealed manner. But this verse should be discussed arousingly: *Before a gray head you shall rise...* (Leviticus 19:32)—*before a gray head* of Torah, generally.¹⁴¹

“*You shall rise*—for one should stand erect. From here we learn that a person should rise before a Torah scroll. As Rav Yeiva Sava said—when he saw a Torah scroll, he would rise before it and say, *Before a gray head you shall rise*. When he saw a *humash* of Torah, he would honor it and say, *You shall honor the face of an elder* (Leviticus 19:32).¹⁴²

“Similarly, a person should rise erect before a scholar, because he has attained supernal holy stature. *You shall honor the face of an elder*, for he is a scholar in the world. Here is an allusion to the Holy Ancient One, and to the supernal Priest. Rabbi Shim’on used to say, ‘Here is an allusion to Written Torah and Oral Torah.’¹⁴³

“Furthermore, we have learned: This verse comes in order to be expounded. *Before a gray head you shall rise*, as has been discussed: *before a gray head*—warning a person that before his hair turns gray he should *rise* to worthy stature in the world, for this becomes his honor toward the end of his days. There is no praise for a person when he grows old and is simply incapable of doing wrong; his praise is when he is good while still in his prime. King

Solomon said, *Even by a lad's deeds it is known [whether his behavior is pure and upright]* (Proverbs 20:11). Similarly, *Recall your Creator in the days of your youth...* (Ecclesiastes 12:1).¹⁴⁴

Rabbi El'azar said, "Surely this way is paved before us, and is the way of the blessed Holy One!"¹⁴⁵

He opened, saying, "*For YHVH knows the way of the righteous, and the way of the wicked will perish* (Psalms 1:6). *For YHVH knows the way of the righteous*—what is meant by *For YHVH knows*? Well, the blessed Holy One knows and watches over the way of the righteous, to benefit them and protect them; He walks before them to defend them. Therefore, one who sets out on his way should make sure that that way is the way of the blessed Holy One, inviting Him to join along. Thus it is written *For YHVH knows the way of the righteous*.¹⁴⁶

"What is meant by *and the way of the wicked will perish*? All by itself—for the blessed Holy One does not [88a] regard that way of theirs and does not go along with them.¹⁴⁷

"It is sometimes written דרך (*derekh*), *way*, and sometimes ארה (*orah*), *path*. What is the difference between one and the other? Well, *derekh, way*—trodden by the ankles of other people. Whereas *orah, path*—opened only recently, as is written: וּאֵרָחָה (*ve-arah*), *and he sets out, in company with evildoers* (Job 34:8). And it is written: וּאֵרָחָה (*ve-orah*), *And the path, of the righteous is like gleaming light, shining ever brighter until full day* (Proverbs 4:18)."¹⁴⁸

Parashat Emor

“SAY” (LEVITICUS 21:1-24:23)

YHVH said to Moses, “Say to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say to them: For no dead person among his kin shall he defile himself” (Leviticus 21:1).¹

Rabbi Yose said, “Why is this juxtaposed with that—with what is written above: *A man or a woman who is a medium for a ghost or wizard-spirit shall surely be put to death...* (Leviticus 20:27)—and next to it: *Say to the priests...*? This indicates that once Scripture admonished Israel to sanctify themselves in every manner, it admonished the priests to sanctify themselves and likewise the Levites. How do we know about the priests? As is written: *Say to the priests.* How do we know about the Levites? As is written: *To the Levites you shall speak, and you shall say to them* (Numbers 18:26)—so that they will all become virtuous, holy, and pure.²

“Say to the priests, the sons of Aaron. The sons of Aaron—now, don’t we know they are the sons of Aaron? Well, the sons of Aaron and not the sons of Levi. For Aaron is the beginning of all priests of the world, because the blessed Holy One selected him from everyone to make peace in the world—for Aaron’s conduct stood out before Him, and all his days he strove to increase peace in the world. Because of such behavior, the blessed Holy One elevated him to this—to bring peace to the celestial Family. Thus, Say to the priests, the sons of Aaron.”³

Say to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say to them.

have wrought for those who shelter in You before the eyes of humankind! (Psalms 31:20). *How abundant Your goodness—how sublime and precious is that goodness called the goodness of YHVH* (Psalms 27:13), with which the blessed Holy One does good in the world! He does not withhold it on any day, for by it the world is sustained and supported.⁴

“That You have hidden for those who revere You—for we have learned: The blessed Holy One made a supernal light when He created the world, and treasured it away for the righteous in the time to come, as is written: that You have hidden for those who revere You.

“That You have wrought for those who shelter in You. That You have wrought—when the world was created, that light radiated from the beginning of the world to its end. When the blessed Holy One gazed upon the wicked who would eventually exist in the world, He hid that light away, as is written: The light of the wicked is withheld (Job 38:15). *It is destined to shine upon the righteous in the world that is coming, as is written: For you, who revere My name, the sun of righteousness will rise, with healing in its wings* (Malachi 3:20).⁵

“Come and see: When a person is about to depart to that world and is on his deathbed, three messengers come to him, and he sees there what one cannot see while in this world. That day is a day of supernal judgment, when the King seeks His deposit. Happy is the person who returns his deposit to the King just as it was placed within him! If that deposit has been soiled by bodily filth, what will he say to the owner of the deposit?⁶

Rabbi Yehudah opened,
“How abundant Your goodness that You have hidden for those who revere You, that You

“He raises his eyes and sees the Angel of Death standing before him, his sword drawn in his hand—a quaestor with chains binding that person. There is nothing at all as hard for the soul as its separation from the body. A person does not die until he sees *Shekhinah*, and out of great desire for *Shekhinah* the soul departs [88b] to meet Her. After it departs, who is the soul that cleaves to Her and is received within Her? These matters have already been established.⁷

“After the soul leaves the body, and the body remains so, an impure spirit appears, to settle upon it and defile that body. Because that impure spirit appears, one must not let that body remain overnight, since the impure spirit prevails at night and spreads throughout the earth to find a body without a soul to defile it, defiling it more.⁸

“Therefore, Scripture warned the priests, saying, *For no dead person among his kin shall he defile himself* (Leviticus 21:1), for they are holy, and an impure spirit must not settle upon them, lest they be defiled.”⁹

Say to the priests. Rabbi Yitshak said, “אמור (*Emor*), *Say—quietly*, just as all actions of the priests are done quietly.¹⁰

“Once, twice—admonishing them about their holiness so that they not defile themselves, for one who serves in a holy place should be holy entirely.¹¹

“*For no dead person [among his kin] shall he defile himself*—as we have established, for a body without a spirit is impure, and an impure spirit settles upon it; because impure spirits crave the bodies of Israel, now that the spirit of holiness has been emptied out of them, and they come to join a vessel of holiness. The priests, who are holy—holiness upon holiness—must not be defiled at all, as is written: *for the crown of his God is on his head* (Numbers 6:7), and it is written *for his God’s anointing oil is upon*

him. I am YHVH (Leviticus 21:12), and he stands below corresponding to the pattern above.¹²

“It is written: *Like fine oil on the head, running down upon the beard, the beard of Aaron, descending over the collar of his robes* (Psalms 133:2). This verse has already been established; but *like fine oil*—anointing oil of supernal holiness, flowing forth from the place of the deepest river of all.¹³

“Alternatively, flowing forth from the head of all heads, Concealed of all Concealed.¹⁴

“*On the head—on the head*, surely, head of Primordial Adam.¹⁵

“*Running down upon the beard*—the glorious beard, as has been established.¹⁶

“*The beard of Aaron*—the High Priest above, as has already been established.¹⁷

“And that oil [89a] *descends* על פי מדותיו (*al pi middotav*), according to his attributes, for some of those anointings flow down to those below; and similarly the lower priest is crowned with anointing oil below.¹⁸

“The beginning of this verse does not match its end, nor the end its beginning! It is written: *Say to the priests... and say to them: For no dead person among his kin shall he defile himself.* The verse should read *shall they defile themselves*; why, *shall he defile himself*? However, Scripture is speaking about that supernal one of all.”¹⁹

Rabbi Yehudah said, “But it is written: *The priest who is exalted over his fellows...* [Near any dead person he shall not come in; for his father or for his mother he shall not defile himself] (Leviticus 21:10-11). However, it is certainly so, as we have established.”²⁰

And Rabbi Yitshak said, “The priest standing below, corresponding to the one above, must be in a state of holiness greater than all, as has been said.”²¹

*And for his virgin sister who is close to him, [who has not belonged to a man, for her he may defile himself] (Leviticus 21:3). What is written above? [For no dead person among his kin shall he defile himself,] except for his own flesh that is closest to him... (ibid., 1-2).*²²

Rabbi Abba opened, “*Who is this coming from Edom, in crimsoned garments from Bozrah—majestic in His attire, striding in the greatness of His strength? ‘It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save’ (Isaiah 63:1). Who is this coming from Edom?—the blessed Holy One will one day don garments of vengeance against Edom, who destroyed His house, burned His Temple, and exiled Assembly of Israel among the nations. He will wreak eternal vengeance upon them until all the mountains are full of those slain among the nations, and He will summon all birds of the sky upon them, and all beasts of the field will feed on them for twelve months and birds of the sky for seven years, until the earth cannot bear their disgrace—as is written: For YHVH has a slaughter in Bozrah, a great butchery in the land of Edom (Isaiah 34:6), until those garments will be defiled, as is written: All My attire I will desecrate (ibid. 63:3).*²³

“*In crimsoned garments from Bozrah—because from there legions of the world went forth to wage war against Jerusalem, and they began to burn the Temple, and the Edomites demolished the walls and cast away the foundation stones, as is written: Remember, O YHVH, the Edomites, on the day of Jerusalem, saying: ‘Raze it, raze it to its foundation!’ (Psalms 137:7).*

“*Majestic in His attire—those garments of vengeance that He will one day don.*

“*צוּעָה (Tso’eh), Striding, in the greatness of His strength. What is tso’eh? Smashing, as is written: Peoples fall beneath you... (Psalms 45:6).*²⁴

“Israel said to Isaiah, ‘Who is this who will do so much?’ He opened, saying, ‘*It is I, speaking in righteousness—the one who is mighty to save, the one of*

whom is written *He loves righteousness and justice* (Psalms 33:5).’ He actually is *righteousness*, and He is *mighty to save*.²⁵

“Why all this? Because they caused Assembly of Israel to lie in the dust in exile and fall to the ground, as is written: *Fallen, not to rise again, is Virgin Israel* (Amos 5:2). Therefore the blessed Holy One will don garments of vengeance against them and defile [those garments] with the multitude of the slain, as is written: *All My attire I will desecrate* (Isaiah 63:3).²⁶

“Why all this? As it is written: *And for his virgin sister who is close to him, who has not belonged to a man*—who is not the portion of Esau, never the share of him of whom is written *a man skilled in hunting, a man of the field* (Genesis 25:27). *For her he may defile himself*—with those garments of vengeance that He will one day defile among those legions, as is written: *For her he may defile himself, for Her sake, because She is lying in the dust and He wants to raise Her, as is written: Arise, shine, for your light has come!...* (Isaiah 60:1).”²⁷

They shall not make any baldness on their head (Leviticus 21:5).²⁸

Rabbi Yose said, “יקרהו” ל (Lo yiqreḥuh), *They shall not make any baldness*—with a ה (he), why? Well, that

supernal oil, which is anointing oil of holiness, perfecting those seven days—as has been said, for it is written *because seven days shall ordain you* (Leviticus 8:33)—that is removed from him, balding him, if he blemishes his head. For the head of the supernal Priest is that supernal oil, and so the priest must not display in himself any blemish at all, as has already been said. Therefore it is written with a ה (he).”²⁹

He opened, saying, “*A song of ascents. When YHVH restored Zion, we were like dreamers* (Psalms 126:1). *When*

YHVH restored Zion—this was spoken in the exile of Babylon, for they spent only seventy years in exile, as is written: *When Babylon's seventy years are completed, I will attend to you* (Jeremiah 29:10). And it is written: *We were like dreamers*. What does this mean? Well, the Companions have already educed that there is a dream of seventy [89b] years.³⁰

“Come and see: As has been said, it is written *because seven days shall ordain you* (Leviticus 8:33). Who is *seven days*? As has been said, the supernal place that is totality of all the other six and is called Seven and is called *Teshuvah*.³¹

“We have learned: ‘If one sits fasting on Sabbath, [even] a decree of seventy years standing against him is torn up.’ Seventy years are seven faces of the King—even if they concur against him, that entire decree of judgment is torn up. Why? Because he grasps that day including them all—called Seven, *Teshuvah*—and so he grasps them all and returns in *teshuvah*, and the decree of them all is torn up. Thus surely there is a dream of seventy years.³²

“Similarly, the priest is crowned with Seven, called *seven days*. If he blemishes his head, that Seven, who is totality of them all, balds him of the entire holiness of them all, settling upon him. Therefore they were admonished that *לֹא יִקְרַח הָ קִרְחָהּ* (*Lo yiqrah he qorḥah*), *He shall not make any baldness, on their head*, rendering them totally defective. Thus the priest must be in a state of perfection more than all—especially the one who is highest of them all.”³³

Rabbi Abba said, “Here with lower *ה* (*he*), there with upper *he*. The priest who is greatest of all, with upper *he*, as is written: *on whose head the anointing oil has been poured and who has been ordained...* (Leviticus 21:10). *And who has been ordained*—as is written: *because seven days shall ordain you* (ibid. 8:33). Another priest, with lower *he*. Thus it is written *The priest who is exalted over his fellows, on whose head the anointing oil has been poured [and who has been ordained] to wear the garments*, (ibid. 21:10) as we

have said. Since he is holy, corresponding to the pattern above, it is written *From the sanctuary he shall not go out* (ibid. 21:12).³⁴

Rabbi Abba opened, saying, “*Yours, O YHVH, is righteousness, and ours is a face filled with shame to this very day, and so for the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem...* (Daniel 9:7). Happy are Israel, in whom the blessed Holy One delighted among all nations! Because of their faith, He gave them Torah of truth, to know the ways of the Holy King. Whoever engages in Torah is as though he engages in the blessed Holy One, for the entire Torah is His Name; so one who is occupied with Torah is occupied with His Name, and one who distances himself from Torah is distant from the blessed Holy One.³⁵

“Come and see: *Yours, O YHVH, is righteousness*—as is said: *Yours, O YHVH, are הגדולה והגבורה (ha-gedullah ve-ha-gevurah), the greatness and the power...* (1 Chronicles 29:11). Who is *righteousness*? A place to which all shining faces are joined, as it is joined to them, and in which they appear.³⁶

“*And ours is a face filled with shame*—a place from which all faces and lights are distant.³⁷

“And *righteousness* is truth, light of all, radiance of the face, joy of all. *Shame* is humiliation, distancing of truth. Whoever is ashamed—this is because truth, which is *righteousness*, is distant from him, distancing of shining faces.³⁸

“Come and see: The supreme priest should display a beautiful face, a radiant face, more joyous than all. He should not display sadness or anger, but rather corresponding entirely to the pattern above. Happy is his share, for of him is written *I am your share and your inheritance* (Numbers 18:20), and similarly: *YHVH is his inheritance* (Deuteronomy 18:2)! So he should appear completely perfect—in his self, in his attire—so as not to taint himself at all, as has been said.”³⁹

He shall take as wife a woman in her virginity (Leviticus 21:13).⁴⁰

and *they shall fine him a hundredweight of silver... for he has defamed a virgin of Israel* (Deuteronomy 22:17, 19). Now, is she *a virgin of Israel*? She is really *a virgin of her father, or a virgin of her husband!* Why [90a] here, *a virgin of Israel*?

“Ask your father, and he will inform you; your elders, and they will tell you (Deuteronomy 32:7). Here, too, concerning the priest who corresponds to the pattern above, it is written *He shall take as wife a woman in her virginity*. Likewise, *in her virginity*—that she should not venture outside at harvest time, as has been said.”⁴¹

Rabbi Shim'on was walking on the way, accompanied by Rabbi Yehudah, Rabbi Yose, and Rabbi Hizkiyah. Rabbi Shim'on opened, saying, *“Food He provides for those who revere Him; He recalls forever His covenant* (Psalms 111:5). *Food He provides for those who revere Him*—happy are Israel, revering the blessed Holy One! For of anyone who reveres Him, it is written as follows: *She rises while it is still night, and provides food for her household* (Proverbs 31:15). From here we learn that every person who delves into Torah at night and rises at midnight—when Assembly of Israel stirs to prepare the house for the King—such a person participates with Her and is considered a member of the Palace. He is given daily of the array of the house, as is written: *She provides food for her household*. Who is *her household*? All those who participate with Her at night and are considered members of the household. Thus, תרף (Teref), *Food, He provides for those who revere Him*—from that actual teref, *what is torn away*, which She takes from a

Rabbi Shim'on opened,
“It is written: *And look, he has brought an accusation of misconduct...*, and it is

distant supernal place, as is written: *From afar she brings her bread* (Proverbs 31:14).⁴²

“Who attains this *teref*? The end of the verse demonstrates, as is written: *He recalls forever His covenant*—one who engages in Torah, sharing in her at night. Moreover, the blessed Holy One has a certain supernal Righteous One, and [this person] participates with Him, both of them possessing Assembly of Israel, as is written: *The righteous will inherit the land forever* (Isaiah 60:21).”⁴³

He opened again, saying, “*He shall not profane his seed among his people, for I am YHVH who sanctifies him* (Leviticus 21:15). Come and see: Whoever emits semen in vain does not attain seeing the face of *Shekhinah*, and is called *evil*, as is written: *For You are not a God delighting in wickedness; evil cannot abide with You* (Psalms 5:5)—this is one who emits it by hand or otherwise. Now, if you say that this also applies to one who emits it within a woman who does not conceive—no; rather, as we have said.⁴⁴

“Therefore, a man should request from the blessed Holy One that He provide him with a worthy vessel, so that he not spoil his seed. For whoever emits his seed in an unworthy vessel spoils his seed. Woe to him who spoils his seed!⁴⁵

“Now, if this is so with other people, how much more so with the high priest, who stands below corresponding to the pattern above!⁴⁶

“What is meant by *among his people* (Leviticus 21:15)? *Among his people*, surely! It is written above: *A widow or a divorcée or a defiled whore, these he shall not take as wife* (ibid., 14), and it is written *He shall not profane his seed among his people* (ibid., 15). בעמיו (*Be-ammav*), *Among his people*—the verse should read בהן (*ba-hen*), *within them*; why *among his people*? Well, this matter is a disgrace *among his people*, a defect. Therefore it is written *rather, a virgin*

from his people he shall take as wife (ibid., 14)—*from his people*, all corresponding to the pattern above.⁴⁷

“*For I am YHVH who sanctifies him.* What is meant by *who sanctifies him*? Well, I am He who *sanctifies* him every day, and therefore he must not spoil his seed nor may any defect be found in him.

“Alternatively, *for I am YHVH who sanctifies him.* What is meant by *who sanctifies him*? I wish to sanctify him so that he may be entirely holy, so that the Holy One may be served by a holy one.

“Come and see: The blessed Holy One [90b] is to be served by the priest, who should be holy when he comes to serve. And in order for the blessed Holy One to be served by someone holy, the priest is served by someone pure, who is sanctified by his purity. Who is that? The Levites. Another person is to be served by another holy one, so that all may be in holiness to serve the blessed Holy One. Happy are Israel in this world and in the world that is coming, for of them is written *I set you apart from the peoples to be Mine* (Leviticus 20:26)! How separated are Israel from all in holiness, as is written: *You shall hallow yourselves and become holy, for I, YHVH, am holy!*”⁴⁸

He opened again, saying, “*Salvation is YHVH’s! Upon Your people Your blessing. Selah* (Psalms 3:9). *Salvation is YHVH’s!*—we have learned as follows: Happy are Israel, for wherever they are exiled, *Shekhinah* is exiled among them...! And when they come forth from exile, whose redemption will it be? That of Israel or *Shekhinah* or the blessed Holy One? This has been established by various verses, and here: *Salvation is YHVH’s, surely! When? Upon Your people Your blessing*—when the blessed Holy One shows His care for Israel, bringing them forth from exile and treating them kindly, then *Salvation is YHVH’s, surely!* Thus we have learned that the blessed Holy One will return with Israel from exile, as is written: ושב יהוה אלהיך את שבותך (Ve-shav YHVH Elohekha et shevutekha), *YHVH your God will return with your*

captivity, and have compassion on you. He will return and gather you (Deuteronomy 30:3)."⁴⁹

No man of your seed throughout their generations in whom there is a defect shall come forward to offer [the food of his God] (Leviticus 21:17). Rabbi Yitshak said, "Because he is blemished, he is forbidden to serve, and it has been established that one who is blemished has no faith, and that blemish bears witness against him. All the more so a priest, who must be perfect, a greater master of faith than all, as has been established."⁵⁰

Rabbi El'azar was sitting in his father-in-law's castle, saying, "The castle's dripping entails advice."⁵¹

Just then, a man passed by who had a defect in one eye. His father-in-law said, "Let's ask this fellow."

[Rabbi El'azar] replied, "He is blemished and not trustworthy."⁵²

He said, "Let us pose a question to him."⁵³

They came and asked him, "Who is the hottest dish in the world?"⁵⁴

He replied, "A rich man. But as for pulling out—in this, I am best of all."⁵⁵

Rabbi El'azar said, "From his words it is obvious that he has no faith and is not trustworthy. Come and see: The blessed Holy One said, '*For no man in whom there is a defect shall come forward* (Leviticus 21:18),' because supernal holiness does not settle in a blemished place."

He opened, saying, "*For Torah and testimony; surely they will speak according to this word* (Isaiah 8:20). *For Torah and testimony*—who is *Torah* and who is *testimony*? Well, *Torah* is Written Torah, and *testimony* is Oral Torah, which does not abide in a blemished place, since it is built on Written Torah."⁵⁶

"It is written: *Bind up the testimony, seal Torah among My disciples* (Isaiah 8:16). *Bind up the testimony*—Oral Torah, for there the bundle of life is bound, and with *the*

testimony the knot of supernal life is tied, all becoming one.⁵⁷

“From there below, ways and paths diverge, as is written: *and from there it divides* (Genesis 2:10). From there, ways branch through all worlds.⁵⁸

“*Seal Torah among My disciples. Seal Torah*—where is sealing of Torah, who is Written Torah? *Among My disciples*—the prophets, as is said: *He set up the pillar on the right and named it Jachin, and he set up the pillar on the left and named it Boaz* (1 Kings 7:21). From there, ways spread to faithful prophets, and these stand firm for the body of six aspects, as is written: *His thighs, pillars of שש (shesh), marble, set upon pedestals of gold* (Song of Songs 5:15).⁵⁹

“All stands only in completeness, and holiness of all settles only in perfection. Uniting with one another, all is complete, all is one, with no place blemished. Thus Assembly of Israel is called שָׁלֵם (*shalem*), *complete*, as is said: *Melchizedek king of Shalem, Salem* (Genesis 14:18); שָׁלֵם (ve-Shalem), *In Salem, was His abode* (Psalms 76:3).⁶⁰

“Thus all abides only in a complete place, and so *no man in whom there is a defect shall come forward* (Leviticus 21:18)—just as a sacrifice with a blemish cannot be offered. Why? As is written: *for it will not be accepted favorably for you* (ibid. 22:20).⁶¹

“Now, you might say, ‘But the blessed Holy One dwells only in a broken place, in a broken vessel, as is written: *and with the crushed and lowly in spirit...* (Isaiah 57:15).’ Well, such a place is more complete than all, for he humbles himself so that grandeur of all may settle upon him, supernal grandeur—this is complete. But it is not written *and with [91a] the blind or broken or disfigured or deformed*; rather, *and with the crushed and lowly in spirit*. Whoever humbles himself, the blessed Holy One raises up.⁶²

“Therefore, the priest who stands below corresponding to the pattern above must be more complete than all and

not appear blemished; so Scripture warns the priests, as is written: *No man of your seed throughout their generations in whom there is a defect [shall come forward to offer the food of his God]* (Leviticus 21:17)."

He opened again, saying, "*When you present the blind for sacrifice—it is not evil! When you present the lame or sick—it is not evil!* (Malachi 1:8). Now, did the blessed Holy One say *It is not evil*? If so, it is good! However, the end of the verse demonstrates that in those days Israel used to appoint blemished priests over the altar and to serve in the Sanctuary, saying, 'What does it matter to the blessed Holy One if it is this one or another?' It was they who said *It is not evil*. And the blessed Holy One answered them with their own words, saying, 'Israel, you say that when the blemished offer sacrifices to worship Me *it is not evil*. What does it matter to the blessed Holy One?'

"What is written at the end of the verse? *Just offer it to your governor: Will he accept you? Will he show you favor?* (Malachi 1:8)—'If any of you wish to offer him a gift, do you send it by one who is defective, or not? *Will he accept you? Will he show you favor* for this gift? All the more so, when you present before Me a blemished person to offer a gift, this gift of yours will be given to the dogs.' For surely, a person who is blemished is entirely defective, defective in faith. Therefore, *no man in whom there is a defect shall come forward...* (Leviticus 21:18)."⁶³

Rabbi Yose said, "The blessed Holy One will one day perfect Israel, making them entirely whole, with none who are blemished among them, so that they will be the adornment of the world, just as a person's garments are the adornment of his body—as is written: *They will stand like a garment* (Job 38:14)."⁶⁴

"Alternatively, when they awaken from the dust, they will rise as they entered. If they entered lame or blind, they will rise lame or blind—in the same 'garment'—so that no one may say it is another who has awoken. Afterward, the

blessed Holy One will heal them, and they will be whole in His presence; then the world will be completely whole; and then, *on that day YHVH will be one and His Name one* (Zechariah 14:9).⁶⁵

When an ox or a sheep or a goat is born, it shall be seven days under its mother, and from the eighth day onward it is acceptable as a fire offering to YHVH (Leviticus 22:27).

Rabbi Yose opened, *“Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains; Your judgments, the great abyss; human and beast You deliver, O YHVH* (Psalms 36:7). This

verse should be contemplated. Come and see: *Righteousness*—a holy supernal crown.⁶⁶

“Like the mighty mountains—like those supernal holy mountains called ‘mountains of pure balsam.’ Because She ascends to be joined with them above, all Her judgments are evenly balanced for everyone, for that Judgment contains no Compassion.⁶⁷

*“משפטיך (Mishpatekha), Your judgments, the great abyss—משפט (Mishpat), Justice, which is Compassion, descends to rectify the world, showing mercy for all, rendering Judgment with Compassion to establish the world sweetly.*⁶⁸

“Since He is Compassion, Human and beast You deliver, O YHVH—all evenly balanced.⁶⁹

“Human and beast—as has been established: one who is *human* and conducts himself like a *beast*.⁷⁰

“Human and beast—the law for a *human* and the law for a *beast* are one. For a *human*—*eight days old every male among you shall be circumcised* (Genesis 17:12). For a *beast*—*it shall be seven days under its mother, and from the eighth day onward it is acceptable as a fire offering to YHVH*, since it has experienced one Sabbath, as has been established.”⁷¹

Rabbi Hiyya opened, “*YHVH, when You came forth from Seir, when You strode from the field of Edom, the earth trembled, the heavens poured...* (Judges 5:4). Come and see: Happy are Israel in this world and in the world that is coming, for the blessed Holy One delights in them and they cleave to Him and are called holy, Nation of *YHVH*. He has even elevated them to a supernal rung called Holiness, as is written: *Holiness is Israel to YHVH* (Jeremiah 2:3), as we have established. For from the eighth day the people of Israel cleave to His Name and are His, inscribed with His Name below, as is written: *Who is like Your people Israel, a unique nation on earth?* (1 Chronicles 17:21). All the other nations do not cleave to Him nor follow His laws, and the holy insignia is lacking from them, so [91b] they cleave to the unholy Other Side.⁷²

“Come and see: When the blessed Holy One wished to give the Torah to Israel, He summoned the people of Esau and said to them, ‘Do you want to receive the Torah?’ At that moment, the Holy Land quaked and sought to enter the Hollow of the Great Abyss. She said before Him, ‘Joyous splendor, two thousand years before the world was created—will I be snatched away to the uncircumcised who are not inscribed with Your covenant?’⁷³

“The blessed Holy One replied, ‘O throne, throne, may a thousand such nations perish, yet the covenant of holy Torah will not be presented to them!’ As is written: *YHVH, when You came forth from Seir, when You strode from the field of Edom, the earth trembled*—surely, for Torah, who is the holy covenant, is given only to one who bears the holy covenant. And whoever conveys Torah to one who is uncircumcised betrays two covenants: the covenant of Torah and the covenant of Righteous One and Assembly of Israel, for Torah is given to this place and to no other.”⁷⁴

Rabbi Abba said, “He betrays three supernal places—betraying Torah, betraying the Prophets, and betraying the Writings. He betrays Torah, as is written: *This is the Torah*

that Moses set before the Children of Israel (Deuteronomy 4:44). He betrays the Prophets, as is written: *All your sons are disciples of YHVH* (Isaiah 54:13)—they are *disciples of YHVH*, not others. And it is written: *Seal Torah among My disciples* (ibid. 8:16)—among them, not among others. He betrays the Writings, as is written: *He established a testimony in Jacob, and ordained a teaching in Israel, which He commanded to our fathers to make them known to their children* (Psalms 78:5). And it is written: *Surely the righteous will acclaim Your name* (ibid. 140:14). Who are *the righteous*? Righteous One and Assembly of Israel. For whoever is not circumcised and has not entered their covenant must not acclaim His Holy Name, which is Torah.”⁷⁵

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “Once the blessed Holy One revealed Himself on Mount Sinai to give Torah to Israel, the earth turned calm and tranquil again, as is written: *The earth feared, and was still* (Psalms 76:9).⁷⁶

“Come and see: When a person is born, a spirit from above is not appointed over him until he is circumcised. Once he is circumcised, an arousal from above is roused upon him. If, as he grows, he succeeds in delving into Torah, a further arousal is roused upon him. If he succeeds in performing commandments of Torah, an even further arousal is roused upon him. If he succeeds in becoming married and engendering children and teaching them the ways of the Holy King, then he is a complete person, totally complete.⁷⁷

“However, as for an animal who is born—the same force it will possess at the end it possesses at the moment of its birth, when this is appointed over it. Therefore it is written: [*When*] *an ox or a sheep or a goat [is born]* (Leviticus 22:27)—it is not written *a calf or a lamb or a kid*, but rather *an ox or a sheep or a goat*, demonstrating that what it will possess at the end it has at birth.⁷⁸

*“It shall be seven days under its mother (Leviticus 22:27)—so that the force may be stabilized and established within it. How does it become established within? When one Sabbath settles upon it. Otherwise, it is not established; and furthermore, it is sickened by the filth of its mother. Once that force is established within it, it is acceptable as a fire offering to YHVH (ibid.), by the fulfillment of one Sabbath passing over it.”*⁷⁹

“As for a person, by the fulfillment of one Sabbath, the arousal of this world and his force are established within him. After he is circumcised, that higher one is roused, and Assembly of Israel passes over him, sees him with that holy insignia, and is aroused upon him, and a spirit of that holy world settles upon him, as is said: *I passed by you and saw you wallowing in your blood, and I said to you, ‘In your blood, live!’ And I said to you, ‘In your blood, live!’* (Ezekiel 16:6).⁸⁰

“There, when Israel went out of Egypt—where the blood of the paschal lamb and the blood of circumcision appeared among them—it is written בדםיך (*be-damayikh*), *In your bloods, live!* Here, why *In your bloods, live?* Well, there are two bloods: the blood of מילה (*milah*), circumcision, and the blood of פריעה (*peri’ah*), uncovering—the one of circumcision pertains to Assembly of Israel, whereas the one of uncovering pertains to Righteous One of the World. These are two bloods through which a person attains existence in the world that is coming, as is written: *In your bloods, live!*”⁸¹

Rabbi Shim’on said, “It is written: *The secret of YHVH is for those who revere Him, and to them He reveals His covenant* (Psalms 25:14). *The secret of YHVH is for those who revere Him—Assembly of Israel. And to them He reveals His covenant—Righteous One of the World, [92a] in a single bond.*⁸²

“יוד (Yod)—three letters, fullness of all. Beginning of all: ם (yod), highest of all. ן (Vav)—middle one, perfection of all aspects, conveying all spirits; upon it depends faith. ד (Dalet)—Garden, bundle of life.⁸³

“This letter is small, fullness of all. This letter is enclosed on all sides. Emerging, it emerges like a king with his soldiers. Returning afterward, ם (yod) alone—within it, something is concealed; within, emerging; closed and open.⁸⁴

“אָה (He)—fullness of all, above and below, as has been said. ה (He) is well known. א (Alef) is יוד (yod), perfection of three letters in the Head, concealed in ם (yod), although א (alef) has already been established. All is one entity; perfection of the Holy Name is perfection of above and below. Thus sometimes אָה (he) carries א (alef), when She is adorned with crowns.⁸⁵

“Come and see: Every single letter of the Holy Name reflects the fullness of the entire Name. יוד (Yod), as has been said, fullness of all.

“אָה (He), fullness of all, even if not with א (alef)—ה (he) alone, as has been said, is in its image perfection of all.⁸⁶

“וּאָו (Vav), whether in one aspect or another, is fullness of all. הָוּ (Vav, he)—greater perfection, crowning all.⁸⁷

“הָ (He)—all is one, as we have already educed.⁸⁸

“Come and see: וְהָיָה (Ve-hayah), *It shall be, seven days* (Leviticus 22:27)—הָוּ יוד (vav, he, yod, he), letters engraved. Vav, he—seven days included in one. Yod, he—seven days. Yod—one, totality of all. He—three: She and two sons. In one son, two fathers included, making six; a daughter, one female, making seven. This implies that supernal הָ (he) is totality of six; הָוּ (yod, he), seven—corresponding to what is written: *seven days and seven days: fourteen days* (1 Kings 8:65).⁸⁹

“וְהָיָה (Ve-hayah), *It shall be, seven days under its mother—under its mother seven days* are adorned, as is written: *Yours, O YHVH, are הגדולה והגבורה (ha-gedullah ve-ha-gevurah), the greatness and the power...* (1 Chronicles 29:11). Thus,

seven days below, for the glory of Supernal Mother; *under its mother*, below.⁹⁰

“It is written: *While עקרה (aqarah), the barren one, bears seven (1 Samuel 2:5)—עקרא (iqqara), essence, of the whole house bears seven: seven days of the Festival. And the mother of many dwindles (ibid.)—offerings of the Festival, diminishing daily.*⁹¹

“Come and see: These ascend on high, whereas those descend below, as is said: *If you soar as high as the eagle, if you make your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down—declares YHVH (Obadiah 1:4).* And Israel ascends from below upward, as is written: *Your seed shall be like the dust of the earth (Genesis 28:14), and it is written I will multiply your seed like the stars of heaven (ibid. 26:4).* Afterward, they rise above all and cleave to the highest place of all, as is written: *You, cleaving to YHVH your God, are alive every one of you today! (Deuteronomy 4:4).*”⁹²

An ox or sheep—it and its young you shall not slaughter on the same day (Leviticus 22:28).

Rabbi Yose said, “According to its translation: *her and her young*, for the mother’s essence is to know her

young one, who follows her and not the father—and we don’t know who he is.”⁹³

You shall not slaughter on the same day. Rabbi Yehudah asked, “Why? If you say because of the animal’s grief, then let us slaughter this one in one house and that one in another, or this one now and that one later.”⁹⁴

Rabbi Yose replied, “There are some who permit that—but not so; rather, *on the same day*, literally!”⁹⁵

“Come and see! We have learned: ‘Fasting is as fine for a dream as fire for tow.’ And the essence of a fast is on that very day, not on another day. Why? Because you cannot find a day below that is not ruled by another, supernal day, and we have learned that when one is fasting to avert a dream,

that day does not pass until the decree is annulled; but if he postpones it to another day, there is another dominion, and no day encroaches on its fellow day.⁹⁶

“Similarly, over every single day there is appointed a supernal day above, and one must not spoil that day, so that it not be defective in the presence of other days.⁹⁷

“We have learned: By an action below is aroused an action above. If a person performs an act fittingly, [92b] a force is aroused fittingly above. If one does kindness in the world, kindness above is aroused and settles on that day, which is crowned with it on account of him. If one conducts himself compassionately below, compassion is aroused upon that day, which is crowned with compassion on account of him. And that day presides over him, becoming his protector in time of need.⁹⁸

“The same applies in reverse, entirely: If a person commits an act of cruelty, so he arouses upon that day, spoiling it; and afterward it looms over him cruelly, to eliminate him from the world. With the very measure by which one measures, it is measured out to him.⁹⁹

“We have learned that cruelty is withheld from Israel more than from all other nations; and no such act should appear anywhere among them, for many watchful eyes are upon a person, alert for that action. Happy is one who displays a worthy act below, for the matter depends entirely on action, arousing something else!”¹⁰⁰

Rabbi Shim'on opened, “*Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt, and Jacob said to his sons, ‘Why do you keep looking at one another?’* (Genesis 42:1). This verse contains a mystery of wisdom and we should examine it, for its beginning does not match the end, nor its end the beginning!”¹⁰¹

“But come and see: When the blessed Holy One wants to punish the world with famine, He does not place the matter in the hand of a herald—for all other punishments of

the world are proclaimed by a herald before descending to the world, whereas this punishment is not delivered to a herald—rather, the blessed Holy One Himself proclaims and announces it, as is written: *For YHVH has proclaimed a famine* (2 Kings 8:1).¹⁰²

“From that moment, other officials are appointed over the world, controlling the markets. It is forbidden for anyone who has plenty to show himself in public and display his satiety, for he thereby indicates a defect above and defies the word of the King. It is as if he removes the King’s officials from their position.¹⁰³

“Therefore, Jacob said to his sons, למה תתראו (*Lammah titra’u*), *Why do you show yourselves? Why do you cause a defect above, defying the word of the King and all those appointed by His proclamation? Rather, Look, I have heard that there is grain in Egypt. Go down there* (Genesis 42:2), and there show yourselves replete. Do not impair the celestial Family!¹⁰⁴

“Come and see: Jacob had so much grain, but he simply wanted his sons to be virtuous and for no defect to occur through his action.”¹⁰⁵

He opened again, saying, “Aaron raised ידיו (*yadav*), *his hands, toward the people and blessed them* (Leviticus 9:22). We have learned: It is written ידו (*yado*), *his hand*, for one should raise the right above the left. Why? To display action below so that action above may be aroused.¹⁰⁶

“It is written: *You shall sound a blasting shofar; in the seventh month on the tenth of the month, on the Day of Atonement, you shall sound a shofar throughout your land* (Leviticus 25:9). Why שופר תרועה (*shofar teru’ah*), *a blasting shofar*? Well, a *shofar* that smashes chains, breaking the power over all slaves. One must display a shofar that is straight and not curved, demonstrating freedom for all, for the day is decisive. In all things one must display action; and therefore a shofar and not a horn, to indicate which place.¹⁰⁷

“Happy are Israel in this world and in the world that is coming, for they know how to cleave to the Holy King and simulate power above and draw their Lord’s holiness upon them. Thus it is written *Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people delivered by YHVH!* (Deuteronomy 33:29), and it is written *You, cleaving to YHVH your God, are alive every one of you today!* (ibid. 4:4).” [93a]

*These are the appointed times of YHVH, sacred convocations—these are My appointed times.*¹⁰⁸

was morning, one day (Genesis 1:5). *God called the light Day*—we have learned: The light that existed at first shone from one end of the world to the other. When the blessed Holy One gazed upon the wicked who would eventually arise in the world, He treasured it away for the righteous in the world that is coming, as is written: *The light of the wicked is withheld* (Job 38:15), and it is written *Light is sown for the righteous* (Psalms 97:11).¹⁰⁹

“Come and see: *God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night*; and we have learned: *Let there be light!* (Genesis 1:3)—a light that already was. Now here, you might say, ‘*Light* that is *Day* alone.’ But the verse goes on to say, *and the darkness He called Night*. And if you say, ‘Each one on its own,’ [93b] the verse goes on to say, *There was evening and there was morning, one day*. For there is no day without night, and no night without day, and it is called *one* only in single coupling. From here we learn that the blessed Holy One and Assembly of Israel are called *one*, and each without the other is not called *one*.¹¹⁰

“Come and see: Since Assembly of Israel is now in exile, the blessed Holy One, as it were, is not called *one*. When will He be called *one*? When Israel emerges from exile, and Assembly of Israel returns to Her place to couple

Rabbi Yitshak opened, “*God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. There was evening and there*

with the blessed Holy One, as is written: *On that day YHVH will be one and His Name one* (Zechariah 14:9). Thus, *There was evening and there was morning, one day*—each without the other is not called *one*.¹¹¹

“Come and see: מועדי יהוה (Mo’adei YHVH), *The appointed times of YHVH*—uniting all in one place, all becoming completely one, and Israel below in single coupling, *one nation on the earth* (2 Samuel 7:23). Granted that the blessed Holy One and Assembly of Israel are called *one*, but Israel below, corresponding to the pattern above, how are they called *one*?¹¹²

“By Jerusalem below, Israel is called *one*. How do we know this? As is written: *one nation בארץ (ba-arets), with the land—with the land they are one nation; with her they are called one*, not by themselves. For it would be sufficient to say *Who is like Your people Israel, one nation?* But they are called *one* only *ba-arets, with the land*—coupling with this *land*, corresponding to the pattern above. So all is interlinked in single coupling. Happy is the share of Israel!¹¹³

“*Six days work may be done* (Leviticus 23:3)—this has already been discussed and established.”¹¹⁴

[2:32a] Rabbi Yose and Rabbi Ḥiyya were walking on the way. Rabbi Yose said to Rabbi Ḥiyya, “Why are you silent? For the way is enhanced only by words of Torah.”¹¹⁵

Rabbi Ḥiyya moaned and wept. He opened, saying, “*Sarai was barren, she had no child* (Genesis 11:30). Woe for this! Woe for that time!”

Rabbi Yose said to him, “Why are you sad about this passage? After all, she later gave birth and had a son of holy stock.”¹¹⁶

He replied, “You see and I see. From the mouth of Rabbi Shim’on, I heard a word, so I weep.”¹¹⁷

He said to him, “What is it?”

He replied, “Woe for that time! For look, because Sarah was hindered, what is written? *Sarai said to Abram, ‘Come to bed with my slave-girl. Perhaps I will obtain a son through her’...* (Genesis 16:2). Consequently, the time was ripe for Hagar to displace her mistress and she had a son by Abraham.[118](#)

“Abraham said, *If only Ishmael might live by Your favor!* (Genesis 17:18). Even though the blessed Holy One gladdened him about Isaac, Abraham clung to Ishmael, until the blessed Holy One replied to him, saying, *As for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him* (ibid., 20). Later, he was circumcised, entering the holy covenant before Isaac emerged into the world.[119](#)

“Come and see: For four hundred years, the Prince of Ishmael stood pleading before the blessed Holy One, saying, ‘One who is circumcised, does he not have a share in Your Name?’[120](#)

“He replied, ‘Yes.’

“He said, ‘Well, what about Ishmael, who was circumcised? Furthermore, he was circumcised at the age of thirteen! Why doesn’t he have a share in You like Isaac?’[121](#)

“He replied, ‘One was circumcised properly and fittingly, and the other not so. Furthermore, these cleave to Me fittingly at eight days, whereas those are distant from Me.’[122](#)

“He said, ‘Even so, since he was circumcised, shouldn’t they have a reward for his sake?’

“Woe for that time when Ishmael was born into the world and circumcised! What did the blessed Holy One do? He distanced the Ishmaelites from supernal cleaving and gave them a share below in the Holy Land because of their circumcision. The Ishmaelites are destined to rule over the Holy Land, when it is entirely empty, for a long time, just as their circumcision is empty and incomplete. And they will

delay the Israelites from returning to their place until the merit of Ishmael has been exhausted.¹²³

“The Ishmaelites will provoke wars in the world, and the Edomites will gather against them, waging war with them—on the sea, on dry land, and close to Jerusalem. One will prevail over the other, and the Land will not be delivered to the Edomites.¹²⁴

“At that time, a nation from the end of the earth will be roused against wicked Rome and wage war against her for three months. Nations will gather there and they will fall into their hands, until all the Edomites from all ends of the earth gather. Then the blessed Holy One will be roused against them, as is written: *For YHVH has a slaughter in Bozrah, a great butchery in the land of Edom* (Isaiah 34:6).¹²⁵

“Afterward, what is written? *To seize the corners of the land, that the wicked be shaken out of it* (Job 38:13)—He will eradicate Ishmaelites from [the Land] and smash all powers above, and there will remain no power over any nation of the world other than the power of Israel alone, as is said: *YHVH is your shade at your right hand* (Psalms 121:5). For the Holy Name is on the right and Torah is on the right, so all depends on the right. And we have learned that one should raise the right above the left, as we have established, for it is written: *From His right hand, a fiery law for them* (Deuteronomy 33:2). And of the time to come, it is written *Save with Your right hand and answer me* (Psalms 60:7).”¹²⁶

[3:93b] *These are the appointed times of YHVH, מִקְרָאֵי קֹדֶשׁ (miqra'ei qodesh), sacred convocations, which you shall proclaim at their*

Rabbi Yitshak opened, “*Of You, my heart said, ‘Seek My face.’ Your face, YHVH, I seek* (Psalms 27:8). This verse has been established by the

appointed times (Leviticus 23:4). Companions in various places, but it may be explained as follows:

King David spoke this on behalf of Assembly of Israel, facing the Holy King. What did he say? *Of You, my heart said*—for Your sake, *my heart said* to the inhabitants of the world, admonishing them. *My heart*—for he is linked to it, and he said this for the sake of the Holy King.¹²⁷

“*Seek My face*—diadems of the Holy King, crowns of the King; for He is joined to them, and they to Him. They are His Name, and He and His Name are one. So David said, *Your face, YHVH, I seek*—as is said: *Search for YHVH and His strength, seek His face continually* (Psalms 105:4).¹²⁸

“Come and see: David was more qualified to utter song on behalf of Assembly of Israel than all other inhabitants of the world, and to convey the words of Assembly of Israel to the King.¹²⁹

“Alternatively, *Of You, my heart said*—for Your sake, *my heart said* to the inhabitants of the world, ‘*Seek My face*’: these are the holidays and festivals, all of which [*my heart*] invited to the place called *holiness*, in order to crown each one of them on its day and in its time, so that all might draw from that deepest depth from which issue streams and springs. Therefore it is written: מִקְרָאֵי קֹדֶשׁ (*miqra’ei qodesh*), *called to holiness*—invited to that place known as *holiness*, to be crowned by it and absorbed within it, so that all may be joined as one, joy prevailing among them.”¹³⁰

Rabbi Abba said, “*Miqra’ei qodesh, called by holiness*—invited by *holiness*. When invited by this, they are invited by the flowing, gushing stream.¹³¹

“This may be compared to a king who invites people to his banquet, lavishing upon them all kinds of food in the world, opening for them jugs of wine, attractive and delicious. For so it should be: whoever invites, invites for food and drink.

“So, *miqra’ei qodesh, called by holiness*—since they are invited to a feast of *holiness*, they are invited for fine preserved wine, as is said: *For your caresses are fine, deriving from wine* (Song of Songs 1:2). Thus it is written *miqra’ei qodesh, called by holiness.*¹³²

“*Which you shall call at their appointed times.* We have learned as follows: ‘It is written *People of holiness shall you be to Me* (Exodus 22:30)—Israel below are called *people of holiness*. Once [the festivals] are invited by *holiness* above, you, *people of holiness* below, should invite them, preparing a feast and rejoicing; for this befits you, so that you may be called *people of holiness*, and all of them may be [94a] invited in all aspects of *holiness*, above and below.’”¹³³

Alternatively, *These are* מועדי יהוה (*mo’adei YHVH*), *the appointed times of YHVH*. What is meant by *mo’adei YHVH, the appointed times of YHVH?*

Rabbi Shim’on said, “They are from *YHVH*, to whom they are linked from below to above, from above to below—all linked to Him, all poised to join in a single bond, the bond of the King. Why? Just as the King inherits Father and Mother, adhering to *holiness* and crowned by them, so all those who are connected to the King have to appear in that supernal place called *holiness*, so that all will join as one through the supernal King. So they are called *mo’adei YHVH, banding together with YHVH*, and then מקראי קדש (*miqra’ei qodesh*), *called by holiness*, for with them the King is crowned.¹³⁴

“*Which you shall call at their appointed times.* Israel has two portions in them. From the aspect of the King, Israel has a sublime share, as is written: *You, cleaving to YHVH your God, [are alive every one of you today!]* (Deuteronomy 4:4); *Indeed, YHVH’s share is His people* (ibid. 32:9). From the supernal aspect of *holiness*, Israel has a sublime share. So you are worthy of inviting them and arranging before them a joyous meal and delighting in

them. Whoever invites someone should display joy, a radiant face, tending to that guest.¹³⁵

“This may be compared to a king who invites an honored guest. He says to those in his palace, ‘All other days each of you is in his house, one engaged in his craft, another in merchandise, another in his field—except for my special day, when everyone presents himself to participate in my joy. Now I have invited an exalted, honored guest. You must not occupy yourselves with work or trading or grazing or laboring in the fields; rather, all of you shall assemble as on my special day, and prepare yourselves to greet that guest with radiant faces, joy, and praise. Prepare splendid meals for him, so that his welcome will be complete in every respect.’¹³⁶

“Similarly, the blessed Holy One said to Israel, ‘My children, all other days you are engaged in work and trade, except for My special day. Now I have invited an exalted, honored guest. Welcome him with radiant faces. Invite him; prepare superb meals for him with well-set tables, as on My special day.’ Thus, *You shall call them at their appointed times.*¹³⁷

“Come and see: When the people of Israel below rejoice—offering praise to the blessed Holy One, preparing tables, adorning themselves with glorious garments—the supernal angels say, ‘Why is Israel doing this?’

“The blessed Holy One replies, ‘They have an exalted guest today.’

“They say to Him, ‘Is he not Yours, from that place called *holiness*?’¹³⁸

“He replies, ‘Are they not *holiness*, and called *holiness*? It is fitting for them to invite My guest—first, from My aspect, since they cleave to Me; and second, from the aspect of *holiness*, as is written: *Holiness is Israel to YHVH* (Jeremiah 2:3). Since Israel is called *holiness*, the guest is surely theirs, for the invitation of this guest comes from *holiness*, as is written: *מקרא קדש* (*miqra qodesh*), *called by*

holiness (Leviticus 23:3); מִקְרָאֵי קֹדֶשׁ (*miqra'ei qodesh*), called by *holiness* (ibid., 2).¹³⁹

“They all open, saying, ‘Happy the people who has it so, happy the people whose God is YHVH! (Psalms 144:15).’

“There are three invited by *holiness*, no more: Festival of *Matsot*, Festival of *Shavu'ot*, Festival of *Sukkot*.”¹⁴⁰

Rabbi Abba said to him, “Isn’t Sabbath invited by *holiness*?”

He replied, “No, from two aspects. First, because it is surely called *holiness*, as is written: *Observe the Sabbath, for it is holiness to you* (Exodus 31:14). And second, because Sabbath does not need to be invited, since [*holiness*] inheres in it—an actual inheritance of holiness, not by invitation. So all of them are invited to *holiness* and link themselves with Sabbath and are adorned by it, whereas Sabbath is adorned by [*holiness*]. Thus, Sabbath is not invited.¹⁴¹

“This may be compared to a son who enters his father and mother’s house, and eats and drinks whenever he wishes.¹⁴²

“This may be compared to a king who had an only son, the beloved of his soul. He appointed companions for him to protect him and befriend him. The king said, ‘It is fitting to invite my son’s companions, to demonstrate my son’s honor and my love for him.’ He invited them. The son did not need to be invited, since he could go into his father’s house and eat and drink whenever he wished. As is written: *Who is like You among the gods, O YHVH? Who is like You, mighty in holiness?* (Exodus 15:11) [94b] —surely, like a son who grasps his father; *mighty in holiness*, not invited by *holiness*.”¹⁴³

*Six days work may be done, but on the seventh day, [a Sabbath of complete rest...] (Leviticus 23:3). Six days—what are they doing?*¹⁴⁴

Rabbi Yose said, "It is written: *Six days YHVH made heaven and earth* (Exodus 20:11), and it is not written *in six days*, as has been established. Every single day did its work, and they are called workdays."¹⁴⁵

Rabbi Yitshak said, "If so, why are they called 'six profane days'? Why profane?"¹⁴⁶

Rabbi Yose replied, "Because now the world is conducted by their agents; so they are called profane days."¹⁴⁷

Rabbi Hiyya said, "Because work is permitted on them—and because they are not called holy, and whoever is not called holy is called profane. This is why the Companions instituted *Havdalah* 'between the holy and the profane.' Why *Havdalah*, separation, here? Well, Holiness is an entity on its own, and the rest derive from it; so these are for work and those are for observance—and if observance pertains, they are invited by Holiness."¹⁴⁸

Rabbi Yehudah said, "The joy and observance of the Sabbath day is absolute, because this day is adorned with Father and Mother, and holiness is added to its holiness. So this day is joy of those above and below; all delight in it. Filled with blessings in all worlds; all are nourished by it. On this day, rest for those above and below; on this day, rest for the wicked in Hell."¹⁴⁹

"This may be compared to a king who arranged a wedding celebration for his only son. He adorned him with the finest crowns, and appointed him king over all. On this day, joy for all. A certain officer in charge of punishing people had in custody men condemned to death and men condemned to flogging. In honor of this royal day of joy, he abandoned his punishments and observed the joy of the king.

"Similarly, this day is the wedding celebration of the King and *Matronita*, joy of Father and Mother, joy of those above and below. In the joy of the King all rejoice, feeling no sorrow. Thus it is written *Call the Sabbath 'delight'*

(Isaiah 58:13). What is *delight*? Well, *delight* exists only above, where supernal Holiness dwells, as is said: *Then you will delight* לַעֲלֹה (al), upon, YHVH (ibid., 14)—for this *delight* is al, above, YHVH. This day, the King's wedding celebration, is adorned with the crown of *delight*, as is written: *Call the Sabbath 'delight'*—which does not occur on any other day.¹⁵⁰

“On this day the King's sons should prepare three meals, arranging the table in honor of the King, as we have established. When a festival or holiday falls on it, a person should not arrange two tables for each meal, one for Sabbath and one for the guest, because it is written *At the king's table he always eats* (2 Samuel 9:13)—there is plenty at the King's table for the guest who has come. So one should prepare a full table for the King, and He will give some to His guest.”¹⁵¹

Rabbi El'azar said, “When a guest appears at the third Sabbath meal, do we abandon it or not? If we don't abandon it, the guest is thereby rejected from the King's table. If we do abandon it, there is a defect in the King's meals.”¹⁵²

Rabbi Shim'on his father replied, “This may be compared to a king to whom a guest comes, and he takes the food placed before him and transfers it to the guest. So even though the king does not eat with him, [the guest] eats of the king's food, given to him by the king. All this because he is the royal guest.”¹⁵³

“In the house of Rav Hamnuna Sava, they do not pay attention to a guest at this time; afterward they arrange a table for the guest.”¹⁵⁴

“On this day speaking is forbidden, as is written: [*if you honor it...*] *by not pursuing your affairs or speaking a word* (Isaiah 58:13), and we have learned: It is written *your affairs*, because all faith is bound to this day.”¹⁵⁵

Rabbi El'azar said to him, “How can we not transfer the King's meal to the guest? After all, when the fourteenth [of

Nisan] falls on Sabbath, the King's meal is transferred to *Pesah*, even though it is not a guest!"¹⁵⁶

He replied, "As I said, if he is His guest that whole day, one can transfer it; otherwise one cannot. Now, if we say that when the fourteenth falls [95a] on Sabbath, the King's meal is superseded by the *Pesah* meal—well, *Pesah* is different, superseding the Sabbath meal in several aspects. First, because of *matsah* and bitter herbs, since a person should have a strong appetite. And second, because of *Pesah*, since bread is unavailable from noon onward, and arranging a table without bread is unacceptable. Now, you might say, 'With wine.' Well, wine is permitted, because it stimulates the appetite."¹⁵⁷

"But all my life I have endeavored not to nullify a Sabbath meal when [a festival] occurs on it. On this day the Holy Apple Orchard is blessed, along with those above and below; this day is the bond of Torah."¹⁵⁸

(Rabbi Abba said, "This is what Rabbi Shim'on used to do when a Sabbath meal was transferred: he would arrange his table and engage in the Account of the Chariot, and say, 'This is the meal of the King, who is coming to dine with me!'"¹⁵⁹)

"So Sabbath is entirely worthier than all holidays and festivals, and is referred to as *קדש* (*qodesh*), *holiness*, not *קדש* *מקרא* (*miqra qodesh*), *called by holiness*."¹⁶⁰

Rabbi Yehudah said, "We refer to all the holidays as *called by holiness*, but Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are exceptions, for they are without joy, being imbued with Judgment. However, these three are invited by *holiness* for the joy of all, to delight in them with the blessed Holy One, as is written: *You shall rejoice before YHVH your God* (Deuteronomy 12:12); *You shall rejoice before YHVH your God* (ibid. 27:7).¹⁶¹

"On this day of Sabbath all sorrow, all anger, and all distress are forgotten throughout the world, for it is the

day of the King's wedding celebration, and additional souls are bestowed as in the world that is coming."[162](#)

Rabbi Yitshak said to Rabbi Yehudah, "It is written: *Remember the Sabbath day to hallow it* (Exodus 20:8), and we have learned: 'Remember it over wine.' Why over wine?"[163](#)

He replied, "Because wine is joy of Torah, and wine of Torah is joy of all. This wine delights the King; this wine adorns the King with His crowns, as is written: *O daughters of Zion, go out and gaze upon King Solomon, [upon the crown with which his mother crowned him on the day of his wedding, on the day of his heart's delight]* (Song of Songs 3:11).[164](#)

"We have learned: 'In all things one must demonstrate action'—for holiness does not exist without wine, as is said: *For your caresses are fine, deriving from wine* (Song of Songs 1:2)—*from wine* they become fine. Therefore, *Qiddush* of Sabbath is with wine, as has been established."[165](#)

In the first month, on the fourteenth of the month [at twilight, a Passover offering to YHVH] (Leviticus 23:5).

my dove, my perfect one! For my head is drenched with dew, my locks with sprinkles of night' (Song of Songs 5:2). *I was asleep*—Assembly of Israel said, 'I was asleep in the exile of Egypt, where My children were harshly enslaved.'[166](#)

Rabbi Hiyya opened, "I was asleep, but my heart was awake. The voice of my lover, knocking: 'Open to me, my sister, my beloved,

"*The voice of my lover, knocking*—the blessed Holy One, who said, *I have remembered My covenant* (Exodus 6:5).[167](#)

"*But my heart was awake*—to protect them so that they would not be destroyed in exile.[168](#)

“*Open to me an opening the size of the point of a needle, and I will open to you celestial gates.*’[169](#)

“*Open to me, my sister—for the opening to enter Me is in You. My children may come before Me only through You. You are the opening—unless You open Your opening, I am closed; they will not find Me. So, פתחי לי (Pithi li), Open to me—pithi li, open for me, surely!*’[170](#)

“Therefore, when David sought to enter the presence of the King, he said, *Open for me the gates of righteousness; I will enter them and praise Yah. This is the gate ליהוה (la-YHVH), to YHVH (Psalms 118:19-20)—this is surely the opening to enter before the King. This is the gate to YHVH—to find Him and cleave to Him. Thus, ‘Open to me, my sister, my beloved! For my head is drenched with dew...—to unite with You, to be with You in eternal tranquility.*’[171](#)

“When the blessed Holy One slew the Egyptians—all those He killed at midnight—casting down rungs from above and below, Israel entered the covenant of the holy sign: they were circumcised, becoming partners with Assembly of Israel and uniting with Her. Then they displayed that blood on the door. There were two bloods—one of the paschal lamb, and the other, blood of their circumcision. The mark of faith was inscribed on the door—one here and one there and one in between—as has been said, for it is written: *They shall put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel (Exodus 12:7), displaying faith.*[172](#)

“*On the fourteenth (Leviticus 23:5)—as has been said, for then one eliminates leaven and leavened stuff; and Israel escaped from an alien domain, uprooting themselves from it and uniting with matsah, [95b] the holy bond.*

“Once they were circumcised, they entered Her—until they were uncovered and their insignia was revealed; then He gave them a bond with a higher place, in the bond of faith, with the place of which is written *Look, I am about to rain down for you bread from heaven (Exodus 16:4)—from heaven, precisely! This has already been established.*[173](#)

“Come and see: *On the fourteenth*—in time of coupling, when the moon is completed by the sun, and lower crowns are not prevalent in the world. For at the renewal of the moon, evil species appear, aroused in the world; but at the time of coupling, when the moon is imbued by radiance of the sun, they all gather to one place, and holy powers of the King are aroused. Then it is written: *It is a night of watch for YHVH* (Exodus 12:42), for holy coupling occurs, and it is total watchfulness.”¹⁷⁴

Rabbi Aḥa said, “Therefore, total adornment of the Bride on that day, and at night the house is settled. Woe to those who are not members of the household when the lions come to couple as one! Woe to those who are not known to them! Therefore holy Israel prepare the house for them that whole day, and through [Israel] those who enter enter—and [Israel] rejoice, singing their joy. Happy are Israel in this world and in the world that is coming!”¹⁷⁵

Rabbi Yose said, “Why should we go to all this trouble? There is a whole verse indicating that on this night supernal holy coupling is aroused and performed, as is written: *It is a night of שמורים (shimmurim), watch, for YHVH* (Exodus 12:42)—*It is a night for YHVH*, precisely! And then it is written: *shimmurim, a watch, for all the Children of Israel* (ibid.). What is meant by *shimmurim, watches*? Two, coupling of the moon with the sun.”¹⁷⁶

“*For all the Children of Israel throughout their generations*—because from then onward they were joined and bound in the bond of the Holy Name, having come forth from an alien domain. So *on the fourteenth* they prepare themselves, remove all leaven, and enter the holy domain. Then Groom and Bride are adorned with crowns of Supernal Mother, and one must show that he is free.”¹⁷⁷

Rabbi Yose said, “Why these four cups on that night?”¹⁷⁸

Rabbi Abba replied, “As the Companions have already established: corresponding to four redemptions. But it is

put well in the Book of Rav Yeisa Sava, which states: Since holy coupling occurs on this night, coupling is by four bonds—namely four rungs, inseparable from one another during coupling—and we stimulate their joy, since we have already attained them, for whoever is linked with this attains all. Therefore this night is different from all other nights, and we should change everything, rejoicing on this night because there is joy above and below.¹⁷⁹

“He also said that we call these four ‘the four redemptions.’ Why? Because this last rung is called Redeemer, and She is called Redeemer only because of another, higher rung, situated above Her and illumining Her. And this one radiates light to Her only through those two rungs above Him. So these four are four redemptions.”¹⁸⁰

Rabbi Yehudah asked Rabbi Abba, “Seeing that it is written [*Seven days*] *no leaven shall be found in your houses* (Exodus 12:19), and joy prevails during all seven, why isn’t *Hallel* completed during all seven—as on *Sukkot*, when for nine days *Hallel* is joyously complete, every single day?”¹⁸¹

He replied, “Well spoken! But it is known that here Israel was not linked to all as fully as later. So on this night when coupling occurs and Israel was linked with that joy, we enact consummation and *Hallel* is completed. But as for those higher rungs—although all of them are present—Israel was not yet linked with them and was not uncovered, revealing the holy insignia, nor had they received Torah or entered where they later entered. Therefore, on *Sukkot* total completion appears, utter joy; but here, they had not yet attained and completion was not so prevalent. Although all seven are present, they are not revealed, and Israel was not yet linked with them fittingly.¹⁸²

“Consequently, total joy and completion of *Hallel*, on account of that portion to which they were joined. Why?

Because since on that night coupling occurs, the entire bond of all appears in the aspect of coupling, though not in the aspect of Israel. For when coupling appears in Her, these three rungs situated above Her appear; [96a] and when these appear, the whole Body appears with them. Then consummation of all, joy from all, and *Hallel* is completed, for then the moon is adorned with all. But afterward, as each day appears—and Israel had not yet attained them—*Hallel* is not complete as at other times.”[183](#)

Rabbi Yehudah said to him, “Well spoken, and certainly so! I heard this another time in the same manner, but I had forgotten.

“Now I’d like to know something else. We see on *Pesah* seven, on *Sukkot* seven, with consummation of joy on another day. Why are there not seven days of *Shavu’ot*, when here they are most fitting of all?”[184](#)

He opened, saying, “*Who is like Your people Israel, one nation on earth?* (1 Chronicles 17:21). Now, why are Israel called *one* here, rather than in another place? Well, since Scripture is expressing Israel’s praise, it calls them *one*, since their praise is always *one*. Why? Because the entire bonding of above and below exists in this place called Israel. Further, He is linked with what is above, linked with what is below, and linked with Assembly of Israel; so all is called *one*. In this place faith is manifested, and complete bonding and supernal holy union.”[185](#)

“So this day is bond of faith, binding of all. It is written: *A tree of life is she to those who grasp her* (Proverbs 3:18)—the Tree called *one*; because of those who are linked to this place, it is called so. *A tree of life* is surely called *one*, for all is within it, and its day is surely *one*, bond of all and middle of all, as is said: *The Tree of Life in the midst of the garden* (Genesis 2:9)—*in the midst*, really, in the middle; grasping all sides and bound to it. So, *Pesah*, *Sukkot*, and He in the middle, for He is the center of all. This is the praise of

Torah on this day and no more, praise of faith and bond of all.”[186](#)

Rabbi Yehudah said, “Blessed is the Compassionate One, that I asked and attained these words!”

Rabbi Yitshak said, “Israel is destined to praise the blessed Holy One with joyous song, like the praise offered by Israel on the night of *Pesah*, when Assembly of Israel is hallowed with the sanctification of the King, as is written: *You will have a song as on the night when a festival is hallowed* (Isaiah 30:29)—*as on the night when a festival is hallowed*, precisely! *Blessed be YHVH forever! Amen and amen* (Psalms 89:53).”[187](#)

On the Day of Firstfruits, when you bring an offering of new grain to YHVH in your Festival of Weeks, [a sacred convocation shall you have: no laborious work shall you do] (Numbers 28:26). Rabbi Shim'on opened, “*Then the trees of the forest will sing for joy before YHVH, for He comes to judge the earth* (1 Chronicles 16:33). Happy is the share of those who engage in Torah, who know the ways of the blessed Holy One and are linked with His Name every day! Woe to those who do not engage in Torah, for they have no share in the Holy Name and are not linked with it, neither in this world nor in the world that is coming. Whoever attains in this world attains in the world that is coming. For we have learned as follows: *Stirring the lips of sleepers* (Song of Songs 7:10)—even if they are in that world, their lips are astir there with Torah.”[188](#)

“Come and see: Until now Israel offered *the yield of the land* (Leviticus 23:39)—*the yield of the land*, surely!—engaging in it and being bound in that bond. Although Judgment prevails, it is Judgment by which the world is conducted.”[189](#)

“Barley was offered because it is the first of all produce, and what is first should be offered, not what

comes later; for Israel's first connection with the blessed Holy One is here.¹⁹⁰

"The blessed Holy One said, 'I gave you manna in the desert from that place called *heaven*, as is written: *Look, I am about to rain down for you bread from heaven* (Exodus 16:4)—and until now you have been offering Me barley?'¹⁹¹

"Mystery of the matter: *This is תורת הקנאה (torat ha-qena'ot), the teaching of jealousy* (Numbers 5:29)—spelled deficiently: a warning to women of the world not to stray under their husbands' authority. Otherwise, she is to bring barley flour.¹⁹²

"Happy is the share of Israel, for Assembly of Israel has never been unfaithful to the blessed Holy One! Assembly of Israel is astonished: '*if a woman strays under her husband's authority!*' Consequently, the punishment of this woman [96b] comes from her place. Who is her place? The one of whom is written *A woman of strength who can find? Her price is far beyond rubies* (Proverbs 31:10); *A woman of strength is her husband's crown* (ibid. 12:4).¹⁹³

"The barley flour that this woman offers is called a *grain offering of קנאה (qena'ot), jealousy* (Numbers 5:15)—spelled deficiently—and Assembly of Israel is called so. Thus, of Phinehas is written *in recompense for קנא (qinne), his acting zealously, for his God* (ibid. 25:13), because *qena'ot, jealousy*, adheres here, since Jealousy is aroused against whoever betrays this covenant. Thus, 'zealots can attack him.'¹⁹⁴

"Come and see: This omer was barley flour, for once it reached the gristmill, they obtained from it a tenth [of an ephah], sifted through thirteen sieves.¹⁹⁵

"This is *seven perfect weeks* (Leviticus 23:15). After *seven weeks* elapse, the Holy King comes to couple with Assembly of Israel, and Torah is given. Then the King is adorned with complete union, and oneness prevails above and below.¹⁹⁶

“When the Holy King is aroused and the time of Torah arrives, all those trees whose fruit ripens early waft song and praise. What do they utter? When their fruit is gathered, they open, saying, ‘*YHVH has set His throne in heaven, and His kingdom rules over all* (Psalms 103:19); *YHVH, Your kindness is in heaven...* (ibid. 36:6).’ And it is written: *All the trees of the field will clap hands* (Isaiah 55:12).[197](#)

“They open again, saying, ‘*A psalm. Sing to YHVH a new song, for He has done wonders...* (Psalms 98:1).’ It is called *a new song*—thus, *when you bring a new grain offering* (Numbers 28:26). There, *a grain offering of jealousy* (ibid. 5:15); here *a new grain offering*. *New*—for here is renewal of all, bond of all above and below, bond of faith. So Jacob the Complete is adorned with his crowns and Torah is given.[198](#)

“When the firstfruits reached the priest, the person had to utter words explicitly about that tree on earth that was perfected, corresponding to the pattern above, with twelve boundaries, with seventy branches. Laban the Aramean sought to destroy him, in order to damage the world; but the blessed Holy One saved him, and he was adorned with his sons, as we have established—on account of that Tree from which is suspended the entire bond of faith.[199](#)

“So it is called *a new grain offering*. Why? Because it is renewal of above and below and renewal of the moon; every time of renewal is of the moon.[200](#)

“This may be compared to a king who had sons and one daughter. He arranged a banquet for all his sons, and that daughter was not present at the table. When she came, she said to the king, ‘My lord, you invited all my brothers and gave each one certain portions, but you did not give me a share among them!’

“He replied to her, ‘By your life, my daughter, your portion will be double! Here, all will give you of their

share.’ So afterward she possessed a share that was double than all.

“Similarly, Assembly of Israel obtains portions from all, so She is called Bride—like a bride for whom all prepare garments, gifts, and jewelry. Such is Assembly of Israel: Her renewal is by all, and all give Her portions and shares.²⁰¹

“Come and see: When the Holy King appears in His crowns, Assembly of Israel rejoices. And when the Torah is given, Assembly of Israel is adorned with supernal crowns. Since the entire bond of faith is bound to this Tree, it is called *one day*, as is written: *There will be one day—known to YHVH* (Zechariah 14:7)—*one day*, surely, with Assembly of Israel; *one day* with the bond above.²⁰²

“The bond above: head, skull, and brain. Another bond: two arms, connected by the power of the head. Rav Hamnuna Sava established it as two bonds of the Patriarchs. Two pillars below, extending vitally through two rungs, gathering seed to be emitted by another rung, mouth of the phallus.²⁰³

“This Tree is the body—the middle—holding all these. All are linked with Him, and He with them, so all is one. And when *Matronita* couples with Him, then He is *one*. We have already established these matters.²⁰⁴

“Come and see: It is written ביום השמיני (*Ba-yom ha-shemini*), *On the eighth day*, [you shall have] עצרת (*atseret*), a *convocation* (Numbers 29:35). What is *atseret*? The place where all are bound as one is called *atseret*. *Atseret*—a gathering.²⁰⁵

“Now, you might say, ‘Why is it called *atseret* here?’ Well, on all those days there were meals of the branches of the Tree, [97a] and therefore seventy bulls. Afterward, joy of the trunk of the Tree itself and joy of Torah; so it is one day—*Atseret*, Joy of Torah, Joy of the Tree, which is the body.²⁰⁶

“Consequently, only the blessed Holy One and Israel partake of this day; thus *You shall have atseret*—you and no

one else. For when the King is present, all is present within Him. Regarding this we have learned: 'At *Atseret*, concerning fruit of the tree,' as they already established. So He is called *one day—one day*, as we have said.²⁰⁷

"Regarding this we have learned: Why is it written *From your dwelling places you shall bring [two] loaves of elevation bread,... semolina they shall be, leavened they shall be baked* (Leviticus 23:17). Why is it different here—leaven with Assembly of Israel? Well, because all are attached to Her and similarly to the Tree. For surely branches are attached to the Tree; Judgment is attached to the Tree—many judgments on all sides. All is found in Him. And because this Tree atones for the evil impulse, which is within a person's dwelling place."²⁰⁸

Rabbi El'azar said, "From this Tree are nourished all other trees below, and it is rooted by a certain deep river, flowing and gushing, whose waters never cease. Of Him is written *He will be like a tree planted by water, spreading its roots by a stream...* (Jeremiah 17:8). So of Torah is written *A tree of life is she to those who grasp her, and those who hold her are deemed happy* (Proverbs 3:18). What is meant by *and those who hold her* מאושר (*me'ushar*), *are deemed happy*? This has already been established, but *and those who hold her me'ushar, are deemed happy*—as is said: באשרי (*Be-oshri*), *Happy am I! For daughters* אשרוני (*isheruni*), *call me happy* (Genesis 30:13)."²⁰⁹

Rabbi Abba and Rabbi H̄iyya were walking on the way. Rabbi H̄iyya said, "It is written: *You shall count for yourselves from the morrow of the sabbath, from the day you bring the sheaf of elevation, [seven complete weeks shall they be]* (Leviticus 23:15). What does this indicate?"²¹⁰

He replied, "The Companions have already established this, but come and see: When the people of Israel were in Egypt, they were under alien domination and were gripped

by impurity, like a woman sitting in days of impurity. After they were circumcised, they entered the holy portion called Covenant. Once [97b] they were joined to this, their impurity ceased, as when a woman's blood of impurity ceases. After [the blood] ceases, what is written? *She shall count for herself seven days...* (Leviticus 15:28). Similarly here, once they entered the holy portion, their impurity ceased, and the blessed Holy One said, 'From now on, a counting for purity.'[211](#)

"*You shall count for yourselves—for yourselves*, precisely, as is said: *She shall count for herself*, for her own self. Here, too, *for yourselves—for your own selves*. Why? To be purified by supernal holy waters, and afterward to come join the King and receive His Torah.[212](#)

"It is written: *She shall count for herself seven days* (Leviticus 15:28); here, too, *seven weeks*. Why *seven weeks*? To attain being purified by waters of the flowing, gushing river, called 'living waters.' From that river issue *seven weeks*—so *seven weeks* surely, to attain it.[213](#)

"Just as a woman's purity takes effect at night, to join conjugally with her husband, so it is written *When the dew would descend on the camp at night* (Numbers 11:9). It is written *on the camp*, and not *When the dew would descend at night*. And when did this dew descend? When Israel approached Mount Sinai—then that dew descended perfectly and they were purified, their filth ceasing, and they joined the King and received the Torah and Assembly of Israel, as we have already established. At that time surely, *All the streams flow into the sea* (Ecclesiastes 1:7)—to be purified and washed—and all are sanctified and joined with the Holy King.[214](#)

"Come and see: If anyone does not reckon this count—those *seven weeks*—to attain this purity, he is not called 'pure' and is not in the category of pure, nor is he worthy of having a share in Torah. But if one arrives pure on this day and has not lost count, when he reaches this night he

should delve into Torah and join her, preserving the supernal purity that comes upon him on that night, purifying him.[215](#)

“We have learned [98a] that the Torah that is required on this night is Oral Torah, so that they may be purified as one by the spring of the deep stream. Afterward, on this day, Written Torah will come and join Her, and they will be as one, in single coupling above. Then a proclamation resounds concerning him: *As for Me, this is My covenant with them, says YHVH: My spirit that is upon you, and My words that I have put in your mouth, will not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your children, nor from the mouth of your children’s children—says YHVH—from now and forever* (Isaiah 59:21).[216](#)

“Therefore the ancient *hasidim* did not sleep on this night and would delve into Torah, saying, ‘Let us come to obtain a holy inheritance for ourselves and our children in two worlds!’ On that night, Assembly of Israel is crowned above them and comes to couple with the King, and both are crowned above the heads of those who attain this.[217](#)

“Rabbi Shim’on would speak as follows when the Companions gathered round him on this night: ‘Let us come and array the jewels of the Bride, so that tomorrow She will appear before the King fittingly bedecked and adorned.’[218](#)

“Happy is the share of the Companions when the King inquires of *Matronita* who has arranged Her jewels, illumined Her crowns, and placed Her adornments. There is no one in the world who knows how to arrange the jewels of the Bride other than the Companions. Happy is their share in this world and in the world that is coming!

“Come and see: On this night the Companions array the jewels of the Bride and adorn Her with crowns for the King. But who prepares the King on this night to be with the Bride, to couple with *Matronita*? The Holy River, deepest of all rivers, Supernal Mother, as is written: *O daughters of Zion, go out and gaze upon King Solomon, upon the crown with which his mother crowned him on the day of his wedding* (Song of Songs 3:11).[219](#)

“After She has prepared the King and crowned Him, She comes to purify *Matronita* and those who accompany Her.

“This may be compared to a king who had an only son, whom he was about to marry off to a noble lady. What did the mother do? All night long she spent in her treasure chamber, and brought out a magnificent crown set with seventy [98b] precious stones, and crowned him. She brought out royal garments and dressed him, adorning him like a king.²²⁰

“Afterward, she entered the bride’s home and saw her maidens arranging her crowns, garments, and jewelry to prepare her. She said to them, ‘Look, I have prepared a bathing house, a place of flowing waters surrounded by aromatic scents to purify my daughter-in-law. Let her come, my son’s *matronita* along with her maidens, to purify themselves in the place that I have prepared, in my bathing house of flowing waters. Afterward, bedeck her with her jewels, dress her in her garments, adorn her with her crowns. Tomorrow, when my son comes to unite with the *matronita*, he will prepare a palace for all and his abode will be among you, together.’²²¹

“So it is with the Holy King, *Matronita*, and the Companions—and Supernal Mother, who arranges all. Thereby, the Supernal King, *Matronita*, and the Companions dwell together, never separating, as is written: *YHVH, who will abide in Your tent?... He who walks blameless* ופועל צדק (*u-pho’el tsedeq*), *and does righteousness* (Psalms 15:1-2). Who is that? Well, those who array the Bride in Her jewels, in Her garments, in Her crowns. Each one is called פועל צדק (*po’el tsedeq*), *one who activates righteousness*.”²²²

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “If I am privileged in the world just to hear these words, it is enough for me! Happy is the share of those who engage in Torah and know the ways of the Holy King and whose desire is for Torah. Of them is written *Because he desires Me, I will deliver him.... I will rescue him and honor him* (Psalms 91:14-15).”²²³

In the seventh month, on the first of the month, [you shall have a Sabbath, a commemoration with horn blast, a sacred convocation] (Leviticus 23:24).[224](#)

delighted in them! From afar He drew them near, as is written: *Joshua said to all the people, 'Thus says YHVH, God of Israel: Beyond the River your fathers dwelt of old'* (Joshua 24:2)—demonstrating that from afar He selected them and drew them near. And it is written: *I took your father Abraham from beyond the River* (ibid., 3). These verses should be examined. Didn't all of Israel know this, especially Joshua?[225](#)

“However, the entire Torah is concealed and revealed, just as the Holy Name is concealed and revealed—for Torah *is* the Holy Name, so it is concealed and revealed. If Israel [99a] and Joshua knew, why is it written *Thus says YHVH*? Well, surely, secrecy of the word is this: The blessed Holy One bestowed great kindness upon Israel by selecting the patriarchs and making them a holy supernal chariot for His glory and bringing them forth from the supernal precious holy River—Lamp of all Lamps—in order to be adorned with them. As is written: *Thus says YHVH: Beyond the River your fathers dwelt* (Joshua 24:2)—*the River*, the one that is well known.[226](#)

“מעולם (*Me-olam*), *Of old*—why is this required here? Well, to demonstrate wisdom. *Beyond the River, me-olam, of old*—well, that *River* is called *olam*, World; so, *Beyond the River your fathers dwelt me-olam, of the World*, demonstrating the steadfast kindness that the blessed Holy One bestowed upon Israel.[227](#)

Rabbi Yitshak opened, “*Blast the shofar on the new moon, on the covering for our festival day* (Psalms 81:4). Happy are Israel, for the blessed Holy One drew them near from among all nations and

“I took your father Abraham from beyond the River— what does this indicate? Well, Abraham did not cleave to that *River* as did Isaac, who cleaved to it by his aspect, drawing power.[228](#)

“Come and see: Although this *River* is not Judgment, judgments issue from its side and are empowered by it. When Isaac is empowered in his judgments, those above and below assemble for judgment, and thrones of judgment are arranged, and the Holy King sits upon the Throne of Judgment and judges the world. Then, *Blast the shofar on the new moon*, אַבְכֶּסֶה (*ba-kese*), *at the throne, for our festival day*. Happy are Israel, who know how to remove the Throne of Judgment and arrange the Throne of Compassion. How? With the *shofar*.”[229](#)

Rabbi Abba was sitting before Rabbi Shim'on. He said to him, “Many times I’ve asked what the shofar signifies, but I’m still unsettled about it.”

He replied, “Surely, this is elucidation of the matter: Israel needs a shofar on the Day of Judgment, and not any other horn, because a horn is well known and we must not cling to Judgment. But we have already learned: By word and by action, we must manifest and arouse concealed elements.[230](#)

“Come and see: When that supernal Shofar, containing radiance of all, withdraws and does not illumine the children, then judgments are aroused and thrones are arranged for the Court. This Shofar is called Ram of Isaac, Power [99b] of Isaac, Praise of the Patriarchs. When this Great Shofar withdraws, no longer suckling the children, Isaac is empowered and poised for Judgment over the world.[231](#)

“When this Shofar is aroused and people repent of their sins, they must conduct the sound of the shofar. That sound ascends, and then another Shofar is aroused; Compassion is aroused and Judgment removed. We must display action

with a shofar to arouse another one, generating from this shofar those sounds—demonstrating that all those sounds above are contained in that supernal Shofar.²³²

“By these sounds, Israel gives strength to Compassion from below, and the Great Shofar is aroused above. So we must prepare a shofar and concentrate on it—for sounds are contained within it—so as to arouse another one and arrange the sounds in the shofar.²³³

“First arrangement: A sound issues and is adorned above—scaling heavens, piercing towering mountains, and reaching Abraham, on whose head it settles; He awakens, and is prepared as a throne.²³⁴

“In the Book of *Aggadta* we have learned: When Abraham is roused by that first sound and prepared as a throne, Father and Mother attend to Him.²³⁵

“Meanwhile, the second one ascends—powerful, to smash the fiercely wrathful. As for this second arrangement, its sound is broken in its power; then it ascends, and all judgments that it encounters are broken, until it rises to the place of Isaac. When Isaac awakens and sees Abraham preparing the throne and standing by it, then severe harshness is overwhelmed and broken. Upon this, one who blows should focus his heart and will, so as to break the power and potency of harsh Judgment, as is written: *Happy the people who know* תרועה (*teru'ah*), *the blast* (Psalms 89:16)—*who know teru'ah, the smashing, surely!*²³⁶

“Third arrangement: A sound issues and ascends, piercing all those heavens, and Compassion is aroused. That sound reaches the head of Jacob, [100a] and Jacob awakens and sees Abraham prepared on the other side. Then they both grasp Isaac, one from this side and one from that, and His powers cannot shoot out. These three arrangements are all one sequence.²³⁷

“Another sequence: A sound issues and ascends, carrying Abraham from His place, drawing Him below to

the place where powers of Isaac dwell, and they station Abraham by them.[238](#)

“Second arrangement: A broken sound issues, not as powerful as the first; not that the voice blowing is weak, but because it is not directed as before toward Isaac, where intense power prevails, but rather toward those below in judicial session, who are weaker. They all see Abraham by them and are subdued before Him.[239](#)

“Just then, the third arrangement: A sound issues and ascends, crowning the head of Jacob, drawing Him below to the place where those powers dwell, and He stands facing them—Abraham on one side and Jacob on the other, with them in the middle. Then they all subside in their places. All of these are another, second sequence.[240](#)

“The final sequence—for they must be raised to their places, with Isaac aligned between them as before, since this one must be settled in His place so that He will not shoot out fiercely. Then all judgments are subdued and Compassion is aroused.[241](#)

“Consequently, one must focus heart and will on these sounds and turn back in *teshuvah* toward his Lord. Then, when the people of Israel arranges and refines sounds fittingly with the shofar—in fervor—that supernal Shofar returns. And when it returns, it crowns Jacob and rectifies all. Another throne is cast down; then joy prevails everywhere, and the blessed Holy One has compassion on the world. Happy is the share of Israel, who know how to draw and conduct [100b] their Lord from Judgment to Compassion, and how to be instruments for mending all worlds.[242](#)

“Come and see: Corresponding to this, ‘Three books are opened on this day: [one of the completely wicked, one of the completely righteous, and one of those in between...].’ Just as Compassion is aroused and harsh judgments are subdued, entering their place, so it is below, corresponding to the pattern above: harsh judgments are

subdued and removed from the world. Who are they? The completely wicked, who are harsh judgments—subdued and removed from the world. Therefore, they ‘are inscribed and sealed [immediately for death].’”²⁴³

Rabbi Abba said, “Surely, this is elucidation of the matter. Blessed is the Compassionate One, that I asked and gained these words!”

Rabbi Yehudah said, “It is written: זכרון תרועה (*zikhron teru’ah*), *a reminder by horn blast* (Leviticus 23:24)—we make a remembrance, to concentrate heart and will. Israel makes a remembrance below. By what? By action, so that something similar may be aroused above.”²⁴⁴

Rabbi El’azar said, “[*Blast the shofar on the new moon,*] בכסא (*ba-kese*), *on the covering, for our festival day* (Psalms 81:4)—for the moon is then אִתְּכַסְיָא (*itkaseya*), covered. How is it covered? Well, when a cloud appears and the sun does not shine, the moon is covered and does not shine. On account of the cloud, the sun does not shine—all the more so, the moon, which is covered and does not shine. Thus, בכסה (*ba-keseh*), *on the covering*, with a ה (*he*), for the moon *itkaseya*, is covered. And how does everything shine? Through *teshuvah* and the sound of the shofar, as is written: *Happy the people who know the blast. Then, O YHVH, they will walk in the light of Your presence* (Psalms 89:16).²⁴⁵

“Come and see: On this day the moon is covered and does not shine until the tenth day, when Israel turns back in complete *teshuvah* and Supernal Mother returns, illumining Her. On this day, Mother embarks on Her journey and joy prevails everywhere.²⁴⁶

“Thus it is written יום הכפורים הוא (*Yom ha-kippurim hu*), *It is the Day of Atonement* (Leviticus 23:27). *Yom ha-kippurim hu, It is the Day of Atonements*—the verse should read ימים כפורים (*yamim kippurim*), *Days of Atonements*; why *yom ha-kippurim, the*

Day of Atonements? Well, because two radiancies shine as one, Upper Lamp illumining Lower Lamp. This day, She shines from the upper light, not from light of the sun; so it is written *בכסה ליום חגנו* (*ba-keseh le-yom ḥagenu*), *on the covering until our festival day.*"[247](#)

Rabbi Abba sent a question to Rabbi Shim'on, asking, "When is the coupling of Assembly of Israel with the Holy King?"[248](#)

He sent back, replying, "*Besides, she really is my sister—my father's daughter, though not my mother's daughter—and she became my wife* (Genesis 20:12)."[249](#)

Rabbi Abba trembled. He raised his voice and wept, saying, "Rabbi Shim'on, my Master, Holy Lamp! Woe to the world when you leave it! Woe to the generation that exists in the world when you depart from them and they are left orphaned of you!"[250](#)

Rabbi Ḥiyya said to Rabbi Abba, "This [verse] that he sent to you, what does it mean?"

He replied, "Surely, coupling of the King with *Matronita* occurs only when She shines from Supernal Father. When She is illumined by Him, we call Her Holiness, since She absorbs this from Father's house; and then they couple as one, for the King is called Holiness, as is written: *Holiness is Israel to YHVH* (Jeremiah 2:3), and He receives from the place called *holiness*. Then, *she is my sister—my father's daughter, though not my mother's daughter*, for this name derives from Father's house, not from Mother's. Consequently, *she became my wife*—coupling as one at this time and at no other: at the time when She receives from Father's house, not when She receives from Mother's. Yom Kippur proves this, for intercourse is forbidden, since coupling does not occur, as She receives from Mother's house, not from Father's."[251](#)

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "Surely, happy is the generation in whose midst Rabbi Shim'on dwells! Happy are those who

stand before him every day!”

Rabbi Abba said, “On Rosh Hashanah, Adam was created, and he stood in judgment from his Lord, and he turned back [101a] in *teshuvah* and was accepted by the blessed Holy One. He said to him, ‘You will be a sign for your descendants through all generations. On this day they stand in judgment, and if they engage in *teshuvah* I will accept them, and rise from the Throne of Judgment and be established on the Throne of Compassion and be compassionate toward them.’²⁵²

“David said, ‘*I love when YHVH hears my voice, my supplications* (Psalms 116:1).’ Thus it is written *For forgiveness is Yours, so that You may be revered* (ibid. 130:4), and *For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we see light* (ibid. 36:10).”²⁵³

On the tenth of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement, a sacred assembly it shall be for you (Leviticus 23:27).²⁵⁴

Rabbi Hiyya opened, “לְדָוִד מִשְׁכִּיל (Le-David maskil), *Of David. Maskil. Happy is one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered* (Psalms 32:1). *Le-David maskil, Of David. Maskil*—we have already learned as follows. The book of Psalms was recited with ten types of song: with נְצוּחַ (nitsuah), leading; with נִגּוּן (niggun), melody; with מִשְׁכִּיל (maskil), insight; with מִכְתָּם (mikhtam), inscription; with מִזְמוֹר (mizmor), psalm; with שִׁיר (shir), song; with אֲשֵׁרֵי (ashrei), happiness; with תְּפִלָּה (tefillah), prayer; with הוֹדָאָה (hoda’ah), thanksgiving; with הַלְלוּיָהּ (haleluyah), hallelujah. And the highest of them all is *haleluyah*, as has been established.²⁵⁵

“Here, *maskil*, whose place is known. What is מִשְׁכִּיל (maskil)? מַיָּא דְאַחְבִּימוּ (Mayya de-ahkimu), Waters enlightening, those who drink them. That place is called *maskil*, as is said: *Maskil, One who gains insight, into a matter will find benefit* (Proverbs 16:20). Since it is called so, forgiveness depends

upon it—freedom of freedoms—as is written: *Happy is one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.*[256](#)

“What is meant by כְּסוּי חַטָּאָה (*kesui ḥata’ah*), *whose sin is covered*? They have already established that his *sin is covered* from people—one who has sinned against the blessed Holy One.[257](#)

“But *whose sin is covered*—come and see! When a person sins—transgressing once, twice, and three times—and does not repent, his sins are exposed and publicized above and publicized below. Heralds go before him, proclaiming: ‘Keep away from so-and-so! He is banned by his Lord—banned above, banned below. Woe to him who has marred the image of his Lord! Woe him who disrespects the honor of his Lord!’ The blessed Holy One exposes his sin above, as is written: *Heaven will expose his sin, and earth will rise up against him* (Job 20:27).[258](#)

“And when a person walks in the way of his Lord, striving to serve Him, and happens to commit one sin, all cover it—those above and below. This is called *one whose sin is covered*.”

Rabbi Abba said to him, “You have not yet reached the root of the matter. You have spoken well, and what the Companions have said is fine. But if so, the verse should read מְכוּסֵה חַטָּאָה (*mekhusseh ḥata’ah*), *whose sin is covered*; what is meant by כְּסוּי חַטָּאָה (*kesui ḥata’ah*)?[259](#)

“Well, that includes two elements of wisdom, as follows. One, as we have learned: The good deeds that a person performs in this world fashion in that world a glorious, splendid garment for him to wear. But when a person enacts good deeds, and evil deeds overpower him—so that when the blessed Holy One examines him, his evil deeds are more numerous and he is wicked, considered a sinner before his Lord, and he regrets those good deeds that he did at first—then he is entirely eliminated, both from this world and from the world that is coming.[260](#)

“What does the blessed Holy One do with those good deeds that this sinner performed at first? Well, the blessed Holy One—even though that wicked sinner has perished, those good deeds and merits do not perish. There may be a righteous person, walking in the ways of the supernal King and preparing his garments from his deeds. The blessed Holy One delivers to him some of those deeds lost by this wicked sinner, completing his garments, in which he may be arrayed in that world, as is written: *What the wicked prepares, the righteous will wear* (Job 27:17)—that sinner prepares and the righteous one is covered with what he has prepared, as is written: כסוי חטאה (*kesui ḥata’ah*), *a covering of a sinner; he is covered by means of a sinner, covering himself by a sinner*. Thus it is not written מכוסה (*mekhusseh*), *covered*, but rather כסוי (*kesui*), *a covering*.²⁶¹

“And another [element]: when the sin of this virtuous person is covered within what is called *the depths of the sea*—for once it falls into *the depths of the sea*, it disappears forever, covered by waters. Who are *the depths of the sea*? As is said: *You will cast* [101b] *all their sins into the depths of the sea* (Micah 7:19).²⁶²

“Who are *the depths of the sea*? Well, that is a precious mystery, established by Rabbi Shim’on: all those who come from the harsh side and are linked with evil species, with lower crowns—like Azazel on Yom Kippur, who is called *the depths of the sea*. Like dross of silver when it is refined in fire, as is written: *Remove the dross from silver* (Proverbs 25:4)—so is this one [Azazel] from those *depths of the sea*, and is called *depths of the sea: depths of that holy sea; depths, dregs of silver*. Therefore, all those sins of Israel are cast into it, received by it, absorbed within it. Why? Because it is חטאה (*ḥata’ah*), *sin*. What is meant by *ḥata’ah*? Deficiency. So it is deficiency of all, bearing deficiency of body and soul. On this day, *the depths of the sea*—dregs of silver—descends and carries off filth of the body. Who is

filth of the body? The evil impulse, who is called 'filth,' 'repulsive one.'" [263](#)

Rabbi Yose said, "We have learned: *Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats, one lot for YHVH and one lot for Azazel* (Leviticus 16:8). If so, it is an honor for Azazel. Have you ever seen a servant casting lots along with his master? According to the custom of the world, a servant obtains only what he is given by his master. [264](#)

"However, since Samael is ready this day with defamation—and so that he should have no pretext to complain, for this lot came up for him. For Rabbi Yehudah said in the name of Rabbi Yitshak: We find a sublime element in the lot. Concerning the lot of Joshua, it is written *עַל פִּי (Al pi), By the mouth of, the lot* (Numbers 26:56)—*by the mouth of the lot*, surely, for it said, 'This is the share of Judah; this, of Benjamin; this, of so-and-so; and so with all of them.' Here, too, as soon as the lots came up in the priest's hand, they leapt from his hand and settled in their places, as is written: *The goat for which the lot comes up* (Leviticus 16:10)—*comes up*, surely! [265](#)

"Not only this, but whenever the Denouncer is ready and has been granted permission, we must set before him something with which he can occupy himself, so that he will leave Israel alone. On this day, the Denouncer is ready to spy out the earth, as is written: *YHVH said to the Adversary, 'From where have you come?' He answered, 'From roaming the earth and walking about upon it'* (Job 1:7)—and we have learned: What is meant by *roaming the earth*? Well, this refers to the Denouncer, the Accuser of Israel. [266](#)

"The Companions have educed that surely at that time Israel was about to cross the [Red] Sea and exact retribution against the Egyptians. [Satan] said, 'I have passed through the Holy Land and I see that these are not worthy to enter it. If You are rendering judgment, their

punishment here should be like the Egyptians. What is the difference between them? Either they should all die together, or they should all return to Egypt! And wasn't it You who said *They will be enslaved and afflicted four hundred years* (Genesis 15:13)? Look, out of the total, only two hundred and ten have elapsed, no more!

"The blessed Holy One said, 'What will I do? This one needs something to keep him occupied. Isn't this the place to offer him that, so he'll leave My children alone? Ah, here is someone to keep him engaged!' Immediately, He said to him, '*Have you considered My servant Job? For there is none like him on earth* (Job 1:8).' Immediately, the Denouncer argued back: *The Adversary answered YHVH, saying, 'Is it for nothing that Job reveres God?'* (ibid., 9).

"This may be compared to a shepherd who wanted to move his flock across a river. A wolf came to attack his flock. The shepherd was wise. He said, 'What will I do? While I am moving the lambs across, he will attack the sheep.' He raised his eyes and saw among the flock one of those wild billy goats, big and strong. He said, 'I will throw this toward him, and while they are fighting each other, I will move the whole flock across and they will be saved from him.'

"Similarly, the blessed Holy One said, 'Surely, here is a big, strong billy goat that I will throw toward him, and while he occupies himself with it, My children will cross and the Accuser will not confront them.' Immediately, *YHVH said to the Adversary, 'Have you considered [My servant Job?...]—until finally the blessed Holy One joined them together, as is written: Here he is in your hand; but spare his life* (Job 2:6). While he was occupied with him, he left Israel alone and did not confront them as the Accuser.^{[267](#)}

"Here, too, on this day, we must send him something with which to occupy himself, resembling him; and while he is engaged with it, he leaves Israel alone and does not confront them as the Accuser. There is a saying: 'To the

contemptible one in the royal palace—give him a little wine and he will praise you before the king. Otherwise, he will speak evil; and sometimes superiors of the palace convey those words, on account of which the king imposes punishment.”[268](#)

Rabbi [102a] Yitshak said, “This may be compared to a fool who stands before the king. Give him some wine and then tell him and show him all those deviancies you have committed and all those bad deeds, and he will come and praise you, saying that there is no one in the world like you.”[269](#)

“Here, too, the Denouncer is standing constantly before the King. The people of Israel present him this gift, in which is a list of all the bad deeds, all the deviancies, and all the sins that they have committed; and he comes and praises Israel and becomes their Defender. And the blessed Holy One transfers everything onto the head of his people, since it is written *For you are heaping live coals on his head, and YHVH will reward you* (Proverbs 25:22).”[270](#)

Rabbi Yose said, “Woe to the people of Esau when this goat is sent to that Denouncer who is appointed over them, since for its sake he comes to praise Israel and the blessed Holy One diverts all those sins onto the head of his people, because it is written *A speaker of lies will not endure My eyes* (Psalms 101:7).”[271](#)

Rabbi Yehudah said, “If the nations of the world knew of this goat, they would not let Israel be for a single day in the world.”[272](#)

“Come and see: All that day he is occupied with the goat, and meanwhile the blessed Holy One purges Israel, purifying them entirely, and the Accuser does not appear before Him. Afterward, he comes and praises Israel. [The blessed Holy One] asks him, as is said: *YHVH said to the Adversary, ‘From where have you come?’* (Job 1:7), and he replies in praise of Israel. The Accuser turns into a Defender and goes his way.”[273](#)

“Then the blessed Holy One says to the seventy surrounding His throne, ‘Do you see how this Denouncer is always looming over My children? Look, one goat has appeared by him, with a list of all their sins, all their deviancies, and all the transgressions they have committed before Me!’ Then they all confirm that those sins should be transferred to his people.”[274](#)

Rabbi Abba said, “All those sins and transgressions cling to him, as is written: *You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea* (Micah 7:19), and they are all transferred onto the heads of his people, as is written: *The goat shall bear upon it all their iniquities to a remote region* (Leviticus 16:22).[275](#)

“On this day, the priest is adorned with supernal crowns, and stands between those above and those below, atoning for himself, for his household, for the priests, for the sanctuary, and for all of Israel. When he enters, making atonement, he concentrates on the Head of Faith, and sprinkles with his finger, as is written: *He shall sprinkle some of it on the purging cover and in front of the purging cover* (Leviticus 16:15). How does he do it? He stirs with the tip of his finger and—like wielding a whip—sprinkles droplets from his finger toward the purging cover. He sprinkles and concentrates and begins to count: ‘One, one and one.’ ‘One’ alone; ‘one’ including all; ‘one,’ glory of all; ‘one,’ to whom all turn; ‘one,’ head of all.[276](#)

“Then, ‘one and one.’ ‘One and one’—for they dwell as one: in desire, in companionship, never parting.[277](#)

“Having reached this ‘and one,’ who is Mother of all, from here he begins to count in coupling, counting and saying, ‘One and two, one and three, one and four, one and five, one and six, one and seven’—so as to draw and convey this ‘one,’ who is Supernal Mother, by certain rungs to the crown of Lower Mother, and to convey deep rivers from their place to Assembly of Israel. Therefore, on this day two radiancies shine as one—Supernal Mother illumines Lower

Mother. Thus it is written יום הכפורים (Yom ha-Kippurim), *the Day of Atonements*, as has been said.”[278](#)

Rabbi Yitshak said, “A braided rope was tied to the leg of the priest when he entered, so that if he died there, they could extract him from outside. How did they know? By that [strip of] crimson wool, if its color did not change. During that time, it was well known that the priest was located within. If he emerged in peace, by the [strip of] crimson wool it was perceived, for its color turned white; then there was joy among those above and below. If not, they all became distressed, and all knew that their prayers had not been accepted.”[279](#)

Rabbi Yehudah said, “As soon as he entered and closed his eyes—so as not to gaze upon what he must not—and heard the sound of the wings of the cherubim chanting praises, the priest knew that all was in joy and that he would emerge in peace. Along with that, by his prayer he knew—words issuing joyously, being blessed and accepted [102b] fittingly. Then, joy of those above and below!”[280](#)

Rabbi El’azar asked his father, Rabbi Shim’on, saying, “Why does this day depend on this place and not on another rung, for it would most fittingly be on the rung occupied by the King?”[281](#)

He replied, “El’azar, it is certainly so, though you have asked well!”[282](#)

“Come and see: The Holy King has left His temple and house in the hands of *Matronita*, and has left His children with Her so that She may guide them, punish them, and dwell among them. If they are virtuous, *Matronita* is in joy and honor in the presence of the King. If they are not virtuous, She and they are sent back into exile, as we have already established, for it is written: *He who plunders his father puts his mother to flight* (Proverbs 19:26), and similarly:

For your crimes, your mother was sent away (Isaiah 50:1).[283](#)

“Therefore there is one day a year to examine and inspect them, and when this day comes to pass, Supernal Mother—in whose hand is all freedom—appears, to observe Israel. And they gird themselves on this day with many rituals, prayers, and self-afflictions—all of them virtuous. Then freedom comes upon them from the place of all freedom by the hand of *Matronita*. The King’s children—Her children, who have been entrusted in Her hands—are all virtuous, all without sin or transgression! Then She couples with the King in radiance, in joy, in perfection, in rapture, for She has raised children fittingly for the supernal King.[284](#)

“But when, on this day, they are not found fit, woe to them, woe to their emissary! Woe, for *Matronita* is distanced from the King, and Supernal Mother withdraws and no freedom issues from Her to the worlds.[285](#)

“Happy are Israel, whom the blessed Holy One has taught, so that they may be delivered from Judgment and be found worthy before Him! As is written: *For on this day atonement will be effected for you, to purify you...* (Leviticus 16:30), and similarly: *I will sprinkle pure water upon you, and you will be pure; from all you impurities and from all your idols will I purify you* (Ezekiel 36:25).”[286](#)

On the fifteenth day of this seventh month, [the Festival of Sukkot, seven days for YHVH] (Leviticus 23:34).[287](#)

Rabbi Yose asked Rabbi Abba, saying, “What do these fifteen days indicate?”

He replied, “Surely it is a precious mystery.

Come and see: Whether above or below, each one proceeds in its own way, settles in its own way, is aroused in its own way, performing what it does.[288](#)

“This עֲשׂוֹר (*asor*), decade, belongs to Assembly of Israel, and the tenth day abides in the tenth. Thus, בְּעֲשׂוֹר (*Be-asor*), *On the tenth, of this month, let every man take a lamb [for a father’s house, a lamb for a household]* (Exodus 12:3). This day is Hers, and the five other days are the King’s—the day above Her—for on the fifth rung the King sits upon the Throne.²⁸⁹

“Everywhere, *on the tenth* belongs to *Matronita*; the five above them belong to the King—the day that comes upon Her. Consequently, five days from the new moon to Torah.²⁹⁰

“Now, you might say, ‘Seventh’—when two Patriarchs appear with Him, for with them He is King, adorned then with all. It is a single matter: seventh and fifth.²⁹¹

“Come and see: The fifth is surely His, as has been said. Then Father illumines Mother, and by Him fifty gates are illuminated, to shine upon the fifth. And you might say, ‘Seventh,’ for the King is in fullness of the Patriarchs, and He receives a crown from the seventh, as is written: *O daughters of Zion, go out and gaze upon King Solomon, [upon the crown with which his mother crowned him on the day of his wedding, on the day of his heart’s delight]* (Song of Songs 3:11). Therefore, on the seventh is the day when the King is adorned with His crowns, and then the King inherits from Father and Mother, who couple as one. So all depends on one.”²⁹²

On the fifteenth day (Leviticus 23:34).²⁹³

Israel was coming by way of Atharim, and he battled against Israel and took some of them captive] (Numbers 21:1). We have learned: Three celestial gifts were provided for Israel through three siblings—Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. Manna, by the merit of Moses; clouds of glory, by

Rabbi Yehudah opened,
“*The Canaanite, king of Arad, [who dwelled in the Negeb,]* heard [that

the merit of Aaron; the well, by the merit of Miriam—and all are linked above.²⁹⁴

“Manna, by the merit of Moses, as is written: *Look, I am about to rain down for you bread from heaven* (Exodus 16:4)—[103a] *from heaven*, precisely: Moses.²⁹⁵

“Clouds of glory, by the merit of אהרן (*Aharon*), Aaron—as is written: *For eye-to-eye You נראה (nir'ah), are seen, YHVH, [and Your cloud stands over them]* (Numbers 14:14), and it is written *The cloud of incense shall envelop* (Leviticus 16:13). Just as the latter consists of seven, so, too, the former consists of seven—for with the incense, seven clouds mingle as one. Furthermore, Aaron is head of all seven clouds, and he is joined with six others.²⁹⁶

“The well, on account of Miriam, for she is surely called Well. In the Book of *Aggadta: His sister stationed herself afar* (Exodus 2:4)—a well of living waters. All are a single bond.²⁹⁷

“When Miriam died, the well disappeared, as is written: *And there was no water for the community* (Numbers 20:2). At that moment, another well accompanying Israel wished to depart; when She saw the clouds joined to Her from above, She remained bound to them.²⁹⁸

“When Aaron died, those clouds disappeared, along with the cloud of the well. Moses came and brought them back, as is written: *You ascended the heights, you seized captives, you took gifts* (Psalms 68:19). *You took gifts*, surely—those gifts that existed before: the well and the clouds.²⁹⁹

“The well—Isaac’s well. The clouds—Aaron’s clouds.”³⁰⁰

Rabbi Yitshak said, “Why was Aaron worthy of this? Because he was joined with clouds, and every single day he bound all of them as one, and they were all blessed through him.³⁰¹

“Come and see: Beyond all the loving-kindness that the blessed Holy One bestowed upon Israel, He bound to them

seven clouds of glory. Where did He bind these? To Assembly of Israel, for Her cloud is joined with six others, and with all seven Israel journeyed through the desert. Why? Because they are all the bond of faith.³⁰²

“Thus, בסכות (*Ba-sukkot*), *In booths, you shall dwell seven days* (Leviticus 23:42). What does this indicate? It relates to what is written: *In his shade I delighted to sit* (Song of Songs 2:3). A person should display himself sitting in the shade of faith.³⁰³

“Come and see: Throughout all the years of Aaron’s life, Israel was in the shade of faith under these clouds. After Aaron died, one cloud disappeared—the right of all. When this one disappeared, all the others did, too, and all of [Israel] were seen as lacking. This has been established, as is written: *All the community saw that Aaron had expired* (Numbers 20:29)—do not read וַיִּרְאוּ (*va-yir’u*), *they saw*, but rather וַיִּרְאוּ (*va-yera’u*), *they were seen*. Immediately, *The Canaanite, king of Arad, who dwelled in the Negeb, heard that Israel was coming by way of האתרים* (*ha-Atarim*), *Atharim* (Numbers 21:1). He *heard* that those clouds had disappeared and the great תיידא (*tayyara*), guide, to whom all those clouds were bound, had died.”³⁰⁴

And Rabbi Yitshak said, “*The Canaanite, king of Arad, who dwelled in the Negeb*, surely! And when those spies that were sent by Moses came back, they said, ‘*Amalek dwells in the land of the Negeb* (Numbers 13:29),’ in order to break their heart, since Amalek had broken their strength at first.”³⁰⁵

Rabbi Abba said, “*The Canaanite heard*. What does this indicate here, after those clouds had disappeared? Well, of Canaan is written *Cursed be Canaan, slave of slaves shall he be to his brothers!* (Genesis 9:25). From here we learn: Whoever excludes himself from the shade of faith deserves to be a slave to slaves of slaves—as is written: *and he battled against Israel and took some of them captive*

(Numbers 21:1); he took slaves for himself from among Israel.³⁰⁶

“Thus it is written *All natives in Israel shall dwell in booths* (Leviticus 23:42)—everyone who is from the holy root and stock of Israel *shall dwell in booths*, under the shade of faith. And whoever is not from the holy root and stock of Israel shall not dwell in them and should exclude himself from beneath the shade of faith.³⁰⁷

“It is written: *A Canaanite, in whose hand are false balances* (Hosea 12:8)—Eliezer, Abraham’s servant. Come and see: It is written *Cursed be Canaan* (Genesis 9:25). But since this Canaanite was privileged to serve Abraham, once he did so and dwelled beneath the shade of faith, he became worthy of escaping from the curse that had been placed on him. Moreover, blessing is applied to him, as is written: *He said, ‘Come in, blessed of YHVH’* (Genesis 24:31). What does this indicate? That whoever dwells under this shade of faith inherits freedom for himself and his descendants forever, and is blessed with sublime blessing. And whoever excludes himself from this shade of faith inherits exile for himself and his descendants, as is written: *and he battled against Israel and took some of them captive.*³⁰⁸ [103b]

“בסבֹּת (Ba-sukkot), *In booths, you shall dwell* (Leviticus 23:42)—spelled deficiently, one, to which all are bound. It is written: *For the cloud of YHVH was over them by day* (Numbers 10:34), and similarly, *In a pillar of cloud You go before them by day* (ibid. 14:14)—the cloud of Aaron—and it is written *By day YHVH ordains חסדו (hasdo), His love* (Psalms 42:9). One cloud carried with it five others, totaling six; and another cloud, as is written: *and in a pillar of fire by night* (Numbers 14:14), illumining Israel with the radiance of those six.”³⁰⁹

Rabbi El’azar opened, “*Thus says YHVH: I remember the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride, how you*

followed Me in the desert... (Jeremiah 2:2). This verse was spoken about Assembly of Israel, when She journeyed in the desert along with Israel.[310](#)

"I remember חסד (hesed), the devotion—cloud of Aaron, moving with five others, bound to You, shining upon You.[311](#)

"Your love כלולותיך (kelulotayikh), as a bride—all of them אשתכללו (ishtakhlalu), adorning, crowning, and arraying You like a bride bedecked with her jewelry. Why all this? Because you followed Me in the desert, in a land unsown.[312](#)

"Come and see: When a person dwells in this abode, shade of faith, Shekhinah spreads Her wings over him from above, and Abraham and five other righteous ones make their dwelling with him."[313](#)

Rabbi Abba said, "Abraham, five righteous ones, and King David make their dwelling with him. As is written: *In sukkot you shall dwell, O seven days* (Leviticus 23:42)—it is written *seven days*, not *for seven days*. Similarly, *Six days YHVH made heaven and earth* (Exodus 20:11). One should rejoice on each day with a radiant face, along with these guests who dwell with him."[314](#)

And Rabbi Abba said, "It is written: *In sukkot you shall dwell seven days*, and afterward, [*they*] *shall dwell in sukkot* (Leviticus 23:42). First, *you shall dwell*; and then, *they shall dwell!* Well, the first is for the guests; the second, for inhabitants of the world.[315](#)

"The first is for the guests: as Rav Hamnuna Sava, upon entering the sukkah, used to stand in joy just inside the opening, and say, 'Let us invite the guests!' He would arrange the table, stand erect, recite a blessing, and say, '*In sukkot you shall dwell, O seven days*. Sit, sublime guests, have a seat! Sit, guests of faith, have a seat!' Raising his hands in joy, he would say, 'Happy is our share! Happy is the share of Israel! *Indeed, YHVH's share is His people, Jacob His allotted possession* (Deuteronomy 32:9).' Then he would sit.[316](#)

“The second, for inhabitants of the world. For whoever [104a] has a share in the holy seed sits in the shade of faith to welcome the guests, to rejoice in this world and in the world that is coming.³¹⁷

“Nevertheless, he must gladden the poor. Why? Because the portion of those guests whom he has invited belongs to the poor. And he who sits in this shade of faith and invites these supernal guests, guests of faith, yet does not give them their portion—they all stand back from him, saying, ‘*Do not eat the bread of a stingy man, nor desire his delicacies* (Proverbs 23:6).’ So the table that he set is his own, not the blessed Holy One’s. Of him is written *I will spread dung upon your faces, the dung of your festivals* (Malachi 2:3)—*your festivals*, not *My festivals*! Woe to that person when those guests of faith stand back from his table!”³¹⁸

And Rabbi Abba said, “All his days, Abraham used to stand at the crossroads to invite guests and set a table for them. Now that he is invited along with all those righteous ones and King David, and they are not given their share, Abraham rises from the table and exclaims, ‘*Turn away, please, from the tents of these wicked people!* (Numbers 16:26),’ and they all depart with him.³¹⁹

“Isaac says, ‘*The belly of the wicked will feel want* (Proverbs 13:25).’ Jacob says, ‘*Your morsel that you eat you will vomit, and you will ruin your pleasant words* (ibid. 23:8).’ All the other righteous ones say, ‘*Surely all tables are full of filthy vomit, without the Omnipresent* (Isaiah 28:8).’³²⁰

“King David speaks and exacts punishment, as is written: *It happened after ten days that YHVH smote Nabal and he died* (1 Samuel 25:38). What does this indicate? Well, David asked Nabal to treat him as a guest and he refused. And this person invites [David] and doesn’t give him a portion. So during those ten days when King David

judges the world, that person who treated him worse than Nabal is punished for it.”[321](#)

Rabbi El’azar said, “Accordingly, Torah does not impose upon a person more than he can manage, for look at what is written: *Each according to the gift of his hand, according to the blessing of YHVH your God that He has given you* (Deuteronomy 16:17)! But a person should not say ‘First, I’ll eat and be satisfied and saturate myself; and if there’s anything left, I’ll give to the poor.’ Rather, the prime portion belongs to the guests. And if he delights the guests and saturates them, the blessed Holy One rejoices with him. Abraham proclaims over him, ‘*Then you will delight upon YHVH, and I will cause you to ride upon the heights of the earth, and feed you the inheritance of your father Jacob...* (Isaiah 58:14).’ Isaac says, ‘*No weapon formed against you will succeed, and every tongue that rises against you in judgment, you will condemn* (ibid. 54:17).’”[322](#)

Rabbi Shim’on said, “This is spoken by King David, because all weapons of the King and battles of the King have been handed over to David. But Isaac says, ‘גבור (Gibbor), *Mighty, upon earth his seed shall be, the generation of the upright shall be blessed. Wealth and riches in his house, and his righteousness stands forever* (Psalms 112:2-3).’”[323](#)

“עֵקֶב (Ya’aqov), Jacob, says, ‘*Then your light יִבְבְּאָה (yibbaqa), will burst through, like the dawn and your healing quickly sprout. Your righteousness will march before you, the glory of YHVH will gather you in* (Isaiah 58:8).’ The other righteous ones say, ‘*YHVH will guide you always; He will satisfy your soul with radiancies and invigorate your bones. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters do not fail* (ibid., 11).’ King David says, ‘*No weapon formed against you will succeed,*’ for he has been appointed over all weapons of the world.[324](#)

“Happy is the share of the person who has attained all this! Happy is the share of the righteous in this world and in the world that is coming! Of them is written *Your people, all of them righteous, [will inherit the land forever—sprout of My planting, work of My hands, that I may be glorified]* (Isaiah 60:21).”

You shall take for yourselves on the first day fruit of a majestic tree, fronds of palms, and a branch of a thickly-leaved tree and willows of the stream, [and you shall rejoice before YHVH your God seven days] (Leviticus 23:40).[325](#)

called forth by His name, as is written: *Elohim created the human in His image; by the image of Elohim He created him* (Genesis 1:27). Furthermore, He calls him by His name—when he produces true justice in the world and is called אֱלֹהִים (*elohim*), as is written: *Elohim, Judges, you shall not vilify* (Exodus 22:27).[326](#)

“He called him forth by His name, as is written: *Elohim created the human in His image*. This is fine and has already been established. It is written: *Let us make a human in our image, according to our likeness* (Genesis 1:26)—uttered at a time of coupling. So it is: in *image* and *likeness*—union of them both. The human issued from Male and Female.[327](#)

“*God created the human in His image*. In the Book of King Solomon I found as follows: When coupling [104b] occurs below, the blessed Holy One sends a certain form—like a human visage, imprinted and engraved with an image, poised above that union. If the eye were empowered to see, one would glimpse above his head an image

Rabbi Shim'on opened, “*Everyone who is called by My name, whom I created for My glory, whom I formed and made* (Isaiah 43:7). *Everyone who is called by My name—the human being, whom the blessed Holy One*

imprinted with a human visage. In that image the person is created; until that image, sent by his Lord, is poised above his head, hovering there, the person is not created—as is written: *God created the human in his image.*³²⁸

“That *image* remains present by him until he issues into the world. Once he does, in that *image* he grows, with that *image* he moves—as is written: *Only with an image does a human go about* (Psalms 39:7).³²⁹

“This *image* is from above. When those spirits emerge from their places, each one is arrayed before the Holy King in splendid adornments, with the visage it is to assume in this world. From that form, that splendid adornment, issues this *image*. This is third from the spirit, and it comes first into this world when coupling occurs. Throughout the world, there is not a single union without an *image*. But as for holy Israel, this *image* is holy, entering into them from a holy place; whereas for other nations, an *image* enters into them from those evil species, from the side of impurity. Consequently, a person must not mingle his image with the image of a Gentile, since one is holy and other impure.³³⁰

[1:220a]³³¹ “Come and see the difference between Israel and other nations. Among Israel, when a person is dead, he defiles the whole house and the body is impure; whereas a Gentile does not defile anyone else nor is he impure when he dies. Why?³³²

“Well, when an Israelite dies, all the holiness of his Lord withdraws from him: this holy image is withdrawn from him, the holy spirit is withdrawn from him. Once the holiness of his Lord is withdrawn from him, the body is impure. But as for a Gentile, not so. In his lifetime he is impure in all aspects of impurity: his image is impure, his spirit is impure. And since these impurities abide within him, he is entirely impure and it is forbidden to approach him. Once he dies, all these impurities depart from him and the body is left without defiling impurity. Even though their bodies—whether alive or dead—are impure, when they are

alive, haunted by all those impurities, they defile anyone who approaches them; but when they are dead, and all those impurities depart from them, they cannot defile anyone else. Whereas regarding Israel, a corpse can defile, since all supernal holiness has departed from it and the Other Side settles upon it.[333](#)

“Come and see: With this holy *image* a person moves and grows, and from this visage—his form—another image is made, and they join together, one conveying the other. When they are present, the person is protected, his body vital, his spirit abiding within.[334](#)

“When his days draw near [to die], they disappear from him, one removing the other, and the person is left unprotected. Of then is written *Before the day exhales and the shadows flee* (Song of Songs 2:17)—*the shadows*, two.[335](#)

“Come and see: On the day that Judgment is aroused—when the blessed Holy One sits upon the Throne of Judgment to judge the world—a person should rouse *teshuvah*, repenting for his sins. For on that day decrees are written, all placed in an archival ledger—recorded! If a person succeeds in turning back to his Lord, the decrees against him are torn up.[336](#)

“Afterward, the blessed Holy One provides Yom Kippur for a person, the Day of *Teshuvah*. If he repents for his sins, good. If not, the King commands that the decrees be sealed. Woe, for *teshuvah* wishes to depart from him![337](#)

“If he attains complete *teshuvah* fittingly, his sentence is suspended until the last day—*Atseret*, Assembly—which is the eighth day of the Festival. If he achieves perfection in *teshuvah* before his Lord, the decrees are torn up or postponed. If not, the decrees go forth from the King’s palace and are delivered to the bailiff. Once they are handed to him, judgment is surely executed and the decrees do not return to the palace.[338](#)

“Then images are withdrawn, disappearing from him. Once they withdraw, the King’s verdict surely overcomes him and he tastes the cup of death. On that last night of the Festival, bailiffs are summoned and they obtain the decrees. After they do so, images withdraw, disappearing. If they appear diminished, then judgment or illnesses will come upon him diminishedly. This we have already established and it has been discussed.[339](#)

“In the books of the ancients, they say more: Lacking on the head and the body present—his son or wife will endure and he will pass away. This applies when he does not repent during all that time afterward. But if he does, he will taste the taste of death and be healed.[340](#)

“If the body is lacking and the head is visible, they will pass away and he will survive. This applies when his son is small and under his authority and his wife is under his authority.[341](#)

“If his hands are flawed, the work of his hands will be flawed. If his feet, illness pursues him. If the image flees and returns, flees and returns, of him is written *In the morning you will say, ‘If only it were evening,’ and in the evening you will say, ‘If only it were morning’—from your heart’s fright with which you will be afraid* (Deuteronomy 28:67). This pertains when the moon shines and night is arrayed in light.[342](#)

“But virtuous devotees contemplate in their hearts every single day as if on that day they are departing from the world, and they perform complete *teshuvah* before their Lord and require nothing else. Happy is their share in this world and in the world that is coming![343](#)

“Come and see: *All that is called by My name* (Isaiah 43:7). How magnificent are the works of the Holy King! For those creatures that He formed He has linked with supernal entities above, and when they are grasped below and employed in action, that entity above that is linked to it

is aroused. For example, hyssop and cedar wood; and we have already established [220b] these matters.[344](#)

“Some of them are connected with the Holy Name, such as *lulav, etrog*, myrtle, and willow, all of which are linked with His Holy Name above. So we must grasp them and perform an action with them, in order to arouse the one linked with them.[345](#)

“Concerning this we have learned: By word and deed, one must demonstrate the matter, so as to arouse another matter. As is written: *All that is called by My name, whom I created for My glory* (Isaiah 43:7)—to arouse *My glory I created it; I created it* to grasp it. *Whom I formed* (ibid.)—to perform an act with it. *And made* (ibid.)—to arouse a power above.[346](#)

“Alternatively, *All that is called by My name*—corresponding to what is written: *fruit of a majestic tree* (Leviticus 23:40). *Whom I created for My glory*—corresponding to *fronds of palms* (ibid.). *Whom I formed*—corresponding to *and a branch of a thickly-leaved tree*. *And made*—corresponding to *and willows of the stream* (ibid.).[347](#)

“The perfection of what is indicated by *You shall take for yourselves on the first day* (ibid.)—*on the first day*, precisely, which is fifth from the tenth.[348](#)

“However, *on the first day*—who is that *first day*? Well, the *day* that issues *first* of all, with springs of flowing water, and we must conduct this to the world.[349](#)

“This may be compared to a king who bound some people in chains. His mother, the *matronita*, came and set them free. Out of respect for her, the king placed them all in her power. She saw that they were hungry and thirsty. She said, ‘Now that I have set them free, I will provide them with food and drink.’

“Similarly, Yom Kippur has set everyone free, and we are hungry for food and thirsting to drink. Then She crowns the King. On this day we know that flowing water abides

with Her, and we request it from the one who has liberated us. Therefore we call it *first day*. This is in the Book of *Aggadta*, and it is fine.³⁵⁰

“But on this day Abraham is the beginning of all. With clouds of glory he is the beginning, and with water he is the beginning, for Abraham was the first to dig wells of water.³⁵¹

“*Fruit of a glorious tree*—the well of Isaac; for Isaac glorified the blessed Holy One, and He is called a *glorious tree*, and the *fruit* of this *glorious tree* is well known.³⁵²

“*Fronds of palms*—as is written: *The righteous one flourishes like a palm tree* (Psalms 92:13). There is no separation between them, so it is not written *and fronds of palms*, but rather *fronds [of palms]*, for one does not grow without the other. By this, the well is filled with flowing supernal water; this is filled first, and from it the well is filled until it flows to all.³⁵³

“*And a branch of a thickly-leaved tree*—a grand and mighty branch, firmly rooted and becoming a tree towering over all, embracing all sides. A *branch* that is עץ עבות (*ets avot*), a *thickly-leaved tree*—grasping the אבות (*avot*), Patriarchs. For from this, Foundation of the World absorbs its fill, to pour into the well. This is the pouring flow.³⁵⁴

“*And willows of the stream*—two streams, in which water gathers, to pour into Righteous One.³⁵⁵

“Alternatively, *and willows of the stream*—powers linked to Isaac, coming from the aspect of that supernal *stream*, not from the aspect of Father. Therefore, its shade is pleasant, but it does not sweeten fruit or yield fruit.³⁵⁶

“*And willows of the stream*—two pillars on which the body stands, but *willows of the stream*, surely, as has been said. All of these are intended to pour water into the well.³⁵⁷

“Alternatively, *You shall take for yourselves on the first day fruit of a glorious tree*—Abraham.

“*Fronds of palms*—Isaac.

“And a branch of a thickly-leaved tree—Jacob.[358](#)

“And willows of the stream—two rungs that we have mentioned.[359](#)

“The reason for this teaching is that *a thickly-leaved tree* is Jacob, who grasps all parts. Surely, this is Jacob! But as we have already established: *Fruit of a majestic tree* is the well of Isaac, Lower *Gevurah*.[360](#)

“Fronds of palms—כפת (kappot), fronds, spelled deficiently: a bond bound to the well, as is written: כפיתו (kephitu), were bound, in their cloaks (Daniel 3:21), for these do not grow without one another.[361](#)

“And a branch of a thickly-leaved tree—the branch is lofty, becoming a thickly leaved tree, embracing all sides, as has been said.[362](#)

“And willows of the stream—Isaac, on all His sides, joined to the aspect of the stream, not to the aspect of Father. For we have learned: Although Judgment is not found in this stream, judgments are aroused from Her.[363](#)

“Rav Hamnuna interpreted as follows: *And willows of the stream—two pillars, as we have said, from which water comes forth. This is fine. But we have already seen that from these two rungs, standing above the rung of Righteous One, issue fruit and a throng of blessings. Yet willows of the stream yield neither fruit, taste, nor smell. We have already established this, and all is fine.*[364](#)

“So, *etrog* [221a] is on the left, corresponding to the heart; *lulav* is on the right—כפת (kappot), *fronds: כפות (kaphut), bound, to all, linked to all, for Righteous One is kaphut, bound, to all sides. This is the bond of faith.*[365](#)

“In the Book of *Aggadata* it is well said that all these are guests, invited by the Holy People on this day. Having invited them, one should be there with them, and through them one presents his request to the King. Happy are Israel, who know the ways of the Holy King and know the ways of Torah, so that they may walk the path of truth,

thereby becoming worthy both in this world and the world that is coming!³⁶⁶

“On this day the people of Israel leave the royal palace with distinguished signs, for they have been victorious in judgment. What are these signs? Signs of faith, supernal seal of the King.³⁶⁷

“This may be compared to two people who went before the king for judgment. No one knew which of them had won the case. A legionnaire came out of the royal palace, and they asked him. He replied, ‘The one who emerges with royal signs in his hand—he is the victor.’

“Similarly, the whole world comes before the supernal King for judgment, and He judges them from the day of Rosh Hashanah through Yom Kippur to the fifteenth day of the month. Meanwhile, the people of Israel prove themselves worthy—all engaged in *teshuvah*, occupied with the sukkah, *lulav*, and *etrog*. Yet no one knows who has won the case. The supernal angels ask, ‘Who has won?’ The blessed Holy One replies, ‘Those who emerge with My signs in their hands—they are the victors.’

“On this day the people of Israel come out with the King’s sign, with praise and *Hallel*, and they enter the sukkah, an *etrog* in their left hand, a *lulav* in their right. Everyone sees Israel, distinguished with holy insignia; they open, saying, ‘*Happy the people who has it so, happy the people whose God is YHVH!*’ (Psalms 144:15).³⁶⁸

“Until here, joy of all, joy of the guests—and even the nations of the world share in the joy and are blessed through us. Therefore, offerings every day for them, to cast peace upon them, and so that they may be blessed because of us. From here on, one day of the supernal King, who rejoices with Israel, as is written: *On the eighth day, there shall be a convocation for you* (Numbers 29:35). For this day is of the King alone, and his joy is focused on Israel. [3:104b]

“This may be compared to a king who invited some guests. All the members of his palace attended upon them. Afterward, the king said, ‘Until now, you and I attended upon the guests, and you brought offerings for the other nations every day. Now, you and I will rejoice for one day.’ As is written: *On the eighth day, there shall be a convocation for you—for you, bringing offerings for yourselves.*³⁶⁹

“Yet, the guests of faith are with the King constantly, and on the day of the King’s joy they all gather and are present with Him. Thus it is written עֲצֵרֶת (*atseret*), a *convocation*—a gathering.³⁷⁰

“On this day, Jacob heads the rejoicing, and all those guests rejoice with him. Thus it is written *Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you, [a people delivered by YHVH!]* (Deuteronomy 33:29), and similarly: *He said to me, ‘You are My servant, Israel, in whom I glory’* (Isaiah 49:3).”³⁷¹

[*Command the Children the Israel,*] *that they bring you clear oil of beaten olives for lighting, to kindle a lamp perpetually* (Leviticus 24:2).³⁷²

Rabbi El’azar said, “This has already been established, but the blessed Holy One adjoined this section to the section of the festivals! Well, they are

all sublime lamps, all lamps to kindle supernal anointing oil, as has been said. For through Israel, those above and below are blessed; they kindle the lamps, as has been established. And it is written: *Oil and incense rejoice the heart* (Proverbs 27:9)—joy [105a] of above and below.”³⁷³

Rabbi Abba opened, “*Rejoice in YHVH, and delight, O you righteous...* (Psalms 32:11). *Rejoice in YHVH*—as is said: *This is the day YHVH has made. [Let us delight and rejoice in it]* (ibid. 118:24). They have established that one should rejoice in the blessed Holy One and illumine His face, so that one may participate with Him in joy, since that joy

belongs to the blessed Holy One, as is written: *Let us delight and rejoice in it*—בּו (bo), *in it*, in the day; *bo, in Him*, in the blessed Holy One. All is one entity.³⁷⁴

“*Rejoice in YHVH*—when judgments are subdued and Compassion is aroused. When Compassion is aroused, of then is written *Delight, O you righteous*— Righteous One and Righteousness are blessed as one, both called *righteous*, as has been said, for these are blessed eternally, delighting all worlds.³⁷⁵

“*Sing gladly, all upright ones* (Psalms 32:11)—Scions of Faith, linked to them.³⁷⁶

“Come and see: Whoever says that there is no need for action in every respect, or to utter words aloud—may his spirit expire! Here is the proof. This section combines kindling the lamps and aromatic incense as one, for it is written *Oil and incense rejoice the heart* (Proverbs 27:9). By this—by this action—kindling occurs above, joy above, and linking as one, fittingly. By an action below is aroused an action above.”³⁷⁷

Rabbi Yehudah said, “The altar below arouses another altar; a priest below arouses another priest. By an action below is aroused an action above.”³⁷⁸

Rabbi Yose and Rabbi Yitshak were walking on the way. Rabbi Yose said to Rabbi Yitshak, “It is written: [*If you...*] *call the Sabbath ‘delight,’ the holy of YHVH ‘honored’; if you honor it by not going your own ways, pursuing your affairs, or speaking a word* (Isaiah 58:13). *If you honor it by not going your own ways*—fine. But what is the meaning of *pursuing your affairs or speaking a word*? How is this any diminishment of Sabbath?”³⁷⁹

He replied, “It is surely diminishment! For there is not a single word issuing from a person’s mouth that lacks a voice, and this ascends, arousing something else. What is that? One called ‘profane’ above, among those profane

days. When the profane is aroused on the holy day, it is surely deficiency; and the blessed Holy One and Assembly of Israel inquire about him: 'Who seeks to separate our coupling? What is the profane doing here? The Holy Ancient One does not appear or settle upon the profane!' [380](#)

"Therefore, thought is permitted. Why? Because thought accomplishes nothing: no voice is generated thereby nor does it ascend. But after one emits a word from his mouth, that word becomes a voice, splitting the atmosphere and firmaments, rising above, arousing something else. Thus it is written *pursuing your affairs or speaking a word.* [381](#)

"If one emits a holy word from his mouth, a word of Torah, from this is generated a voice ascending, arousing sanctities of the supernal King, which adorn His head. Then joy prevails above and below." [382](#)

He said to him, "Certainly so! I have already heard this. But if someone fasts on Sabbath, does he diminish Sabbath or not? If you say that he does not—look, he has nullified the meals of faith, and his punishment is great; he has nullified the joy of Sabbath!" [383](#)

He replied, "Concerning this matter, I have heard that this one is attended to from above more than all inhabitants of the world. Because this day is joy above and below—joy of all joys, joy suffused with all faith. Even the wicked in Hell rest on this day! Yet this person has no joy nor tranquility; he is different from all those above and below. Everyone asks, 'Why is only so-and-so in sorrow?' [384](#)

"When the Holy Ancient One is revealed on this day, and that person is in sorrow, his prayer ascends and presents itself before Him. Then all the decrees of Judgment that have been issued against him are torn up. Even if confirmed in the royal courts, all is torn up—because when the Holy Ancient One reveals Himself, total freedom and total joy prevail, since He is revealed in the wedding celebration of the King. [385](#)

“Concerning this, we have learned: ‘A decree of seventy years standing against him is torn up.’ Who are ‘seventy years’? Well, even though all those seventy crowns of the King, in which He appears, have confirmed it, all is torn up; for the Holy Ancient One grasps that person. This [105b] only applies when one is warned in a dream on Sabbath eve.[386](#)

“This may be compared to a king who made a wedding celebration for his son and decreed joy for all. On the day of celebration, everyone rejoiced, but one man was sad—constrained in a neck-iron. The king came to the joyous event and saw everyone rejoicing, as he had decreed. Raising his eyes, he saw that man bound in a neck-iron, sad. He said, ‘How can it be that everyone is rejoicing in my son’s wedding celebration, while this one is bound in a neck-iron?’ Immediately, he gave a command and they freed him, releasing him from his bonds.[387](#)

“Similarly with this one who is fasting: the whole world is rejoicing, yet he is sad—constrained in a neck-iron. When the Holy Ancient One is revealed on this day and this person is bound in a neck-iron, even though all those ‘seventy years’ that we mentioned have concurred against him, all is torn up and judgment does not loom over him. On another day, that particular day is empowered to tear it up; all the more so on Sabbath.[388](#)

“For there is not a single day without its own power, and if someone is fasting to avert a dream on that day, the day does not depart before tearing up his sentence—but not that of ‘seventy years,’ as on the Sabbath day.[389](#)

“Therefore, on that very day, not on another, for a day has no authority over another day. Each day can act upon what happens on itself, but not upon what does not. So a person must not postpone it from this day to another; thus we have learned: *each day’s matter on its day* (Leviticus 23:37), not on another day.[390](#)

“Come and see: Not without reason is he warned in a dream—but in order that he may plead for mercy. Woe to one who is neither warned nor informed in a dream, for he is called *evil*! Thus, *Evil cannot abide with You* (Psalms 5:5), and it is written *not visited by evil* (Proverbs 19:23)—*not visited* because he is *evil*.”[391](#)

Rabbi Yose said, “We have learned: *Pursuing your affairs* (Isaiah 58:13). Since it is written *pursuing your affairs, why or speaking a word* (ibid.)? Well, until one articulates a word completely and utters it. Surely this is elucidation of the matter, as implied by what is written: *or speaking a word*.”[392](#)

“Happy are Israel in this world and in the world that is coming. Of them is written *He said, ‘Surely they are My people, children who will not speak falsely.’ So He became their savior* (Isaiah 63:8).”[393](#)

The son of an Israelite woman—he being the son of an Egyptian man—went out among the Children of Israel, and the son of the Israelite woman and certain Israelite man brawled in the camp (Leviticus 24:10).[394](#)

Went out. Rabbi Yehudah said, “He went out from the sphere of all, he went out from the sphere of faith, and he went out from the sphere of the share of Israel.”[395](#)

“*Brawled in the camp*—from here we learn: Whoever comes from polluted seed eventually exposes it before all. What causes this? Filth of the evil portion within him, for he has no share in the entire sphere of Israel.”[396](#)

Rabbi Ḥiyya opened, “*It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, the glory of kings, to probe a matter* (Proverbs 25:2). *It is the glory of God to conceal a matter*—for a human is not permitted to divulge hidden matters not intended to be revealed, things covered by the Ancient of Days, as is said: *that they may eat their fill and cover*

themselves elegantly (Isaiah 23:18). *That they may eat their fill*—until that place permitted to you, no farther. Nevertheless, *and cover themselves* עֲתִיק (atiq), *elegantly—and cover* עֲתִיק (attiq), *the Ancient One*, surely!³⁹⁷

“Alternatively, *that they may eat their fill*—the Companions who know ways and paths, to walk in the way of faith fittingly, such as the generation in which Rabbi Shim’on dwells. *And cover the Ancient One*—from other generations, for none of them are worthy *to eat their fill* and to have matters revealed among them. Rather, *cover the Ancient One*—as is said: *Do not let your mouth make your flesh sin* (Ecclesiastes 5:5). In the days of Rabbi Shim’on, a person would say to his fellow, ‘Open your mouth and let your words shine!’ After he passed away, they would say, ‘*Do not let your mouth make your flesh sin.*’ In his days, *to eat their fill*; after he passed away, *and cover the Ancient One*—for the Companions stammer and cannot comprehend.³⁹⁸

“Alternatively, *to eat their fill*—of those matters that are revealed. *And cover the Ancient One*—those matters that are covered.” [106a]

The son of the Israelite woman pronounced the Name (Leviticus 24:11). What is meant by וִיקוֹב (va-yiqqov), *pronounced*? Rabbi Abba said, “*va-yiqqov, Pierced*, surely—as is said: *va-yiqqov, He pierced, a hole in its door* (2 Kings 12:10)—piercing what had been closed up.”³⁹⁹

His mother’s name was Shelomith daughter of Dibri (Leviticus 24:11). Until here, Scripture concealed his mother’s name; once it is written וִיקוֹב (va-yiqqov), *pierced*, Scripture נִקְיֵב (neqev), *designated*, his mother’s name.⁴⁰⁰

Rabbi Abba said, “Were it not that the Holy Lamp exists in the world, I would not be permitted to reveal. From here on, this word is conveyed only to the Companions, who are among the Reapers of the Field. Contrarily, any who seek to reveal to those who do not know—may their spirit expire!⁴⁰¹

“Come and see: It is written *and the son of the Israelite woman and a certain Israelite man brawled in the camp* (Leviticus 24:10). This verse has already been established; but this is the son of another wife of his father, husband of Shelomith. When that Egyptian copulated with [Shelomith] in the middle of the night, and [her husband] returned home and realized what had happened, he separated from her and no longer cohabited with her. He took another wife and engendered this one, called *a certain Israelite man*, whereas the other one is *the son of the Israelite woman*.⁴⁰²

“If they brawled with one another, what need is there here for the Holy Name, and why did he curse the Holy Name?

“Well, in the midst of fighting, that *certain Israelite man* said something about [the other one’s] mother. Immediately, ויקוב בן האשה הישראלית (*va-yiqqov ben ha-ishah ha-yisre’elit*), *the son of the Israelite woman pierced*—as is said: *Va-yiqqov, He pierced, a hole in its door* (2 Kings 12:10). Mystery of the matter: He took the ה (*he*) of the Holy Name and cursed, to defend his mother. This is piercing, for he pierced the Holy Name. This is uttered for the Reapers of the Field. Mystery of the matter: *Such is the way of an adulteress...* (Proverbs 30:20). Happy is the share of the righteous, who know the matter and conceal it! Thus it is said *Have your quarrel with your neighbor, but another’s secret do not reveal* (ibid.25:9).⁴⁰³

“The final ה (*he*) was the Female, suckling on two sides. Consequently, She took the weapons of the King to wreak Her vengeance. *Take out the one who cursed* (Leviticus 24:14). Thus it is written *Every man shall revere his mother and his father* (ibid. 19:3), reverence for one’s mother preceding that of one’s father. Happy are Israel in this world and in the world that is coming!”⁴⁰⁴

Rabbi Yehudah said, “This has already been established, but it is written *if [anyone] curses his God*—since it says *his*

If anyone curses his God, he shall bear his sin (Leviticus 24:15).[405](#)

God, unspecified, he shall bear his sin; for we do not know who *his God* is, which ‘deity’ he reveres: whether one of the Princes or one of

the stars or conductors of the world.”[406](#)

Rabbi Yose said, “If he were completely righteous, he would not arouse a word; and since he did so, we suspect that he has been infected by heresy. Yet he should not die for this, since the statement is unspecified.”[407](#)

Rabbi Yehudah said, “Judge him favorably, for he said ‘my god.’ He can claim: ‘My god that I had until now, to whom my heart was drawn. Yet now I have returned to supernal faith.’ But if he said ‘YHVH my God’ or ‘YHVH,’ designating Him by name, then he has no claim, since this is the faith of all, and every single letter of this Holy Name amounts to a name.”[408](#)

Alternatively, *The son of the Israelite woman pronounced the Name, cursing it* (Leviticus 24:11). Rabbi Yitshak said, “Why? Well, as has been established—but that *certain Israelite man* was Shelomith’s husband.”[409](#)

Rabbi Yehudah said, “He was the son of Shelomith’s husband from another woman.”[410](#)

Rabbi Yitshak said, “They brawled with one another and he said something about [the other one’s] mother, and that his father was the one killed by the Holy Name—as has been established: It is written הלהרגני אתה אומר (*Ha-lehargeni attah omer*), *Do you speak to kill me [as you killed the Egyptian]?* (Exodus 2:14), for Moses killed him by the Holy Name. So he extended a word toward him.”[411](#)

“This is why it is written *The son of the Israelite woman pronounced the Name, cursing it, and he was brought to Moses*. Why? Because it pertained to Moses, since he had killed [the man’s] father by the Holy Name. Therefore, *he was brought to Moses*. Once Moses perceived, immediately,

he was put under guard... (Leviticus 24:12); so father and son fell into Moses' hands."[412](#)

If anyone curses his God, he shall bear his sin (Leviticus 24:15). Rabbi Yitshak opened, "*Hear, O My people, that I may admonish you; Israel, if you would but listen to Me. There shall be among you no strange god, and you shall not bow to an alien god* (Psalms 81:9-10). Since it is written *There shall be among you no strange god*, what is meant by *and you shall not bow to an alien god*? [106b][413](#)

"Well, one should not let the evil impulse enter. For if anyone seeks to join it, a *strange god* dwells within him: when a person joins it, he immediately proceeds to transgress the decrees of Torah, proceeds to transgress the faith in the Holy Name, and later comes to bow before false gods. Thus it is written *There shall be* כָּךְ (*vekha*), *within you, no strange god*—since *there shall be within you no strange god*, you will not come to bow before false gods or transgress the faith in the Holy Name, as is written: *and you shall not bow to an alien god*. This is a person's evil faith.[414](#)

"Thus, *if [anyone] curses his God*—for he can claim that he cursed the evil faith that sometimes settles upon him, and we do not know whether his words are true or not, so *he shall bear his sin*. But *he who pronounces the name of YHVH shall surely be put to death* (Leviticus 24:16)."[415](#)

Rabbi Yehudah said, "If so, why *he shall bear his sin*? The verse should read *his sin shall be forgiven*. However, if he said 'my God,'—as we have established: unspecified, inexplicit."[416](#)

Rabbi Hiyya said, "*If [anyone] curses his God*—unspecified, inexplicit; surely, *he shall bear his sin*. But *he who pronounces the name of YHVH shall surely be put to death*—for here depends faith of all, and he has no right to claim anything."[417](#)

Rabbi Yose said, “Surely this faith is faith of above and below; upon this all worlds are established. From one tiny letter dangle a million, a billion worlds of yearning. Of this we have learned: These letters are linked with one another, and countless thousands and myriads of celestials dangle from every single letter—ascending, connecting with faith. Revealed and concealed within them is that which has not been grasped by those above or below. Torah depends on them—this world and the world that is coming—He and His Name are one. Thus it is written *I said, ‘Let me guard my ways from sinning with my tongue’* (Psalms 39:2), and similarly: *Do not let your mouth make your flesh sin* (Ecclesiastes 5:5).”[418](#)

Rabbi Hizkiyah opened, “*No hand shall touch it, but he shall surely be stoned or be shot; whether beast or person, he shall not live. When the ram’s horn blasts long, [they may go up on the mountain]* (Exodus 19:13). Now, if concerning Mount Sinai—which is a mountain like other mountains of the world—once the glory of the Holy King appeared upon it, it is written *No hand shall touch it, but he shall surely be stoned or be shot*, then all the more so, one who approaches the Holy King! And if concerning Mount Sinai, to which one can extend a hand respectfully and reverently, it is written *No hand shall touch it*—without qualification, even respectfully—then all the more so, one who extends his hand contemptuously toward the King!”[419](#)

Rabbi Yeisa opened, “*He said, ‘Do not come any closer! Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you stand [is holy ground]’* (Exodus 3:5). Now, if concerning Moses, from whom supernal holy radiance never withdrew since the day he was born, it is written *Do not come any closer*—‘Moses, you are not yet worthy to wield My glory’—*Remove your sandals*; if this is so concerning Moses, who approached in reverence and holiness, then one who

approaches the King contemptuously, how much more so!"[420](#)

Rabbi Abba said, "*If anyone curses his God, he shall bear his sin* (Leviticus 24:15). Come and see: When the people of Israel were in Egypt, they were familiar with those Princes of the world, appointed over the other nations, and each one of [the Israelites] possessed an idol representing one of them. Once they were linked with the bond of faith and the blessed Holy One drew them to His service, they separated from them and drew near supernal holy faith. Thus it is written *If anyone curses אלהיו (elohav), his god*—even though it is false worship: since I appointed them as ministers to conduct the world, whoever curses and humiliates them *shall bear his sin*, surely! For by My power they stand and move, conducting the inhabitants of the world."[421](#)

"However, *he who pronounces the name of YHVH shall surely be put to death* (Leviticus 24:16)—not *he shall bear his sin*, as concerning those [Princes of the world], but rather מות יומת (mot yumat), *shall surely be put to death. Mot yumat, dying, he shall be put to death—dying*, in this world; *he shall be put to death*, in the world that is coming. Concerning those [Princes], *he shall bear his sin*, 'because he humiliates My handiwork, humiliates My ministers that I appointed, which is forbidden. But he does not deserve to die.'" [422](#)

Rabbi Shim'on was walking on the way, accompanied by Rabbi El'azar, Rabbi Abba, Rabbi Yehudah, Rabbi Hiyya, and Rabbi Yose. They came to a certain obstructive watercourse, and Rabbi Yose slipped into the water fully clothed. He said, [107a] "This construction of measured water—I wish that it didn't exist!"[423](#)

Rabbi Shim'on said to him, "You are forbidden! This serves the world, and one must not treat contemptuously

those who are of service to the blessed Holy One, especially since they are fashioned genuinely.”⁴²⁴

He opened, saying, “*God saw all that He had made, and look, it was very good* (Genesis 1:31)—existing according to the laws of supernal authority. *God saw all that He had made*—without qualification: even snakes, scorpions, and mosquitoes, and even that which seems to harm the world. Concerning all of them, it is written *and look, it was very good*. All of them serve the world, conduct the world, though people do not know.”⁴²⁵

As they were walking along, they saw a snake leading the way. Rabbi Shim’on said, “Surely, this one is about to perform a miracle for us!”

That snake slithered quickly in front of them and tangled with a viper diametrically across the road. They fought one another and died. When they reached them, they saw them both lying on the road. Rabbi Shim’on said, “Blessed is the Compassionate One who has performed a miracle for us! For if anyone looks at this [viper] while it is alive, or is looked upon by it, he is doomed, all the more so if he approaches it.” He proclaimed over himself, “*No evil will befall you, nor affliction draw near your tent. For His angels He will command for you, to guard you on all your ways* (Psalms 91:10-11). By all things, the blessed Holy One fulfills His commission, and we must not treat contemptuously anything He has made. Thus it is written *YHVH is good to all, and His compassion is over all His creatures*, and similarly: *All your creatures, YHVH, acclaim You* (ibid. 145:9-10).”⁴²⁶

Rabbi Shim’on opened, “*I am a lily of Sharon, a rose of the valleys* (Song of Songs 2:1). How beloved is Assembly of Israel to the blessed Holy One, for He praises Her and She praises Him constantly! How many praisers and singers She arranges continually for the King! Happy is the share

of Israel, who are linked to the holy allotted share, as is written: *Indeed, YHVH's share is His people, Jacob His allotted possession* (Deuteronomy 32:9).[427](#)

"I am a lily of Sharon—Assembly of Israel, who was is called lily, planted in radiant beauty in the Garden.[428](#)

"השרון (Ha-sharon), Sharon—for She שרה (sharah), sings, and offers praise to the supernal King.[429](#)

"Alternatively, I am a lily of Sharon, for She desires to be saturated by the flow of the deep stream, bubbling spring of rivers, as is said: Sharon shall become a pond of water.[430](#)

"A rose of העמקים (ha-amaqim), the valleys—abiding in עמיקתא (amiqta), the depth, of all. A rose of ha-amaqim, the valleys—who are those amaqim, valleys? As is said: ממעמקים (Mi-ma'amaqqim), From the depths, I call You, YHVH (Psalms 130:1).[431](#)

"A lily of Sharon—from that place where the saturating flow of streams issues, never ceasing.[432](#)

"A rose of ha-amaqim, the valleys—a rose from that place called עמיקא (amiqa), Depth, of All, sealed on all sides.

"Come and see: At first, greenish—green like a lily with green leaves. Afterward, a red rose, colored white and red. שושנת (Shoshannat), A rose—with שית (shit), six, leaves. Shoshannat, A rose—for שניאת (shanniyat), She varies, Her colors, ואשתניאת (ve-ishteni'at), and changes, from color to color.[433](#)

*"A rose—first a lily; when She seeks to couple with the King, She is called a lily. After She unites with the King, by those kisses, She is called a rose—for it is written *His lips are like roses* (Song of Songs 5:13).*

"Shoshannat, A rose of, the valleys—for שניית ומשניאת (shanniyat u-mshanneyat), She varies and changes, Her colors: sometimes for good, sometimes for evil; sometimes for Judgment, sometimes for Compassion.[434](#)

"The woman saw that the tree was good for eating and attractive to the eyes and the tree was desirable to look at,

and she took of its fruit and ate (Genesis 3:6). Come and see, for people do not know or consider or contemplate: When the blessed Holy One created Adam, investing him with supernal glory, He asked him to cleave to Him, so that he would be unique and single-hearted, in a place of single cleaving, never changing or reversing—in that bond of faith, to which all is bound, as is written: *and the Tree of Life in the midst of the Garden* (ibid. 2:9).[435](#)

“Afterward, they strayed from the way of faith—abandoning the unified tree, highest of all trees—and came to cling to a place that changes and turns from color to color, and from good to evil and evil to good. They descended from above to below and clung below to many changes, abandoning the highest of all, who is One and never changing, as is written: *God made the human being upright, but they sought many schemes* (Ecclesiastes 7:29) —*but they sought many schemes*, surely! Then their hearts changed in that very aspect: sometimes toward good, sometimes toward evil; sometimes to Compassion, sometimes to Judgment— [107b] according to that to which they clung, surely! *They sought many schemes* and clung to them.[436](#)

“The blessed Holy One said to [Adam], ‘You have abandoned life and clung to death.’ Life, as is written: *and the Tree of Life in the midst of the Garden*—a tree called *Life*, for whoever grasps it never tastes death. ‘And you clung to another tree—surely, death faces you.’ As is written: *Her feet descend to Death* (Proverbs 5:5), and similarly: *I find woman more bitter than death* (Ecclesiastes 7:26). Surely, he clung to the place of death and abandoned the place of life; therefore, death was decreed upon him and upon the whole world.[437](#)

“If he sinned, how did the whole world sin? If you say, ‘All the creatures came and ate of this tree, trampling all around it’—not so! Rather, when Adam stood erect, all the creatures saw him and feared him and followed him like

servants in the presence of a king. He said to them, '*Come, let us bow down and kneel, let us bend the knee before YHVH our maker* (Psalms 95:6),' and they all followed him. When they saw Adam bowing to this place and clinging there, they were all drawn after him; so he inflicted death upon himself and the whole world.[438](#)

"Then Adam changed into many aspects: sometimes good, sometimes evil; sometimes agitation, sometimes calm; sometimes judgment, sometimes compassion; sometimes life, sometimes death—never enduring constantly in any of them, because that place dominated him. Thus it is called *the ever-turning sword* (Genesis 3:24)—*ever turning* from this side to that: from good to evil, from Compassion to Judgment, from peace to war. She is *ever turning* every way—good and evil, as is written: *But from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat* (ibid. 2:17).[439](#)

"The supernal King, out of compassion for His handiwork, warned him, saying, *But from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat...* Yet he did not accept, and was drawn after his wife and banished forever; for woman attains her place and no farther, and woman brought death upon all.[440](#)

"Come and see: Of the world that is coming, it is written *For as the days of the tree shall the days of My people be* (Isaiah 65:22)—that well-known one! Of that time is written *He will swallow up death forever. YHVH Elohim will wipe away tears from all faces and remove the disgrace of His people from the whole earth—for the mouth of YHVH has spoken* (ibid. 25:8)."[441](#)

Parashat Be-Har

“ON THE MOUNTAIN” (LEVITICUS 25:1-26:2)

Rabbi El’azar opened, *“This is the teaching of the ascent offering. It is that which ascends... (Leviticus 6:2).* We have established this verse as referring to Assembly of Israel, who ascends and joins the Holy King in complete coupling.¹

*“It is that which ascends upon its hearth on the altar all night... Come and see: As soon as night enters and gates are shut, lower judgments are aroused in the world, and donkeys, asses, and dogs go roaming. Donkeys, as we have already established. Asses and dogs do not roam about; rather with them sorcery is performed for people—for example, Balaam, as has been established. Then all inhabitants of the world sleep, and the lower altar outside is aflame.”*²

“At midnight a north wind is aroused, and from that lower altar darts a flame of fire, and gates are opened and lower judgments withdraw into their holes. That flame goes roaming, and gates are opened until the flame arrives. It splits in many directions and enters [108a] beneath the wings of the rooster, which then crows.”³

“Then the blessed Holy One appears among the righteous, and Assembly of Israel praises Him until morning comes. When morning comes, they are found conversing on a certain mystery, and She takes pleasure in

Her Husband. As is written: *upon her hearth on the altar all night till morning*—for in the morning judgments and flames subside, and Abraham awakens in the world, and there is tranquil pleasure for all.⁴

“Come and see: When Israel entered the Land, there were no lower judgments there, and Assembly of Israel rested tranquilly upon the wings of the cherubim, as has been said, for it is written: *Righteousness lodged in her* (Isaiah 1:21). Then She had repose from all, for Israel did not sleep until they had brought the twilight offering and judgments departed. The ascent offering was consumed upon the altar, and then She had repose from all, and there was only Wife with Her Husband, as is written: *When you enter [the land that I am giving you,] the land shall rest* (Leviticus 25:2)—tranquil pleasure, surely! *The land shall rest, a Sabbath to YHVH—a Sabbath for YHVH, really!*”⁵

Rabbi El’azar opened again, “*If you buy a Hebrew slave, six years he shall serve [and in the seventh he shall go free, with no payment]* (Exodus 21:2)—for every son of Israel who bears the holy insignia has repose in the Sabbatical year, since that Sabbatical is his, to rest therein. This is called *Sabbath of the land* (Leviticus 25:6)—surely containing freedom, containing rest. Just as Sabbath is rest for all, so the Sabbatical year is rest for all, rest for spirit and body.⁶

“Come and see: ה (He) is rest for those above and below. Thus, higher *he*, lower *he*—rest for those above, rest for those below. Higher *he*, *seven years seven times* (Leviticus 25:8); lower *he*, seven years alone. One is Sabbatical year; the other, Jubilee. Upon contemplating matters, all is one.⁷

“Therefore, *the land shall rest* (Leviticus 25:2)—in that repose of the land, slaves must rest; so *in the seventh he shall go free, with no payment* (Exodus 21:2). חִנָּם (Hinnam), *With no payment*—what is *hinnam*? That he gives his master nothing.⁸

“However, this is a mystery! I have learned as follows: It is written *We remember the fish we used to eat in Egypt ḥinnam, for nothing* (Numbers 11:5)—‘without a blessing, since in Egypt we didn’t have a heavenly yoke upon us.’⁹

“Come and see: Slaves are exempt from the yoke of the Celestial Kingdom, so they are exempt from the *mitsvot*. What is the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven? Well, as with an ox upon which they first place a yoke in order to derive benefit for the world; and if it doesn’t accept that yoke, it does no work at all. Similarly, a person must first accept upon himself a yoke, and afterward he will perform whatever is required; and if he doesn’t first accept this upon himself, he cannot serve.¹⁰

“As is written: *Serve YHVH with awe* (Psalms 2:11). What is *with awe*? As is said: *The beginning of wisdom is awe of YHVH* (Psalms 111:10). This is the Kingdom of Heaven, and thus, ‘the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven.’ So this is first of all. What proves it? First of tefillin is of the hand, for thereby one enters the rest of holiness. If he lacks this, supernal holiness does not abide with him. Therefore it is written: *בזאת (Be-zot), With this, shall Aaron enter the sanctuary...* (Leviticus 16:3).¹¹

“This yoke does not settle upon one who is bound by another, and so 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, for the rest does not settle upon someone until this yoke is on him. Therefore Israel ate in Egypt *ḥinnam, for nothing* (Numbers 11:5). Here, too, *he shall go free ḥinnam, for nothing* (Exodus 21:2)—since he was a slave and whatever he did was *for nothing*, without the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven. Yet although his deeds were *for nothing, he shall go free and find rest*.¹²

“After gaining freedom and rest, a yoke is placed upon him from the place that liberated him. And if a person refuses to go free—as is said: *If the slave declares, ‘I love*

my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go free' (Exodus 21:5)—then surely he has damaged this place by abandoning the yoke of the Celestial Kingdom and accepting the yoke of his master. So what is written? *His master shall make him approach* הֵאֵלֶיךָ (*ha-Elohim*) *and make him approach the door or the doorpost...* (ibid., 6)—*His master shall make him approach ha-Elohim, the Elohim,* unspecified: the one whom he impaired, who is also called *Elohim*.¹³

“Which place should he approach? *The door or the doorpost,* [108b] for this place is the opening above and is called מְזוּזָה (*mezuzah*), *doorpost,* as has been said.¹⁴

“Since he intended to damage this place, that blemish remains with him, in his body, as is written: *and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl, and he shall serve him forever* (Exodus 21:6)—he will be a slave under his master’s feet until the year of the Jubilee.¹⁵

“Why *his ear*? This has already been established. But ‘hearing’ depends upon this place; ‘doing,’ above. And because when Israel approached Mount Sinai, yearning in their hearts to draw near the blessed Holy One, they placed doing before hearing—for hearing is first, and afterward doing. Hearing depends on this Sabbatical year; so since he impaired this hearing, his hearing is impaired, and a blemish remains in him. He does not remain a slave to his master until he approaches the place that he damaged and becomes damaged before it, and that blemish remains in him. Therefore, *his master shall make him approach the Elohim,* unspecified, as we have established. Thus, *the land shall rest* (Leviticus 25:2).¹⁶

“*Six years you shall sow your field.... But in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of complete rest for the land, a Sabbath to YHVH* (Leviticus 25:3–4). This has already been established, as is written: *But in the seventh you shall release it and leave it fallow...* (Exodus 23:10). Why? *That*

the needy of your people may eat (ibid.), for the poor depend upon this place, so let them eat.¹⁷

“Consequently, one who shows compassion to a poor person brings peace to Assembly of Israel, increases blessing in the world, and gives joy and strength to the place called צדקה (*Tsedakah*), Righteousness, to pour blessings upon Assembly of Israel, as we have established.”¹⁸ [110b]

And should you say, “What will we eat [in the seventh year...]?” (Leviticus 25:20).¹⁹

Rabbi Yehudah opened, “*Trust in YHVH and do good. Dwell in the land and shepherd faith* (Psalms 37:3). A person

should always be aware of his Lord and unite his heart with supernal faith, so as to be complete with his Lord. For when he is complete with Him, no inhabitant of the world can harm him.

“Come and see: *Trust in YHVH and do good*. What is meant by ועשה טוב (*va-aseh tov*), *and do good*? Well, we have learned as follows: By an action below is aroused an action above. As has been established: ועשיתם אותם (*va-asitem otam*), *and you do them* (Leviticus 26:3)—it is as if *you make them*, for that arousal of yours that you enact below arouses above. Thus is it written *va-aseh tov, and make good*—and *good* is none other than Righteous One, as is written: *Say of the righteous one that he is good* (Isaiah 3:10). Once you do this, surely *good* is aroused; then, *dwell in the land and shepherd faith*, and all is one.²⁰

“*Dwell in the land*—Supernal Land, for no one in the world can dwell with Her before arousing this *good* toward Her. Once he arouses Him, it is as if he ‘makes’ Him. Then, *dwell in the land*—dwell within Her, eat Her fruit, delight in Her.²¹

“*And shepherd faith—the land*, and all is one, as is said: *and Your faithfulness in the nights* (Psalms 92:3). *And shepherd faith*—conduct Her however you wish.²²

“If you do not arouse this *good* toward Her, keep your distance from Her and do not approach Her: do not venture into a blazing fiery furnace. And if you do approach Her—in fear, like one who fears death; for then fire rages, consuming the world with its flames. But once this *good* is aroused toward Her, then dwell within Her, do not fear Her. Then, *You will decree and it will be fulfilled, and light will gleam on your ways* (Job 22:28).²³

“Come and see: Scions of Faith conduct this one as they wish every day. Who are Scions of Faith? Those who arouse this *good* toward Her, without sparing what they own, knowing that the blessed Holy One will give them more, as is said: *There is one who scatters yet gains more* (Proverbs 11:24). Why? Because this one stimulates blessings toward him. A person should not say, ‘If I give this now, how will I manage tomorrow?’ Because the blessed Holy One will bestow blessings upon him overwhelmingly, as has been established.²⁴

“Therefore, *And should you say, ‘What will we eat in the seventh year...?’*” (Leviticus 25:20). What is written? *I will ordain My blessing for you in the sixth year, and it will yield enough produce for three years* (ibid., 21). ועֲשֶׂה (ve-asat), *And it will yield*—the verse should read ועֲשֶׂתָה (ve-asetah); why ve-asat? Well, to exclude הוּ (he), who has release and rest, and performs no work. It is written: *See that YHVH has given you the Sabbath. Therefore He gives you on the sixth day bread for two days...* (Exodus 16:29). Similarly, *I will ordain My blessing for you in the sixth year...*²⁵

Rabbi Ḥiyya and Rabbi Yose were walking on the way; they encountered a certain mountain. They found two men who were walking, and just then they saw another person coming. He said to [the two men], “I beg of you, give me food—a piece of bread—’cause for two days I’ve been lost in the desert and I haven’t eaten anything!”

One of the two men slipped aside, took out his food that he brought for the way, and gave it to him, providing him food and drink. His companion said to him, "What will you do for food, since I'm going to eat my own?"

He replied, "Do you think I'm relying on your food?"

That poor man sat by him until he had eaten all that he had, and [whatever] bread [remained] he gave to [the poor man] for the road, and [the poor man] went his way.

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "The blessed Holy One did not wish that this deed should be done by us."²⁶

Rabbi Yose said, "Perhaps judgment was decreed upon that person, and the blessed Holy One wanted to provide this opportunity to him in order to save him."²⁷

While they were going along, that man became faint on the way. His companion said to him, "Didn't [111a] I tell you not to give away your bread?"

Rabbi Ḥiyya said to Rabbi Yose, "Look, we have some food, let's give him some to eat!"

Rabbi Yose replied, "Do you want to exhaust his merit? Let's wait and see, for surely fastened to this one's ropes is a flickering ember of death, and the blessed Holy One wished to provide him an opportunity for merit in order to save him."²⁸

Meanwhile, that man sat down and slept beneath a certain tree, and his companion went farther on and sat somewhere else. Rabbi Yose said to Rabbi Ḥiyya, "Now let us sit and watch, for surely the blessed Holy One wants to generate a miracle for him."

They stood up and waited. After a while, they saw a flaming ember poised next to him. Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "Woe to that man, for he is about to die!"²⁹

Rabbi Yose said, "Happy is that man, for the blessed Holy One is going to perform a miracle for him!"

At that moment, a snake came down from the tree, intending to kill him. That flickering ember attacked and killed it; then, erecting its head, it went away.³⁰

Rabbi Yose said, “Didn’t I tell you that the blessed Holy One wanted to generate a miracle for him, and that you should not exhaust his merit?”³¹

Meanwhile, that man awoke, and he rose to go. Rabbi Hiyya and Rabbi Yose grasped him and gave him food. After he ate, they showed him the miracle that the blessed Holy One had performed for him.

Rabbi Yose opened, saying, “*Trust in YHVH and do good. Dwell in the land and shepherd faith* (Psalms 37:3). Happy is the share of a person who does [good], using what is his, for he arouses *good* for Assembly of Israel! By what? By צדקה (*tsedaqah*), charity. For when *tsedaqah* is aroused, then *good* is aroused toward Assembly of Israel.”³²

“Thus it is written *Tsedaqah delivers from death* (Proverbs 10:2). Why? Because *tsedaqah* is the Tree of Life, and it is aroused over that Tree of Death, and grasps those who are attached to it and saves them from death. Who causes that Tree of Life to be roused so? You must admit, the *tsedaqah* that [this person] performs. As it were, he performs it above, as is said: *who perform tsedaqah at all times* (Psalms 106:3).³³

[ZH 49d]³⁴ “Now, can a person perform *tsedaqah at all times*? If so, who can do that for twelve hours a day? Rather, we have learned as follows: One who performs *tsedaqah* acts upon *all times*. What is meant by *all times*? As is said: *that he not enter at all times into the sanctuary* (Leviticus 16:2), as has been established.

“Do not say ‘upon Assembly of Israel alone,’ who is a holy time of favor, but even upon *all times* below he increases *tsedaqah*, arousing *tsedaqah* upon all of them, those above and those below. Therefore one should set his heart and aspiration, cleaving to the blessed Holy One.”³⁵

When they reached Rabbi Shim’on, they told him what had happened. He said, “Do you think only this? Anyone who grasps the Tree of Life is saved in this world—even

from death at the hands of another human, all the more so from any other [death].”[36](#)

Rabbi Shim'on said, “By all of them, *tsedaqah* arouses the Tree of Life, and this place is nourishment for all.”[37](#)

“What is the nature of scholars? For they are joined to *tsedaqah*, and all inhabitants of the world are nourished by their very merit, yet they themselves are unable to be nourished by their own merit! For they engage in Torah, and whoever engages in Torah engages in the Tree of Life, from which all inhabitants of the world are sustained. Thus, scholars stimulate nourishment for the world and peace. If they stimulate nourishment for all inhabitants of the world, why don't they do so for themselves?”[38](#)

“Well, a scholar is the actual Tree of Life, and the Tree of Life is nourished only by the World that is Coming, and the World that is Coming does not exist in this world. Rather, after he enters that world, he is then nourished there, and his roots are planted within.”[39](#)

“Now, they eat of the fruit of the Tree of Life. Who is that? The place available to the poor, called *the fruit of the tree in the midst of the garden* (Genesis 3:3). So they eat of that fruit in this world.”[40](#)

“Concerning this we have learned: ‘[The righteous] are nourished by the arm.’ What is meant by ‘arm’? *Gevurah* (Power). And they are destined for the World that is Coming, since the nourishment of the World that is Coming does not exist in this world—only a small contraction of its power, found in the sweetness of Torah. This they taste, upon the fruit of the Lower Tree; this is the delight of scholars and their nourishment.”[41](#)

“Once they pass away from this world, numerous supernal streams of the World that is Coming surround their places, and they will be rooted there and rise above, above. Then, *No eye has seen, O God, but You, what You will do for one who awaits You* (Isaiah 64:3). *Who will do?* Jubilee, the one called the World that is Coming.”[42](#)

“For one who awaits You—surely, for they do not want nourishment for this world, until they attain their nourishment. And what is their nourishment? The World that is Coming. So, happy are they entirely, for of them is written No eye has seen, O God, but You, [what You will do for one who awaits You].” [112a]

Parashat Be-Huqqotai

“BY MY STATUTES” (LEVITICUS 26:3-27:34)

If by My statutes you walk, and My laws you keep and do them (Leviticus 26:3). Rabbi Ḥiyya opened, “My people, remember now what Balak king of Moab plotted, and what Balaam son of Beor answered him. [Recall your journey] from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the saving acts of YHVH (Micah 6:5). My people, remember now—happy is the share of this people whose Lord reproves them so! My people, remember now—‘although you stray from My ways, you are My people, and I do not wish to act toward you according to your deeds.’”¹

Rabbi Yitshak said, “Happy is the share of the people whose Lord says to them, *My people, what have I done to you? How have I wearied you? Testify against Me* (Micah 6:3). *Remember now what Balak king of Moab plotted—*how many things he intended to do to eliminate you from the world, how much sorcery he incited against you!”

Rabbi Yose said, “The blessed Holy One said to Israel, ‘*Remember now.*’ Woe, that we cry out every day, wailing and weeping, *Remember, O YHVH, what has happened to us* (Lamentations 5:1), and He does not want to care for us! He said to us, ‘Please, *Remember* נָא (*na*)’—and *na* conveys nothing but a plea—yet we disregarded Him. Corresponding to this, we cry out, *Remember, O YHVH, what has happened to us!* (ibid.); *Remember, O YHVH, the*

Edomites! (Psalms 137:7). *Remember Your community You acquired of old, You redeemed Your very own tribe!* (ibid. 74:2). *Remember us, O YHVH, when You favor Your people* (ibid. 106:4). But He does not want to care for us.”²

Rabbi Yehudah said, “Surely, if the blessed Holy One did not care for us and remember us, Israel would not survive a single day in exile, as is written: *Yet even this, too —when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them or loathe them so as to destroy them, annulling My covenant with them; for I, YHVH, am their God* (Leviticus 26:44). [112b] The blessed Holy One does not act toward us according to our deeds.

“Come and see: Balak was wiser and more highly skilled in sorcery than Balaam. We have learned as follows: Whatever a person wants to accomplish in this world through serving the blessed Holy One, he must arouse by action; an action below arouses action above, and action requires holiness, as has been established. Where there is no action, there is a word; and action depends upon a word of the mouth, arousing above. Just as we must arouse supernal holiness by action and word, so too those from the side of impurity must arouse their side through action and utterance of the mouth.”³

“Even though Balaam was a greater sorcerer than all sorcerers of the world, Balak was a supreme sorcerer, as has been established. Divination and omen are two rungs. Divination depends on action; omen does not depend on action but rather on observation and utterance of the mouth. Then an impure spirit is aroused upon them, to be clothed in them, and they do what they do.”⁴

“Not so, holy Israel! Rather, they are all holy, all their actions arousing upon themselves a holy spirit, as is said: *until a spirit from on high is poured upon us* (Isaiah 32:15). Thus it is written *Surely there is no omen in Jacob, no divination in Israel* (Numbers 23:23), for they are linked to the side of holiness and their actions proceed in holiness

and they arouse holiness upon themselves, clothing themselves in it.⁵

“Come and see: In *divination*, Balak was greater than all sorcerers; in *omen*, Balaam. So when Balak wished to join him, what is written? *The elders of Moab and the elders of Midian went, with divination in their hand, [and they came to Balaam and spoke Balak’s words to him]* (Numbers 22:7). Whereas Balaam’s actions were by *omen*, by word of the mouth—greater than all sorcerers of the world—and by observing that *omen* he knew how to determine the precise moment. So Balak wished to complete *divination* and *omen*.⁶

“The blessed Holy One said to him, ‘Wicked one, My children have anticipated you! They possess something that no evil aspect of the world or sorcery of the world can approach, and from which all flee. What is that? The Tent of Meeting, holy vessels, Temple implements, aromatic incense—that nullifies all wrath and anger of the world above and below—daily ascent offerings and sacrifices, two altars upon which to perform the service, the table of the Presence, *and the basin and its stand* (Exodus 30:28). And various implements to serve the utterance of the mouth: the ark, the two tablets of Torah, Aaron to atone for the people, and daily prayer.’⁷

“When that wicked one saw this, he said, *Surely there is no omen in Jacob, no divination in Israel* (Numbers 23:23). Why? *YHVH his God is with him, the King’s trumpet blast in his midst* (ibid., 21).⁸

“Therefore, *Remember* נָסַח (*na*), *please, what Balak king of Moab plotted* (Micah 6:5)—‘I beseech you to remember that time when Balak and Balaam joined to destroy you, but they did not succeed because I loved you like a father who loves his son, not abandoning him to anyone else.’⁹

“*From Shittim to Gilgal* (ibid.). What does this have to do with that? Well, the blessed Holy One said to Israel, ‘I beseech you to remember that as long as you held on to

Me, [Balaam] could not prevail against you with his sorcery and omen. But when you let go of Me and were in Shittim, what is written? *The people ate and bowed down to their gods* (Numbers 25:2). *To Gilgal*—as is said: *In Gilgal they slaughtered oxen...* (Hosea 12:12). Then your enemies overpowered you.¹⁰

“Why all this? *That you may know the saving acts of YHVH* (Micah 6:5)—‘all those *saving acts* that I performed for you when you held on to Me, and I let nothing in the world dominate you, and neither higher nor lower wrath nor evil species were able to come near you.’¹¹

“*He said to them, ‘Lodge here tonight, [and I will reply to you as YHVH will speak to me]’* (Numbers 22:8). Come and see: When the sun sets and all gates are shut and night enters and it turns dark, many dogs are loosened from their chains and go roaming through the world. Many princes are appointed over them, conducting them, and there is one prince empowered over all, from the left side. That wicked one [Balaam] was situated near this highest one of all, and he uttered his spells at night, when [that prince] ruled along with all his retinue, and [the prince] came to be with him, revealing whatever he wanted.¹²

“Similarly, [113a] *Elohim came to Laban the Aramean* (Genesis 31:24)—the one who was with him—*Elohim came to Abimelech* (ibid. 20:3). All of them following this pattern; everywhere invoking him with all those spells. So he appears more frequently at night rather than by day. As has been established, Abimelech had many sorcerers and wizards, for it is written: *Abimelech king of the Philistines gazed through the window...* (Genesis 26:8), and it is written: *Through the window she gazed, the mother of Sisera wailed through the lattice: ‘Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why so late the clatter of his wheels?’* (Judges 5:28). As for Laban, we have already established this; and similarly, Balaam.¹³

“So with all of them: *Elohim came to Balaam* (Numbers 22:9); *Elohim came to Laban*; *Elohim came to Abimelech*—he comes to them, not they to him, since [the princes] have no designated place.¹⁴

“Now, you might say, ‘Look, it is written *Elohim!*’ Well, this name is shared by all—even idolatry is called *elohim*—and these princes are in the category of *elohim aḥerim*, other gods. Being in this category, they are called so.¹⁵

“That wicked one used to conjure with his spells and call him, and he came. Therefore it is written: *Lodge here tonight, and I will reply to you as YHVH will speak to me* (Numbers 22:8)—that wicked one boasted, for it is written only that *Elohim came to Balaam* (ibid., 9).¹⁶

“Now, you might say, ‘Look, [*Elohim*] appeared by day—with Balak!’ Well, [Balaam] was surely observing an omen, and at that time he was gazing to determine the precise moment—as is written: *He did not go, as time after time, to encounter omens* (Numbers 24:1). Why *Balaam saw that it was good in the eyes of YHVH to bless Israel* (ibid.)? Well, that day he was gazing to determine the precise moment, but it was unlike other days. Then he saw that wrath was nowhere to be found in the world, so he knew *that it was good in the eyes of YHVH to bless Israel*. Immediately he abandoned all omens of the world and did not observe them.¹⁷

“Come and see: When wrath prevails, the Left is aroused; and that wicked one knew a place below on the left side, so as to curse. At that time, he looked but could not find. Then what is written? *How can I curse whom God has not cursed? How can I doom whom YHVH has not doomed?* (Numbers 23:8). Therefore it is written: *My people, remember now what Balak king of Moab plotted, and what Balaam son of Beor answered him* (Micah 6:5). So, happy is the share of Israel, whose Lord reproves them so!¹⁸

“If בחקותי (*be-ḥuqqotai*), *by My statutes, you walk...* (Leviticus 26:3). *If be-ḥuqqotai, by My statutes*—a place on which depend decrees of Torah, as is said: *My statutes* השמורו (*tishmoru*), *you shall keep* (ibid. 19:19).¹⁹

“And משפטי (*mishpatai*), *My laws, you keep* (ibid. 26:3)—another, higher place to which that חקה (*ḥuqqah*), statute, is linked, and they join with one another. For those above and below, all commands of Torah, all decrees of Torah, and all sanctities of Torah are connected with these, since one is Written Torah and the other, Oral Torah.²⁰

“Thus, *If be-ḥuqqotai, by My statutes, you walk, and mishpatai, My laws, you keep and do them. If be-ḥuqqotai, by My statutes, you walk*—all those decrees, judgments, punishments, and commands included in the place called *ḥuqqah*, statute. *And mishpatai, My laws, you keep*—in the place called Written Torah, as is said: משפט (*mishpat*), *a law, of the God of Jacob* (Psalms 81:5). This is linked to that, and all is one—totality of the Holy Name.²¹

“Whoever transgresses the decrees of Torah is considered to have spoiled the Holy Name, for חק (*ḥoq*), statute, and משפט (*mishpat*), law, constitute the Name of the blessed Holy One. Therefore, *If be-ḥuqqotai, by My statutes, you walk*—the place on which depend decrees of Torah; this is Oral Torah. *And mishpatai, My laws, you keep*—Written Torah. This is totality of the Holy Name.²²

“ועשיתם אותם (*Va-asitem otam*), *And you do them* (Leviticus 26:3). What is meant by *va-asitem otam*? Well, one who fulfills the commands of Torah and walks in [God’s] ways, makes Him above, as it were. The blessed Holy One says, ‘It is as if he made Me!’ This has already been established. So *va-asitem otam, and you make them*, surely! Since they are aroused above you to unite with one another, so that the Holy Name may be perfect, *va-asitem otam, and you make them*, surely!”²³

Similarly, Rabbi Shim’on said, “*David made a name* (2 Samuel 8:13). Now, did David actually make it? Well, since

he walked in the ways of Torah and conducted the kingdom fittingly, he made the Name above, as it were. No king in the world attained [113b] this like David—who used to rise at midnight and praise the blessed Holy One, until the Holy Name ascended its throne when daylight appeared. As it were, he really made the Name—as is said: *The son of the Israelite woman pierced the Name* (Leviticus 24:11). So *David made a name*, and thus, *va-asitem otam, and you make them*, surely! If you strive to make them, restoring the Holy Name fittingly, all those blessings from above will appear by you, fittingly arrayed.²⁴

*“I will give your rains in their season, and the land will give its yield... (Leviticus 26:4). Each one will bestow its power upon you. Who are they? The restoration that you made, which is the Holy Name.*²⁵

“It is written: *They will keep the way of YHVH to do righteousness and justice* (Genesis 18:19). Now, since it is written *they will keep the way of YHVH*, why לעשות (*la’asot*), *to do, righteousness and justice*? Well, one who keeps the ways of Torah עושה (*oseh*), makes, as it were, צדקה ומשפט (*tsedaqah u-mishpat*), *righteousness and justice*. What is *tsedaqah* and *mishpat*? The blessed Holy One.”²⁶

Rabbi Shim’on wept, and said, “Woe to humankind, for they do not know or care about the glory of their Lord! Who makes the Holy Name every day? You must say, one who gives *tsedaqah*, charity, to a poor person.²⁷

“Come and see: It has already been established—and so it is—that a poor person is linked with Judgment and all his nourishment is by Judgment, by the place called *Tsedeq*, Righteousness, as is said: *A prayer of a poor person when* יעטוף (*ya’atof*), *he is faint* (Psalms 102:1). תפילה (*Tefillah*), *A prayer—tefillah*, phylactery, of the hand, as we have established.²⁸

“One who gives *tsedaqah*, charity, to a poor person, makes the Holy Name fittingly complete above, since

tsedaqah is the Tree of Life, and *Tsedaqah* gives to *Tsedeq*. And when it gives to *Tsedeq*, they join with one another and the Holy Name is consummated. If one produces this arousal below, it is surely as if he makes the Holy Name complete. As he acts below, so it is aroused above. Thus it is written *Happy are those who keep justice, עושה צדקה (oseh tsedaqah), who do righteousness, at all times* (Psalms 106:3). *Oseh tsedaqah, who make righteousness*—the blessed Holy One; as it were, he makes Him.²⁹

“Come and see: A poor person’s place has already been identified. Why is it so? Because a poor person has nothing of his own, but only what he is given; similarly, the moon has no light of her own, but only what the sun gives her—nothing more.³⁰

“Come and see: Why is a poor person considered dead? Why? Because that place determines it, for he is in a place of death, so he is called ‘dead.’ Whoever shows compassion for him gives him *tsedaqah*—the Tree of Life—as is said: *Tsedaqah delivers from death* (Proverbs 10:2). And as a person does below, so he does precisely above. Happy is the share of one who makes the Holy Name above. Therefore, *tsedaqah* surpasses all.³¹

“This applies to *tsedaqah* for its own sake, for *Tsedaqah* arouses *Tsedeq*, joining them as one, so that all becomes the Holy Name fittingly. For *Tsedeq* is enhanced and perfected only by *Tsedaqah*, as is written: בצדקה (Bi-tsdaqah), *By righteousness, shall you be established* (Isaiah 54:14), and this is spoken to Assembly of Israel. Thus, *and you make them* (Leviticus 26:3).³²

I will grant peace in the land, and you will lie down with none to make you afraid (Leviticus 26:6).³³

Rabbi Yose opened, “*Tremble, and do not sin. Speak in your hearts on your beds, and be still. Selah* (Psalms 4:5). רגזו (Rigzu),

Tremble, and do not sin—this verse has been established: ‘A person should לארגזא (*le-argaza*), incite, the good impulse against the evil impulse,’ and that is fine. But when night dusks and a person lies upon his bed, many wardens of judgment are aroused in the world and go roaming around, and people should tremble before the blessed Holy One and be afraid, so that their souls will not mingle with them but rather be saved from them. One must not utter a single word about them, so as not to arouse them against him or enable them to haunt him. As is written: *Speak in your hearts on your beds*—not letting a word escape from your mouth—and be still. *Selah.*³⁴

“Come and see: When Israel is found innocent before the blessed Holy One, what is written? *I will grant peace in the land.* This applies above, for the blessed Holy One comes to join Assembly of Israel. Then, *you will lie down with none to make you afraid.* Why? Because *I will eliminate an evil beast from the land* [114a]—an evil species of beast below. Who is that? Agrat daughter of Maḥalat, along with all her retinue. This pertains to night. By day, people deriving from her side, as is written: *and no sword will traverse your land.*”³⁵

Rabbi Abba said, “It has already been established that this applies even to a sword of peace, like that of Pharaoh Necho. However, *no sword will traverse your land*—her retinue. *I will eliminate an evil beast from the land*—that she will have no dominion over the land, not even merely passing through; and even an armed man of the other nations will not pass by you.

“This was expounded by King Josiah, as has been established; but he was seized for the sins of Israel, as is written: *The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of YHVH, was captured by their corruption* (Lamentations 4:20).³⁶

“Here one should examine, for we have learned: ‘If the head of the people is good, the whole people is saved for his sake; and if the head of the people is unworthy, the

whole people is seized for his sin.’ Yet Josiah was a worthy head and his deeds were worthy!³⁷

“However, he was seized for Israel’s sins, for he did not believe Jeremiah and did not restrain Israel, since he thought that they were all as virtuous as he was. Jeremiah told him [otherwise], but he did not believe him; so he was seized for their sins. Furthermore, the moon’s light was fading and was about to be blocked.³⁸

“I will place My Dwelling in your midst, and My soul will not loathe you (Leviticus 26:11). I will place מִשְׁכְּנִי (mishkani), My Dwelling—שְׁכִינְתָא (Shekhinta), Shekhinah. Mishkani—מִשְׁכּוֹנָא (maskhona), pledge, who was seized because of the sins of Israel.³⁹

“I will place mishkani, My Dwelling, in your midst—maskhona, a pledge, surely! This may be compared to a person who loved another. He said to him, ‘My love for you is so strong that I want to live with you!’

“[The other] replied, ‘How do I know that you will stay with me?’

“So he took all his most precious belongings and brought them to him, saying, ‘Here is this pledge for you that I will never part from you.’

“Similarly, the blessed Holy One wished to dwell with Israel. What did He do? He took His most precious delight and brought it down to them, saying, ‘Israel, here is My pledge for you, so that I will never part from you.’

“Even though the blessed Holy One has gone far away from us, He has left a pledge in our hands, and we possess that pledge—His precious delight. If He wants His pledge, let Him come and dwell with us!

“Thus, I will place mishkani, My Dwelling, in your midst—‘I will deposit mashkoni, My pledge, in your hands, so that I will dwell with you.’ Even though the people of Israel are now in exile, the blessed Holy One’s pledge is with them, and they have never forsaken it.⁴⁰

“And My soul will not loathe you. This may be compared to a person who loved another and wanted to live with him. What did he do? He took his bed and brought it to [the other’s] house, saying, ‘Here, my bed is in your house, so that I won’t be far from your bed or your belongings.’⁴¹

“Similarly, the blessed Holy One said, *‘I will place My Dwelling in your midst, and My soul will not loathe you—I will place My bed in your house. Since My bed is with you, you know that I will not part from you.’* Thus, *My soul will not loathe you.*⁴²

“I will walk about in your midst: I will be your God, [and you will be My people] (Leviticus 26:12). Since My pledge is with you, you know for sure that I walk with you, as is said: *For YHVH your God walks about in the midst of your camp to save you and to deliver your enemies to you, and your camp shall be holy...* (Deuteronomy 23:15).”

One night, Rabbi Yitshak and Rabbi Yehudah were in a village near the Sea of Tiberias. They rose at midnight. Rabbi Yitshak said to Rabbi Yehudah, “Let us converse in words of Torah, for although we are in this place, we must not separate ourselves from the Tree of Life.”⁴³

Rabbi Yehudah opened, saying, *“Moses took the Tent and pitched it for himself outside the camp...* (Exodus 33:7). *Moses took the Tent—why?* Well, Moses said, ‘Since Israel has dealt falsely with the blessed Holy One and exchanged His Glory, let His pledge be placed in the hands of a trustee until we see with whom it will remain.’⁴⁴

“He said to Joshua, ‘You will be the trustee between the blessed Holy One and Israel, and the pledge will remain entrusted to you, and we will see [114b] with whom it remains.’

“What is written? *He [Moses] returned to the camp, and his attendant, Joshua son of Nun, a youth, did not depart from within the Tent* (Exodus 33:11). Why Joshua?

Because he was [to Moses] as the moon is to the sun, and he was worthy of guarding the pledge; so *he did not depart from within the Tent.*⁴⁵

“The blessed Holy One said to Moses, ‘Moses, this is not right, for I have given My pledge to them. Even though they have sinned against Me, the pledge must remain with them; they shall not part from it. Do you want Me to part from Israel and never return to them? Rather, return My pledge to them, and for Her sake I will not abandon them.’

“Therefore, in every place—even though Israel has sinned against the blessed Holy One—they have not forsaken this pledge of His, and the blessed Holy One has not taken it from them. So wherever Israel goes in exile, *Shekhinah* is with them; and thus it is written *I will place My Dwelling in your midst* (Leviticus 26:11), as has been established.”⁴⁶

Rabbi Yitshak opened, saying, “*My beloved resembles a gazelle, or a young stag. Here he stands behind our wall, gazing through the windows, peeking through the crevices* (Song of Songs 2:9). Happy are Israel, who are privileged to hold this pledge of the supernal King! For although they are in exile, the blessed Holy One comes on every new moon, Sabbath, and festival to gaze upon them and to behold that pledge of His that is with them, His precious delight.”⁴⁷

“This may be compared to a king whose *matronita* offended him. He expelled her from the palace. What did she do? She took his son—the king’s precious delight, his beloved. Since the king was fond of her, he let him remain in her hands. When the king began to yearn for the *matronita* and his son, he climbed up roofs, descended ladders, and scaled walls—to gaze upon them, peering through holes in the wall. As soon as he saw them, he began weeping from behind chinks in the wall; then he went away.”⁴⁸

“So with Israel: Although they have left the King’s palace, they have not forsaken that pledge; and since the King is fond of them, He has left it with them. When the Holy King begins to yearn for *Matronita* and for Israel, He climbs up roofs, descends ladders—*leaping over mountains, bounding over hills* (Song of Songs 2:8)—and scales walls to gaze upon them, peering through chinks in the walls. As soon as He sees them, He begins weeping. As is written: *My beloved resembles a gazelle, or a young stag—leaping from wall to roof, from roof to wall.*⁴⁹

“*Here he stands behind our wall—in synagogues and houses of study. Gazing through the windows—for surely a synagogue must have windows. Surely, peeking through the crevices—to gaze upon Israel and look after them.*⁵⁰

“Therefore, joy is needed—rejoicing on that day, for they know this, and Israel declares, *This is the day YHVH has made. Let us delight and rejoice in it* (Psalms 118:24).”⁵¹

If you spurn My statutes and if you loathe My laws... (Leviticus 26:15).

Rabbi Yose opened, “*YHVH’s discipline, my son, do not spurn... (Proverbs 3:11).* How beloved is the people of

Israel to the blessed Holy One, who wants to reprove them and guide them in a straight path—like a father who loves his son and, because of his love for him, wants to guide him on a straight path so that he will not stray to the right or the left. As is written: *For the one whom YHVH loves He reproves, as a father does to a son in whom he delights* (ibid., 12). As for one who is not loved by the blessed Holy One, but hated—He removes reproof from him, removes the rod.⁵²

“It is written: *‘I have loved you,’ says YHVH. And you ask, ‘How have You loved us?’... (Malachi 1:2).* Out of His love, there is always a rod in His hand to guide them. *And Esau I have hated* (ibid., 3)—‘so I removed the rod from him,

removed reproof, so as not to share Myself with him. He is distant from My soul, but as for you, *I have loved you, surely!*⁵³

“Therefore, *YHVH’s discipline, my son, do not spurn, and do not despise His reproof.* What is meant by ואל תקוץ (*ve-al taqots*), and do not despise? Do not bristle from it, like one who flees from thorns, for those things are like thorns in one’s flesh.⁵⁴

“Come and see: When Righteousness is aroused with its judgments, many dazzling aspects are aroused, on the right and on the left. Many shafts shoot forth—among them shafts of fire, shafts of embers, shafts of flame—all darting out, flaring through the world, striking human beings.⁵⁵

“Beneath them are other chieftains, masters of fiery sparks, empowered with forty-minus-one. They roam and descend, strike and ascend, and obtain authorization. Entering [115a] the Hollow of the Great Abyss, their sparks are dyed [red], flaming fire fused to them. Embers shoot out—flying, descending, confronting humans. This corresponds to what is written: ויספתי (*ve-yasafti*), *I will go on, to chastise you* (Leviticus 26:18)—‘I will give the Masters of Judgment תוספת (*tosefet*), a supplement, beyond what they already have’; as is written: לא אוסיף (*Lo osif*), *I will not again, curse the ground on humankind’s account* (Genesis 8:21). What is *lo osif, I will not again?* I will not give תוספת (*tosefet*), a supplement, to the Masters of Judgment to destroy the world, but only as much as the world can endure. So *ve-yasafti*—‘I will give *tosefet*, a supplement.’ Why this supplement? In order *to chastise you sevenfold for your sins* (Leviticus 26:18).⁵⁶

“שבע (*Sheva*), *Sevenfold?* If the blessed Holy One collected His due, the world could not endure for even a moment, as is written: *If You keep account of sins, O Yah, Lord, who will survive?* (Psalms 130:3). Yet you say *sheva, sevenfold, for your sins?*⁵⁷

“Rather, what does Scripture mean by saying *sheva*? Behold, *Sheva, Seven*, is confronting you! Who is She? *Shemittah*, Sabbatical, who is seven, called Seven, as is written: *At the end of seven years you shall make שמיטה (shemittah), a release* (Deuteronomy 15:1). Thus, *sheva, seven, for your sins.*⁵⁸

“She is called *Sheva, Seven*, and also *בת שבע (Bat Sheva)*, Daughter of Seven. What is the difference between one and the other? Well, Seven—by Herself, to make *shemittah, a release*, to execute judgments, to liberate completely. Daughter of Seven—joined to another, to illumine, to reign in dominion, to reveal the Kingdom on earth. In all ways, She is called *Sheva, Seven*, as is written: *Therefore the name of the town is באר שבע (Be'er Sheva), Beersheba, to this day* (Genesis 26:33). *Be'er Sheva, Well of Seven*, is the Well of Isaac, and all is one entity.”⁵⁹

Rabbi Abba said, “*I will chastise you, I Myself, שבע (sheva), sevenfold, for your sins* (Leviticus 26:28). *I will chastise you*—through other chieftains, as has been established. *I Myself*—I will be aroused toward you. Behold, *Sheva, Seven*, to be aroused over you.”⁶⁰

“Come and see the sublime love of the blessed Holy One for Israel! This may be compared to a king who had an only son who used to sin against him. One day he offended the king. The king said, ‘All these times I have struck you and you have not obeyed. Now, what should I do to you? If I banish you from the land and expel you from the kingdom, perhaps wild bears or wolves or robbers will attack you and eliminate you from the world. Rather, you and I will leave the land.’

“So *I Myself*—‘you leave the land and *I Myself* will go with you. You and I will go into exile, leaving as one.’

“So said the blessed Holy One to Israel: ‘What should I do to you? I have already struck you, and you did not incline your ears. I have already brought upon you shield-bearing warriors and masters of fiery sparks to smite you,

and you have not listened. I will banish you from the land, and we will go into exile—as is written: *I will chastise you, sending you into exile. But if you say that I will abandon you—I Myself, along with you!*’ As is written: *sheva, seven, for your sins*—corresponding to what is written: *For your crimes, your mother was sent away* (Isaiah 50:1).⁶¹

“The blessed Holy One said, ‘You have caused both Me and yourselves to be homeless in the land. For look, *Matronita* has left My palace along with you! Everything is ruined, My palace is destroyed. For a palace is not fit for a king unless he enters with his *matronita*; a king is only joyful when he enters the *matronita*’s palace and finds her there with her son. Now that neither son nor *matronita* is present, the palace is totally ruined. What will I do? I Myself will go with you!’⁶²

“So now, even though Israel is in exile, the blessed Holy One is with them and does not abandon them. This has already been established, as is written: יהוה אלהיך את שבותך: ושב (Ve-shav YHVH Elohekha et shevutekha), *YHVH your God will return with your captivity* (Deuteronomy 30:3); for when Israel emerges from exile, the blessed Holy One will return with them, as has been said.”⁶³

Rabbi Ḥiyya and Rabbi Yose were walking on the way, and they came upon a certain cave in a field. Rabbi Ḥiyya said to Rabbi Yose, “[I wonder] about what is written: *These are the words of the covenant ... besides the covenant* (Deuteronomy 28:69). דברי הברית (Divrei ha-berit), *The words of the covenant*—why *the words of the covenant*? The verse should read דברי גבורה (divrei gevurah), *words of power*.”⁶⁴

He replied, “This has already been established: These derive מפי הגבורה (mi-pi ha-gevurah), from the mouth of Power; whereas those derive מפי עצמו (mi-pi atsmo), from [Moses’] own mouth, as has been said.⁶⁵

“Come and see: Both these and those were *words of the covenant*. [115b] For although these derived *mi-pi ha-gevurah*,

from the mouth of Power, they were *words of the covenant*, since good and evil depend upon it: good issuing from Righteous One, evil issuing from Judgment—Judgment from the site of Judgment, namely Righteousness. Righteous One and Righteousness are Covenant, and called *covenant*. So [these words] are *words of the covenant*, and Covenant is bound as one.⁶⁶

“Consequently, זכור ושמור (*Zakhor ve-shamor*), *Remember and Keep*, bound as one—*Remember* by day, *Keep* by night—Covenant as one. Thus, surely they are *words of the covenant*, and *covenant* always abides in this place.”⁶⁷

Rabbi Hiyya said, “Certainly so! Therefore Sabbath, which is *Remember* and *Keep*, is called *covenant*, as is written: *The Children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath ... throughout their generations, an eternal covenant* (Exodus 31:16). All is one entity, and this place is called *covenant* everywhere.⁶⁸

“Come and see: It is written *I will grant peace in the land* (Leviticus 26:6)—*Yesod*, who is peace of the land, peace of the home, peace of the world.⁶⁹

“*I will chastise you, I Myself*, שבע (*sheva*), *sevenfold, for your sins* (Leviticus 26:28). What is meant by *sheva*, *seven*? Righteousness. Surely, Covenant, and thus they are *words of the covenant*.”⁷⁰

Rabbi Yose said, “ואף גם זאת (*ve-af gam zot*) *Yet even this, too—when they are in the land of their enemies, [I will not reject them or loathe them so as to destroy them, annulling My covenant with them...]* (Leviticus 26:44). *ve-af*, *Yet even*—as is said: אף אני (*af ani*), *I Myself* (ibid., 28).⁷¹

“*Gam, Too*—to include Assembly of Israel, who is called *zot, this*, who never abandons them.⁷²

“*When they are in the land of their enemies—when they are all together.*

“*I will not reject them or loathe them—so as not to join with them.*

*“Annulling My covenant with them—for if I do not redeem them, My covenant is split. So I will not annul My covenant with them.”*⁷³

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “I have heard something new said by Rabbi El’azar:

*“I will not reject them or loathe them so as to destroy them—the verse should read I will not strike them or kill them so as to destroy them. However, I will not reject them or loathe them—one who is hated by another is rejected by him and utterly loathsome to him; but I will not reject them or loathe them. Why? ‘Because My soul’s beloved is among them, and for Her sake all of them are beloved to Me.’ As is written: לְכַלּוֹתָם (le-khallotam), so as to destroy them—spelled לְכַלְלָתָם (le-khallatam), because of their Bride: ‘for Her sake, I will not reject them; since She is the love of My soul, My love is with Her.’*⁷⁴

“This may be compared to a man who loves a woman, and she lives on the tanners’ street. If she were not there, he would never enter the place. Since she is there, it seems to him as a street of spice-peddlers, filled with all the aromas of the world.⁷⁵

“Here, as well: *Yet even this, too, when they are in the land of their enemies—which is a tanners’ street—I will not reject them or loathe them. Why? Le-khallatam, Because of their Bride, whom I love—the love of My soul, dwelling there. And it seems filled with the finest aromas of the world because of that Bride in their midst.*”

Rabbi Yose said, “If I have come here just to hear this word, it is enough for me!”⁷⁶

He opened, saying, “A son honors his father, and a servant his master (Malachi 1:6). A son honors his father—as is said: Honor your father and your mother (Exodus 20:12), and they have established: with food, drink, and everything. This pertains during his lifetime, when one is obligated to do so. After he dies, do you think that one is exempt? No. For although he has died, one is obligated

even more, as is written: כבוד את אביך (*Kabbed et avikha*), *Honor your father*. If that son pursues a path of stumbling, he surely shows contempt for his father, surely causing him shame. But if that son follows a straight path and refines his conduct, he surely honors his father—honoring him in this world among people, honoring him in that world by the blessed Holy One. For the blessed Holy One watches over him and seats him upon a throne of honor. Surely, *A son honors his father!*⁷⁷

“For example, Rabbi El’azar, who honors his father in this world and in that world. Now the praise of Rabbi Shim’on increases in two worlds, in this world and in that world, more than in his lifetime. Happy are the righteous, who attain holy children, holy shoots! For them is proclaimed *All who see them recognize that they are seed YHVH has blessed* (Isaiah 61:9).”⁷⁸ [117a]

Parashat Be-Midbar

“IN THE DESERT” (NUMBERS 1:1-4:20)

YHVH spoke to Moses in the Desert of Sinai in the Tent of Meeting on the first of the second month...
(Numbers 1:1).¹

Rabbi Abba opened, “*God created the human in His image; in the image of God He created him* (Genesis 1:27). This verse has been discussed. Come and see: When the blessed Holy One created the human being, He made him in the image of those above and below: he was composed of all, and his light shone from one end of the world to the other, and all feared him.²

“Although it has been established, this verse should be examined further. *God created the human in His image; in the image of God [He created him]*. Since it says *God created the human in His image*, why *in the image of God [He created him]*? Well, surely two rungs, comprising male and female—one for male and one for female.

“Consequently, they were *דו פרצופין* (*du partsufin*), with two faces, as demonstrated by the end of the verse: *male and female He created them* (Genesis 1:27). He was complete on all sides. Even though the female was adjoined to his side, she too was composed of two sides—to be totally complete.³

“He contemplated wisdom, above and below. Once he degenerated, faces diminished, wisdom departed from him, and he considered only matters relating to his body.⁴

“Afterward, he engendered sons from above and below, but they did not settle with one another in the world. Finally, he engendered a son by whom the world אשתיל (*ishetil*), was sown, and he was called שֵׁט (*Shet*), Seth, as has been demonstrated.⁵

“Even so, the lower world was neither perfected nor complete nor fulfilled until Abraham came, when it became established. The world was incomplete until Abraham appeared, grasping it with the right hand—as one grasps with the right hand someone who is falling. Isaac came and grasped the world with the left hand, and it was more firmly established. When Jacob came, the world stood firm and did not totter.⁶

“Even so, it did not take root until [Jacob] engendered twelve tribes and seventy souls, and the world was firmly planted. Even so, it was not perfected until the blessed Holy One gave the Torah at Mount Sinai and the Dwelling was erected. Then worlds were established, and those above and below became fragrantly firm.⁷

“Once Torah and the Dwelling were established, the blessed Holy One wished to count [117b] the forces of Torah—how many troops of Torah there were, and how many troops of the Dwelling.⁸

“Come and see: Every entity that needs to be settled in its place does not settle until it is mentioned by mouth and enumerated. Here, too, the blessed Holy One wished to count the forces of Torah and the forces of the Dwelling, and all were as one, inseparable from each other, all corresponding to the pattern above; for Torah and Dwelling do not separate from one another and proceed as one.⁹

“Therefore their forces are enumerated, to be recognized by them—except for those others who are not counted. Thus it is written *YHVH spoke to Moses in the Desert of Sinai in the Tent of Meeting* (Numbers 1:1). For if *in the Tent of Meeting*, why *in the Desert of Sinai*? Well,

one for Torah and one for the Dwelling; *in this and in that.*¹⁰

*“On the first of the second month in the second year (Numbers 1:1)—all is one. This is called the month of זיו (ziv), Glow (1 Kings 6:1), alluding to the month that illumines the moon, for then all worlds were in perfection.*¹¹

“After their going out from the land of Egypt (Numbers 1:1)—to reveal that when Israel went out of Egypt, it was in the first month.”¹²

Rabbi Yitshak opened, “*יְהוָה זָכְרָנוּ בְּרַךְ (zekharanu yevarekh), is mindful of us—may He bless. May He bless the house of Israel, may He bless the house of Aaron. May He bless those who revere יְהוָה (Psalms 115:12-13). יְהוָה זָכְרָנוּ בְּרַךְ (zekharenu yevarekh)—the males, who were enumerated in the desert, whom the blessed Holy One blesses, to whom He adds more constantly.*¹³

*“Come and see: One who speaks in praise of his friend or of his [friend’s] wealth, should bless him and confirm those blessings. How do we know this? From Moses, as is written: Here you are today as numerous as the stars of the heavens (Deuteronomy 1:10). What is written next? May יְהוָה, God of your fathers, add to you a thousand times more than you are (ibid., 11). There are two blessings here. One, May יְהוָה, God of your fathers, add to you. This is one; then, and bless you as He has spoken to you (ibid.), confirming for them blessings upon blessings.*¹⁴

“If he recounts the praise of his friend and does not confirm the blessings, he will be the first to be punished from above. And if he blesses him, he will be blessed from above.”¹⁵

“The blessing should be given generously, not grudgingly. In all things, the blessed Holy One desires love of the heart. Now, if concerning one who blesses his friend, the blessed Holy One wants him to bless generously and

wholeheartedly, then how much more so, one who blesses the blessed Holy One must do so generously and wholeheartedly—with love of the heart! Thus it is written *You shall love YHVH your God [with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might]* (Deuteronomy 6:5).¹⁶

“Come and see: Blessing from above does not settle upon anything counted. Now, you might say, ‘How were the people of Israel counted?’ Well, a ransom was taken from them, as has been established, and no counting took place until that ransom was collected and totaled up. First, Israel was blessed, and then that ransom was counted, and then Israel was blessed once again. Thus Israel was blessed in the beginning and at the end, and no pestilence touched them.¹⁷

“Why does pestilence pertain to counting? Well, because blessing does not settle upon anything counted. As soon as blessing departs, the Other Side settles there and can inflict harm. Therefore in counting, redemptive ransom is taken, to avert pestilence.

“*May He bless the house of Israel* (Psalms 115:12)—the women, who were not reckoned in the count.¹⁸

“*May He bless the house of Aaron* (ibid.)—for they bless the people generously, wholeheartedly, with love of the heart. *The house of Aaron*—so, too, the women, who are blessed by their blessing.¹⁹

“*May He bless those who revere YHVH* (ibid., 13)—the Levites and all those who revere the blessed Holy One.

“*The small with the great* (ibid.)—even though they were not included in the count.²⁰

“Come and see: In no other counting of Israel were they blessed as in this one. For this counting was intended for blessing—a counting to consummate completeness of the worlds. They were counted in a place where blessings issue, as is written: *on the first of the second month* (Numbers 1:1), which is זִיבָה (*ziva*), a glow, of blessings for the world, from which a glow radiates to the world. So it is

called the month of זִיב (Ziv), Glow, since the glow of all radiates from there. Thus it is written *YHVH will bless you from Zion* (Psalms 134:3)—one matter—and it is written *for there YHVH ordained [118a] blessing* (ibid. 133:3).²¹

Rabbi Yehudah was present before Rabbi Shim'on. He asked him, "From where is Israel blessed?"

He replied, "Woe to the world, for humans do not consider or contemplate the glory of the supernal King!

"Come and see: When the people of Israel were found worthy before the blessed Holy One, and worlds appeared in one holy supernal tree, containing sustenance of all, then it was blessed from the place of all blessings, in which its roots were deeply planted. And the people of Israel below were blessed—their roots planted—from the place where all those blessings issue, undelayed, as is said: *YHVH will bless you from Zion* (Psalms 134:3), and it is written: *Like the dew of Hermon that descends upon the mountains of Zion, for there YHVH ordained blessing—everlasting life* (ibid. 133:3).²²

"This is radiance of the world, as is written: *From Zion, perfection of beauty, God הוֹפִיעַ (hofi'a), shone forth* (Psalms 50:2); *hofi'a*—radiated, as is said: *Hof'ia, He radiated, from Mount Paran* (Deuteronomy 33:2). When this is aroused, all are in affection, all in love, all complete. Then, peace entirely—peace of those above and those below, as is written: *May there be peace within your ramparts, tranquility in your palaces* (Psalms 122:7).²³

Every man with his unit, with insignia for his father's house, shall the Children of Israel camp ... (Numbers 2:2).²⁴

her (Isaiah 66:10). How beloved is Torah before the blessed

Rabbi El'azar opened, *"Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad with her, all you who love her! Rejoice with her in joy, all you who mourn over*

Holy One! For wherever words of Torah are heard, the blessed Holy One and all His forces listen; and the blessed Holy One comes to dwell with the one uttering them, as is written: *Wherever I cause My name to be mentioned, I will come to you and bless you* (Exodus 20:21). Furthermore, his enemies will fall before him, as has been established.²⁵

“Come and see: The commandments of Torah are exalted on high. If a person comes and fulfills one commandment, it stands before the blessed Holy One—all adorned—and says, ‘So-and-so fulfilled me; I come from him,’ since he arouses it above. As he arouses it below, so is it aroused above, making peace above and below, as is said: *Or let him hold fast to My refuge, that he may make peace with Me; peace he will make with Me* (Isaiah 27:5). *That he may make peace with Me*, above; *peace he will make with Me*, below. Happy is the share of one who fulfills the commandments of Torah!²⁶

“*Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad with her, all you who love her! Rejoice with Jerusalem*—for there is no joy except when Israel abides in the Holy Land, where the Wife is joined with Her Husband. Then there is joy of all, joy above and below. When Israel is not in the Holy Land, one is forbidden to rejoice or display joy—as is written: *Rejoice with Jerusalem וגילו בה (ve-gilu vah), and be glad with her, all you who love her! Ve-gilu vah, And be glad in her, precisely!*”²⁷

Rabbi Abba saw someone rejoicing in a Babylonian royal castle. He kicked him, saying, “It is written: *Rejoice with Jerusalem*—only when Jerusalem is in joy should one rejoice!”²⁸

Rabbi El’azar follows his approach, for Rabbi El’azar said, “*Rejoice with Jerusalem*—corresponding to what is written: *Serve YHVH with joy* (Psalms 100:2).²⁹

“One verse says, *Serve YHVH with joy*, while another verse says, *Serve YHVH with awe, and rejoice in trembling* (Psalms 2:11). What is the difference between them? Well,

the former pertains to when Israel dwells in the Holy Land; the latter pertains to when Israel dwells in another land.³⁰

“Alternatively, *Serve YHVH with awe*—Assembly of Israel, when She is in exile among the nations.”³¹

Rabbi Yehudah said, “But look at what is written: *Indeed, you shall leave with joy* (Isaiah 55:12), and this is Assembly of Israel! Since it says *you shall leave*, this means from exile, and She is called *joy*.”³²

He replied, “Certainly so! For as long as She is in exile, lying in the dust, She is not called *joy*. When the blessed Holy One comes to Her, raises Her from the dust, and says, *Shake off the dust, arise; sit enthroned!* (Isaiah 52:2); *Arise, shine!* (ibid. 60:1), and they join as one—then She is called *Joy, joy of all*, and then *Indeed, you shall leave with joy, surely!* Then numerous forces will go forth to greet *Matronita*, in the joy of King’s wedding celebration, as is said: *The mountains and hills will break into jubilation before you, and all the trees of the field will clap hands* (ibid. 55:12), and it is written: *For marching before you is YHVH, your rear guard is the God of Israel* (ibid. 52:12).³³ [118b]

“*Every man with his unit, with insignia* (Numbers 2:2)—the four camps of Assembly of Israel, with those twelve tribes, boundaries, surrounding Her, all corresponding to the pattern above.³⁴

“It is written: *There tribes ascend, the tribes of Yah, a testimony to Israel, to praise the name of YHVH* (Psalms 122:4). *There tribes ascend*—those twelve tribes, twelve boundaries below. *The tribes of Yah*—as has been established, for יה (Yah) is surely a *testimony to Israel*. Thus, הרֵאוּבֵנִי (*ha-Re’uveni*), *the Reubenite* (Numbers 26:7), and השִׁמְעוֹנִי (*ha-Shim’oni*), *the Simeonite* (ibid., 14)—יה (Yah) in each one. But it is certainly so, for by them the supernal holy Tree is bounded in its boundaries, as has been established.³⁵

“It is written: *The image of their face was פְּנֵי אָדָם* (*penei adam*), *a human face, and on the right the four of them had a*

lion's face, and on the left the four of them had a bull's face, and the four of them had an eagle's face (Ezekiel 1:10). The image of *adam* included all of them; there were faces in all directions of the world, distinguished in their appearances, yet all were included in *adam*.³⁶

“Michael to his right, Gabriel on the left, Uriel in front of them, Raphael behind them, *Shekhinah* above them. Two on this side, two on that, and She in the center. Following this pattern, on earth below: two on this side, two on that, and She between them.³⁷

“As soon as two units set forth, what is written? *The Tent of Meeting, the camp of the Levites, shall journey [in the midst of the camps]* ... (Numbers 2:17). Following them, those two other ones.³⁸

“There are four camps, in the four directions of the world, totaling twelve. So too below, corresponding to the pattern above.³⁹

“The unit of the camp of Judah journeyed first—corresponding to the camp of Michael. The camp of Reuben, corresponding to the camp of Uriel. One to the south, the other to the east. Similarly, the altar, southeast.⁴⁰

“The camp of Dan, to the north; the camp of Ephraim, to the west. The camp of Dan, corresponding to the camp of Gabriel; the camp of Ephraim, corresponding to the camp of Raphael. Similarly, the altar, northwest.⁴¹

“All linked with one another, until all ascends and unites with the Holy Name—beginning of all, supreme over all, holiest of all, comprising all.⁴²

“י (Yod)—east. East is beginning of light—moving, flying, streaming to the south. South emerges, suspended from beginning of the east.⁴³

“ה (He)—south. From there issues south, for *yod* enters the beginning of east and generates it.⁴⁴

“From *he* are suspended south, north, and the one between them. *Yod*, east—from here are suspended north

and south.⁴⁵

“י (vav)—in the center, and this is the male child. So He is between north and south, and thus we have learned: ‘Whoever places his bed between north and south will be granted male children,’ for the male child is between north and south.⁴⁶

“From upper י (he) are suspended north and south, with the male child between them, in mystery of vav. Final י (he) is west.⁴⁷

“So, south is joined with east—beginning of the sun—suspended there. Thus we have learned: From the aspect of Father is suspended supernal *Hesed*. From the aspect of Mother is suspended *Gevurah*. In this manner, all are joined to one another.⁴⁸

“The corners of the altar were circled so: ‘to the southeast corner.’ For the potency of the south is in the east, beginning of the sun, and the potency of the sun is found only in the beginning.⁴⁹

“Northeast—once the south absorbs its power in the east it illumines the north, and north is included in south, for left is included in right.⁵⁰

“Northwest—for west, which is last, absorbs from north; so north proceeds to the west.⁵¹

“Southwest—She moves to unite with the south. Just as south depends on east, its potency following the beginning, so west follows beginning, cleaving to the south—as is written: *his right embracing me* (Song of Songs 2:6), this right being south. So She suckles from two sides, from north and from south, as is written: *His left hand beneath my head, his right embracing me* (ibid.)—*his left hand* is north; *his right* is south.⁵²

“This mystery I have learned: The blessed Holy One places His bed between north and south, and it is surely joined to this Son. Therefore, people should place their beds between north and south—so has Father taught me—and they will be granted male children. For he has focused

his intention on supernal faith in total perfection—on the blessed Holy One, who is between north and south, and on Assembly of Israel, who is illumined between north and south. Certainly he will be granted male children.⁵³

“In all things, [119a] one should display his actions corresponding to the pattern above. As he displays action below, so it is surely aroused above, as has been established.”⁵⁴

His father-in-law heard and kissed Rabbi El’azar. He wept and laughed, and he said, “Happy is my share in this world and in the world that is coming!”⁵⁵

He opened, saying, “*YHVH is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? YHVH is the stronghold of my life; whom shall I dread?* (Psalms 27:1). *YHVH is my light and my salvation*—as soon as a person gazes on the supernal light, and the blessed Holy One shines upon him, he does not fear those above or below, as is said: *Upon you YHVH will shine, and His Glory will be seen on you* (Isaiah 60:2).

“*YHVH is the stronghold of my life*—once the blessed Holy One grasps a person, he has no fear in that world from any Masters of Judgment. I, too, follow this pattern: since I grasp your father and you, how can I fear this world or the other world?⁵⁶

“Of you is written *Your father and your mother will rejoice; she who bore you will be glad* (Proverbs 23:25). Since it is written *Your father and your mother will rejoice*, why *she who bore you will be glad*? It is sufficient to say *your mother*! However, *your father* is the blessed Holy One; *and your mother* is Assembly of Israel. *She who bore you will be glad* is *she who bore you* below.⁵⁷

“As for Rabbi Shim’on, your father, where is his joy? Well, he has a verse of his own: *The father of a righteous son will be very glad; he who engenders a wise son will rejoice in him* (Proverbs 23:24)—your father below.⁵⁸

“Alternatively, *The father of a righteous son will be very glad*—your father below. *He who engenders a wise son* בו

שמח" (yismah bo), *will rejoice in him*—written וישמח בו (ve-yismah bo), *and will rejoice in him*, with an additional ו (vav), alluding to the blessed Holy One above."⁵⁹

It is written: *In Your hand I entrust my spirit. You redeem me, O YHVH, God of truth* (Psalms 31:6).⁶⁰

Rabbi El'azar said, "This verse should be examined. Have you ever seen someone entrust anything into the hand of a king? But surely, happy is the person who walks in the ways of the Holy King and does not sin in His presence!"⁶¹

"Come and see: As soon as night enters, the Tree containing death rules the world, and the Tree of Life ascends high above. Since the Tree of Death rules alone, all inhabitants of the world experience a taste of death. Why? Because of that Tree."⁶²

"A person must anticipate and entrust to it a deposit of his soul—like someone depositing a pledge with another. Even if he owes him more than the value of that pledge, it is not right for [the creditor] to keep it, since it was given to him on trust. If he refuses [to return it], we should surely examine him, for he is not of holy seed or of the scions of faith."⁶³

"Similarly with that Tree. People anticipate and give it a pledge of their souls; so it obtains the souls of all inhabitants of the world, and they all experience a taste of death, since this is the Tree of Death. And even though all those souls are indebted to it, nevertheless, since they were all given to it on trust, it returns all the deposits to their owners."⁶⁴

"Come and see: This Tree should not really return a person's pledge to him until the Tree of Life is aroused in the world. And when is that Tree aroused? At the break of dawn. Then, once this has been aroused in the world, all inhabitants of the world come to life, and that Tree of

Death releases all those pledges that were deposited with it. Why do they come to life? Because of that Tree.⁶⁵

“Now, you might say, ‘Look, there are many people who wake up in the night—while the Tree of Death reigns!’ Well, surely that Tree of Death is acting. How so? As is written: *to see if there is an enlightened one, seeking God* (Psalms 14:2)—and no one will have an excuse, claiming, ‘If I had been in control of my soul during the night, I would have engaged in Torah.’”⁶⁶

Rabbi Yehudah said, “This surely applies to Israel, and so it is. As for the nations of the world, whom I have seen in the same manner—why?”⁶⁷

He replied, “What you have said is certainly fine!”

He opened, saying, “*How can I curse whom God has not cursed?*... (Numbers 23:8). Come and see: As it is above, so below. There is right and there is left; Israel and the other nations. Israel to the right, holiness of the Holy King; other nations to the left, on the side of impure spirit, all of them below all those rungs on the left. All those rungs are linked with one another, [119b] ultimately suspended from the head, and just as the head moves, so moves the tail, which is the lowest. Why? Because it is linked to it. Therefore, the other nations on the impure side are conducted so.”⁶⁸

“Balaam wielded all those lower crowns, and he saw that this lowest one, which is the tail, can be controlled only by the head. Therefore he said, ‘*How can I curse whom לַאֵל (EI), God, has not cursed?*’—referring to the head, because that supernal head was not in a state of Judgment on those days.”⁶⁹

“Although we have established this *EI*, Holy *Malkhuta* assumes names corresponding to all, and this one is goodness and *hesed* in the world, so She is called *EI*. However, She *rages every day* (Psalms 7:12) that is imbued with Judgment.”⁷⁰

“Come and see: אל שדי (*El Shaddai*). *Shaddai* we have already established, for He conveys satisfaction to the world, and He said to the world, דַּי (*Dai*), Enough!’ *El* is the one who couples with Him, so She is called *El Shaddai*—*El* of *Shaddai*. Thus, *How can I curse whom אל (El), God, has not cursed?* Therefore, as the head is aroused, so is that below aroused.”⁷¹

Rabbi El’azar wept. He opened, saying, “*Her sound will move like a snake...* (Jeremiah 46:22). Now that Israel is in exile, She surely moves *like a snake*. When a snake bends its head to the dust and raises its tail, the tail dominates and strikes anyone in front of it. Who causes the tail to rise above, dominate, and strike? The head, which is bent low. Nevertheless, who controls the tail, and who propels its movements? This head—although it is bent to the dust, it conducts [the tail’s] movements. Therefore, now the other nations—who are attached to the tail—rise above, dominate, and strike, while the head is bent to the dust, as is said: *Fallen, not to rise again, [is Virgin Israel]* (Amos 5:2). Nevertheless, this head controls the tail and preserves it, as is said: *They made me keeper of the vineyards* (Song of Songs 1:6)—the other nations, who are the tail.”⁷²

Rabbi Yehudah came and kissed his hands, and said, “If I had asked nothing in the world except for this, and gained it, it would be enough for me! For now I know how the other nations and their dominion are controlled. Happy is the share of Israel, of whom is written *For Yah has chosen Jacob for Himself, Israel as His treasure* (Psalms 135:4).”⁷³

Rabbi El’azar asked him, “What is meant by לסגולתו (*iisgullato*), *as His treasure?*”

He replied, “Three patriarchs are called סגולה (*segullah*), *treasure*, whether above or below. Similarly: priests, Levites, and Israelites—and all is one. These are the *treasure* of the blessed Holy One above and *His treasure* below, corresponding to what is written: *You will be a treasure for Me among all the peoples* (Exodus 19:5).”⁷⁴

The Tent of Meeting, the camp of the Levites, shall journey [in the midst of the camps...] (Numbers 2:17). What is written next? *The unit of the camp of Ephraim by their divisions seaward* (ibid., 18)—namely to the west; *Shekhinah* is in the west, as has been established.⁷⁵

It is written: *He blessed them on that day, saying, “By you shall Israel bless, saying, [‘May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh’]—and he put Ephraim before Manasseh* (Genesis 48:20). *By you shall Israel bless*—Israel the Elder. What does this tell us? Well, it is not written *By you shall Israel be blessed*. What is meant by *shall Israel bless*? Well, Holy Israel will not bless the world except *by you*, who are in the west. And it is written: *I am El Shaddai. Be fruitful and multiply* (ibid. 35:11).⁷⁶

We have learned that [Jacob] saw *Shekhinah* by [Ephraim’s] side, and then he said, *By you shall Israel bless, saying—by you, he will bless* the world. Now how could he see, when it is written *Israel’s eyes had grown heavy with age, he could not see* (Genesis 48:10)? Well, it is written *He crossed his hands* (ibid., 14). What is meant by *He crossed*? Well, his right hand was raised, and *Shekhinah* turned it toward Ephraim; he smelled the fragrance of *Shekhinah* over [Ephraim’s] head, and then he said, *By you shall Israel bless*.⁷⁷

He saw that he is in the west—surely, *Shekhinah* is in the west! As we have already established: so that She may be between north and south, to unite with the Body and attain single coupling. North receives Her beneath the head, and south embraces Her, as is written: *His left hand beneath my head, his right embracing me* (Song of Songs 2:6). As we have established: Surely, *the bed of Solomon* (ibid. 3:7) lies between north and south, and then all is one, so that the world may be blessed.⁷⁸

We have learned: “Whoever recites *A praise of David* (Psalms 145:1) three times daily [is assured of being admitted to the world that is coming].” [120a] As we have

established: in order to couple Her, so that She may be between north and south.⁷⁹

A person comes in the morning and accepts upon himself the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven, as has been said. He arranges praise with those praises that he utters, including *A praise of David* and all those *Hallelujahs*—an array of ten praises of ten holy crowns of the Holy Name; therefore, ten *Hallelujahs*. Then he concludes with ten praises, namely *Praise God in His sanctuary...* (Psalms 150:1).

What are the ten *Hallelujahs*? There are only five!

Well, beginning praise with *Hallelujah* and concluding with *Hallelujah*.⁸⁰ Then, sublimity of sequence of praise with *Then sang Moses* (Exodus 15:1), comprising all, whereby one accepts upon himself the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven—Holy *Malkhuta*, Kingdom.⁸¹

Then, at the conclusion of the prayer, אֲשֶׁרִי (*ashrei*), he places, Her in *Hesed*, to be sanctified by Him. Later, in the prayer of *minḥah*, when *Gevurah* looms and Judgment prevails. So every day She is placed between north and south, to conjoin in single coupling with the Body fittingly. One who unites Her daily in this manner is surely admitted to the world that is coming.⁸²

Consequently, *The unit of the camp of Ephraim to the west* (Numbers 2:18), which is between north and south. South—Reuben on one side, as is written: *The unit of the camp of Reuben to the south* (ibid., 10). North—Dan on the other side, as is written: *The unit of the camp of Dan to the north* (ibid., 25). Ephraim between one and the other; so west, which is Ephraim, is between north and south, all corresponding to the pattern above.⁸³

A mystery known to our brethren who dwell in the south, sent to them as follows: “Brothers! Sentinels of lamps, in intertwined mysteries, who wish to effect unification in the matrix of supernal nexus! Accept upon yourselves the yoke of the Holy Kingdom every day first,

and thereby you will enter the holy bond of the south. Encircle the directions of the world until they are bound in one knot, and in the south secure a place, abiding there.”[84](#)

Rabbi El’azar asked his father, Rabbi Shim’on, saying, “A mnemonic for conjugal union, where is it found?”[85](#)

He replied, “My son, although we have established matters in every aspect and they have been scattered—here a word, there a word—grasp this sign in your hand. It is like circling the altar, as we have learned: ‘He came to the southeast horn, then the northeast, the northwest, the southwest.’”[86](#)

He said, “But one cannot do so until first accepting upon himself the Holy Kingdom, placing upon himself this yoke. Yet you say he should come to the south first!”[87](#)

He replied, “I have told you everything. Because first ‘he came to the horn,’ and you already know: this is the yoke of the Holy Kingdom. Then ‘the south,’ location of the Tree of Life. This is to couple it with the east, which is supernal Father, for the Son comes from the aspect of Father. Therefore, from south to east, since the potency of south is in the east, and south must be joined as one with east.”[88](#)

“East—joined with north, as is said: *And Your north will fill their belly* (Psalms 17:14), for this one completes and fills streams and springs. So ‘then the northeast,’ who are Father and Mother, never separating, as we have established.”[89](#)

“As for Her being called צפונית (tsefonit), north, this is because She is supernally concealed, and from Her side issues north and judgments are aroused from Her side—even though She is compassion and joy, as we have already established. When She emerges, north emerges within Her, included and connected with south.”[90](#)

“Then ‘the northwest,’ since from the aspect of Father issues the Son, from the aspect of the Female issues the

Daughter. So ‘the northwest,’ and this is ‘the horn’ mentioned at first, which now is bound with north, with no further qualification.⁹¹

“Then one should join Her to the south—where nexus of all is located, where the Body is found—so ‘the southwest.’⁹²

“Consequently, this horn—three times. One, for a person to accept it at first. Then, two—embracing Her with two arms, to unite with the Body, all becoming one. This is the sequence of perfect unification, with every single side in its appropriate bond; and one should not substitute one side with another that is inappropriate for it, so as not to be punished.⁹³

“Whoever effects [120b] this unification fittingly, as I have described, happy is his share in this world and in the world that is coming, for he knows how to arrange the unification of his Lord, the praise of his Lord. Furthermore, the blessed Holy One takes pride in him. Of him is written *He said to me, ‘You are My servant, Israel, in whom I glory’* (Isaiah 49:3).”

Rabbi Shim’on opened, saying, “*Of David. To You, YHVH, I lift my soul...* (Psalms 25:1). What prompted David to arrange this praise so? And all the other praises in alphabetical acrostic are complete, whereas this one is lacking, without a ם (*vav*). And why this arrangement for falling upon the face?⁹⁴

“Well, come and see! This is a sublime mystery, concealed among the Companions. When night enters, and the lower tree—hanging with death—rules, it spreads its branches, covering all, and the world darkens and all inhabitants of the world experience a taste of death. Anticipating, a person gives it a deposit of his soul, entrusting it in its hand as surety, and since it has taken them on trust, the deposit returns to its owner when morning comes. When morning arrives and his pledge

returns to him, he should bless the blessed Holy One, the supernal trustee.⁹⁵

“Then he rises and goes to synagogue, adorns himself with tefillin, and covers himself with his covering. He enters and first purifies himself with his sacrificial offering, then he accepts upon himself the yoke of the Kingdom by praising his Lord, by the sequence of David’s praise, an arrangement of the yoke of the Kingdom. The sequence of this praise אֲשֶׁרִי (*ashrei*), places, that yoke upon him. Afterward, the arrangement of prayer, binding them as one.⁹⁶

“Come and see mystery of the matter: Although prayer depends on speech and utterance of the mouth, all depends first on the essence of action, and afterward speech and utterance of the mouth. Which action? Well, the act that a person performs first is patterned on prayer, and one should not pray until he displays an interior act patterned on prayer.⁹⁷

“First, action. When a person gets up, he should purify himself first, and then accept upon himself this yoke—spreading over his head a spread of *mitsvah*. Then he should be bound in a bond of unification, namely tefillin. What is meant by tefillin? *Tefillah* of the hand and *tefillah* of the head. And to perfect them in a single knot on the left arm and upon the heart, as we have established: *His left hand beneath my head...* (Song of Songs 2:6), and it is written *Set me as a seal upon your heart* (ibid. 8:6), as we have already established. This is action.⁹⁸

“At first, when a person enters the synagogue, he should purify himself with sacrifices recited orally. Then he should accept upon himself this yoke, spreading over his head a spread of *mitsvah* by the praises of King David, just like his act of spreading over the head.⁹⁹

“Then *tefillah* of the hand, which is the *tefillah* recited seated; then *tefillah* of the head, which is the *tefillah* recited standing. One corresponding to the other: action

corresponding to speech. Surely, prayer depends on action and utterance.¹⁰⁰

“And if one spoils the act, the utterance finds no place in which to settle—and it is not prayer, and that person is spoiled above and below. Furthermore, we should surely display action and utter words over it; this is perfect prayer. Woe to one who spoils his prayer, worship of his Lord! Of him is written *When you come to appear before My face, [who asked this of you, to trample My courts.... Even if you make many prayers, I will not listen]* (Isaiah 1:12, 15).¹⁰¹

“Come and see: When a person performs genuine prayer—in action and utterance—tying the knot of unification, then by him those above and below are blessed. Afterward, having completed the prayer of *Amidah*, he should assume the appearance of one who has departed from the world, for he has separated from the Tree of Life and gathered his feet toward that Tree of Death who returned his pledge, as is said: *He gathered his feet into the bed* (Genesis 49:33); for he has confessed his sins and prayed over them, and now he must be gathered to that Tree of Death, and fall [on his face] and say to it, *‘To You, YHVH, I lift my soul. First, [121a] I gave [my soul] to You in pledge. Now that I have bound unification and performed action and utterance fittingly, and confessed my sins—here, my soul I surely surrender to You!’*¹⁰²

“A person should see himself as if he has departed from the world, for he has surrendered his soul to this place of death. That is why it has no ם (*vav*), since *vav* is the Tree of Life, and this is the Tree of Death. What does this indicate to us? Mystery of the matter, that there are sins that cannot be purged until one departs from the world, as is written: *This iniquity shall not be purged from you until you die* (Isaiah 22:14). This one most certainly gives himself up to death, surrendering his soul to this place—not as a pledge,

as in the night, but like someone departing from the world.[103](#)

“This restoration must be performed with intention of the heart, and then the blessed Holy One has compassion upon him and purges his sin. Happy is the person who knows how למפתי (*le-miftei*), to entice, and serve his Lord with fervor and intention of the heart! Woe to one who comes to entice his Lord with a distant heart, with no fervor, as is said: ויפתוהו (*Va-yfattuhu*), *They enticed Him, with their mouths, and with their tongues they lied to Him, and their heart was not firm with Him* (Psalms 78:36–37). He says, ‘*To You, YHVH, I lift my soul,*’ yet all his words are from a distant heart. He brings it upon himself to depart from the world before his allotted days, when this Tree is aroused in the world to execute Judgment.[104](#)

“Consequently, a person should fuse his soul and will to his Lord, and not approach Him with deceitful will, for it is written: *A speaker of lies will not be established before My eyes* (Psalms 101:7). What is meant by *will not be established*? Well, when he prepares himself for this and his heart is distant from the blessed Holy One, a voice issues, saying, ‘*He will not be established. Why does this one seek to establish himself? He will not be established. I do not want him to be established.*’ All the more so, if he comes to unify the Holy Name and does not do so fittingly.[105](#)

“Happy is the share of the righteous in this world and in the world that is coming! Of them is written *They will come and see My glory...* (Isaiah 66:18); *Surely the righteous will acclaim Your name, the upright will dwell in Your presence* (Psalms 140:14).”

Rabbi El’azar came and kissed his hands. He said, “If I have come into the world just to hear these words, it is enough for me!”[106](#)

Rabbi Yehudah said, “Happy is the share of Israel, who cleave to the blessed Holy One, as is written: *Your people,*

all of them righteous (Isaiah 60:21), and similarly: *You, cleaving [to YHVH your God, are alive every one of you today!]* (Deuteronomy 4:4)."[107](#)

פרשת נשא

Parashat Naso

“COUNT” (NUMBERS 4:21-7:89)

COMMENTARY ON NASO

Rabbi Abba opened, “*Happy is the person to whom YHVH reckons no iniquity, in whose spirit is no deceit* (Psalms 32:2). The beginning of this verse does not match its end, nor the end its beginning. It calls for contemplation, and has already been established.¹

“Come and see: During the prayer of *minḥah*, Judgment prevails in the world—and Isaac instituted the prayer of *minḥah*, and supernal *Gevurah* rules the world until night comes and enters, to receive night. From the time when the prayer of *minḥah* begins, the left extends toward Her, and night is aroused. Once it is aroused, all those keepers of the outer openings are aroused in the world, spreading out, and all inhabitants of the world taste death, as has been said.²

“At precisely midnight, the left is aroused as before. The Holy Rose wafts fragrances, and She praises aloud; then the head ascends and rests above upon the left, [121b] and the left receives Her. Then a herald proclaims in the world, for it is time to awake and praise the King; then praises break forth, and sweetness of all prevails. Happy is the share of one who awakens to accomplish this coupling fittingly! When morning comes, and the right is aroused to embrace Her, then there is coupling of all as one.³

“Come and see: When people are asleep and experience a taste of death and the soul ascends on high, she stands where she stands and is examined concerning the actions that she performed that whole day, and these are written on a slip. Why? Because the soul ascends on high and testifies about all a person’s activity, and about every single word that issues from his mouth. For the word that a person emits from his mouth rises and splits the heavens and stands where it stands, until night enters and the soul ascends and grasps that word and presents it before the King—as is written: *From her who lies in your bosom guard the doors of your mouth* (Micah 7:5). Then that sinful word is inscribed upon the person. Therefore, *Happy is the person to whom YHVH reckons no iniquity. When? When in his spirit is no deceit.*⁴

“*When a man or woman commits any of the human sins, committing a sacrilege against YHVH...* (Numbers 5:6). Come and see: *Heber the Kenite separated from Cain, from the sons of Hobab, father-in-law of Moses* (Judges 4:11). Now Heber the Kenite was among the great-grandchildren of Jethro, as is said: *Saul said to the Kenites, [‘Go, turn away, come down from amidst the Amalekites, lest I sweep you away together with them, for you did kindness to all the Children of Israel when they came up from Egypt’]* (1 Samuel 15:6). Why was he called *the Kenite*? Well, this has already been established, as is written: *the Kenite and the Kenizzite and the Kadmonite* (Genesis 15:19).⁵

“And it has been said that he made קִינָא (*qinna*), a nest, in the desert like a bird, in order to delve into Torah, and he separated from the city. *Separated from Cain*—from the people to whom he originally belonged—and he clung to the blessed Holy One.⁶

“*Separated from Cain.* Happy is the person who attains Torah, proceeding to cling to its paths! For when a person follows [122a] the paths of Torah, he draws upon himself a holy supernal spirit, as is said: *until a spirit from on high is*

poured upon us (Isaiah 32:15). And when a person perverts his ways, he draws upon himself another spirit from the Other Side, which is the side of impurity. That side of impurity is aroused from the Hollow of the Great Abyss—site of the haunts of evil spirits who harm humans, called Damagers of the World, since they derive from the side of Primordial Cain.⁷

“Jethro was originally an idolatrous priest, serving that side, and he drew upon himself a spirit from that place. Although he was called *Kenite*, eventually he *separated from Cain* surely and clung to the blessed Holy One. What does this imply? That whoever cleaves to the blessed Holy One and fulfills the commandments of Torah, it is as if he sustains the worlds—the world above and the world below. This has already been established: it is written וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אוֹתָם (va-asitem otam), *and you make them* (Leviticus 26:3), surely!⁸

“And whoever transgresses the commandments of Torah, it is as if he damages above, damages below, damages himself, damages all worlds. This may be compared to seafarers sitting side by side on a ship, when one fool among them stands up and wants to drill a hole, etc. Thus, *When a man or woman commits any of חטאת האדם (hattot ha-adam), the sins of humanity, committing a sacrilege against YHVH, and [that person] feels guilt* (Numbers 5:6).⁹

“Come and see what is written: *But they, like Adam, have violated the covenant...* (Hosea 6:7). Adam transgressed a single commandment of Torah—inflicting death upon himself and upon the whole world; damaging above, damaging below—and that sin impends until the blessed Holy One restores the world to its original state and that defect is eliminated from the world, as is written: *He will swallow up death forever. YHVH Elohim will wipe away tears from all faces* (Isaiah 25:8). Therefore, *When [a man or woman] commits any of חטאת האדם (hattot ha-adam), the sins of Adam—it is written ha-adam, the original Adam.*¹⁰

*“Committing a sacrilege against YHVH (Numbers 5:6)—by abandoning Compassion and suckling from Judgment, he causes a defect, etc. So, may the Compassionate One save us from the wicked of the world and from their damage! On account of them, many of the righteous pass away—aside from what they cause above and below.”*¹¹

Rabbi Yitshak and Rabbi Yehudah were traveling from Usha to Lydda. Rabbi Yehudah said, “Let us discuss Torah as we go.”¹²

Rabbi Yitshak opened, saying, *“If a man opens a pit or if a man digs a pit [and does not cover it, and an ox or a donkey falls into it] (Exodus 21:33). What is written next? The owner of the pit shall make restitution... (ibid., 34). If such is the case in this situation, then all the more so with one who harms the world by his sins! But I am astounded that even though he harms the world—why does he have the opportunity of teshuvah? For look at what is written: When a man or woman commits any of the human sins, committing a sacrilege against YHVH, [and that person feels guilt,] they shall confess [the sin that they committed,] וְהָשִׁיב (ve-heshiv), and he shall restore (Numbers 5:6-7)!”*¹³

“Well, surely this benefits them! Because he has performed *teshuvah*, it is as if he really actualized Her, for that which he damaged above he restored below. How? By *teshuvah*. And *teshuvah* restores everything—repairing above, repairing below, mending oneself, mending the whole world.”¹⁴

Rabbi Yehudah opened after him, saying, *“When you are in distress and all these things befall you in the end of days, you shall return to YHVH your God... (Deuteronomy 4:30). When you are in distress and all these things befall you in the end of days—from here we learn that teshuvah is most beneficial before Judgment prevails in the world. For once Judgment prevails, its power intensifies—who can remove it from the world and eliminate it? [122b] Once*

Judgment appears, it does not depart until it is completed. After it has been completed and a person performs *teshuvah*, he restores all worlds—as implied by what is written: *and all these things befall you in the end of days*, and it is written *you shall return to YHVH your God... For YHVH your God is a compassionate God...* (ibid. 4:31).¹⁵

“*In the end of days*—what does this mean here? Well, to include Assembly of Israel, who is in exile, sharing their distress and never abandoning them. Therefore, even though the blessed Holy One has placed Judgment in the world, He wants Israel to return in *teshuvah*, in order to benefit them in this world and in the world that is coming; for nothing can withstand *teshuvah*.¹⁶

“Come and see: Even Assembly of Israel is called *Teshuvah*. Now, you might say, ‘Supernal *Teshuvah* is not found everywhere!’ Nevertheless, this is called *Teshuvah* when Compassion turns back to Her, for She returns to all those multitudes and suckles them. And finest *teshuvah* is when one’s soul is surrendered to Her, and She takes it while he is in a state of *teshuvah*. Then all is restored above and below; and he is restored along with the whole world.¹⁷

“One wicked person in the world—ruin of many others because of him. Woe to the wicked one, woe to his neighbor!¹⁸

“Come and see: Because Jonah refused to go on his Master’s mission, many people were about to perish on his account in the sea. Finally they all turned on him and sentenced him to punishment in the sea, and then they were all saved. Afterward, the blessed Holy One had mercy on him, and saved many multitudes in the world. When? When he returned to his Master out of his distress, as is written: *Out of my distress I called to YHVH, and He answered me...* (Jonah 2:3). And it is written: *From confinement I called to Yah. Yah answered me with expanse* (Psalms 118:5).¹⁹ [124a]

THE SECTION OF THE STRAYING WIFE²⁰

ישׂא ישׂא (*Ish ish*), *Any man, whose wife strays, betraying him by infidelity* (Numbers 5:12). What does this have to do with that? Well, as is written: *betraying YHVH by infidelity* (ibid., 6).²¹

Rabbi El'azar said, "*Ish ish, A man, a man—why ish ish, a man, a man, when one would suffice? Well, this has already been established; but ish ish, a man, a man, implies a man who is a man—who has fulfilled the verse that is written: Drink water from your own cistern, flowing waters from your well* (Proverbs 5:15). Then he is *a man* in the world, *a man* toward his wife."²²

"ומעלה בו מעל" (*U-ma'alah vo ma'al*), *Betraying him by infidelity* (Numbers 5:12). One would suffice; why two? Well, one above and one below; one for Assembly of Israel and one for her husband. Therefore, *The man shall bring his wife to the priest* (ibid., 15).²³

"Why *to the priest*? Mystery of the matter: because the priest is the best man of *Matronita*.²⁴

"Here one should examine. After all, it is written: *He shall slaughter the male of the herd before YHVH* (Leviticus 1:5). *He shall slaughter*—someone else, not the priest; for the priest is forbidden to be involved in Judgment, so as not to damage the place to which he is linked. Yet you say, *The man shall bring his wife to the priest, to render judgment!*²⁵

"Well, surely the priest is appropriate for this, since he is the best man of *Matronita*, and all women of the world are blessed along with Assembly of Israel. This is why a woman below is blessed with seven blessings and linked with Assembly of Israel. The priest stands ready to arrange the affairs of *Matronita* and to see to all Her needs; so the priest is suitable for this, and no one else.²⁶

"Now, if you say that he executes judgment—not so! Rather, he engages in this in order to promote peace and increase *hesed*, loving-kindness. For if that woman is found innocent, the priest thereby increases peace between them.

Furthermore, she conceives a male child, thereby bringing peace. And if she is not found innocent, it is not he who executes judgment; rather, that Holy Name, which she betrayed, executes judgment and puts her to the test.²⁷

“Come and see: The priest does not inject himself into this. Rather, when she presents herself before him to be proven innocent, [124b] he questions her once and twice; and if she wishes to be found innocent, then the priest performs the procedure in order to promote peace.²⁸

“The priest writes the Holy Name once straight, and then he writes it backward—letters incised in dazzling light: Judgment with Judgment, Compassion with Compassion, Compassion with Judgment, and Judgment with Compassion. If she is found innocent, letters of Compassion settle and judgments vanish; if she is found unworthy, Compassion vanishes and judgments remain, and then Judgment is executed.”²⁹

Rabbi El’azar opened, saying, “*They came to Marah and could not drink water from Marah, for it was bitter...* (Exodus 15:23). This has already been established.”³⁰

Rabbi El’azar said, “I am astounded how inhabitants of the world do not examine or delve into words of Torah! Here one should examine: Why is it written *There He set them statute and law, and there He tested them* (Exodus 15:25)? We have already established *and there He tested them*; but surely mystery of the matter is that this happened by water. For the Egyptians had claimed that they fathered the offspring of Israel, and many Israelites suspected their wives concerning this. Finally, the blessed Holy One brought them to this place, seeking to test them.³¹

“What is written? *They came to Marah [and could not drink water from Marah, for it was bitter].... And he cried out to YHVH* (Exodus 15:23, 25). The blessed Holy One said to Moses, ‘Moses, what do you want? Look, many ravaging

bands are confronting all of you here, and I want to put the wives of Israel to the test. Write down here the Holy Name, cast it into the water, and let all of them be tested—women and men—so that no disrepute may remain upon My children. Until they are all tested here, My name shall not settle upon them.’

“Immediately, *YHVH* showed him a tree, and he threw it into the water (Exodus 15:25)—the Holy Name, the same one that the priest used to write to test the wives of Israel. Thus, *there he set them statute and law, and there He tested them.*³²

“Now, you might say, ‘As for the wives of Israel, fine; but why the men?’ Well, they too had to be [tested], to show that they had not been defiled by the wives of the Egyptians, [just as] the wives of Israel [had to be tested to show that they] had not been defiled by the Egyptians all those years they were among them. All of them—males and females—emerged innocent, and the seed of Israel were found to be holy and pure. Then [125a] the blessed Holy One ensconced His Name among them. So, surely by water—*there he set them statute and law, and there He tested them.* Here, too, with water the priest tests the woman, and by the Holy Name.

“*And from the dust that is on the floor of the Dwelling* (Numbers 5:17). Who is *the dust*? We have already learned: *All comes from the dust, and all returns to the dust* (Ecclesiastes 3:20). *All comes from the dust*, even the globe of the sun—all the more so, human beings, who originate from it.”³³

Rabbi Yose said, “*And from the dust.* If it were written *and from the dust*, and nothing more, we would say so; but since it is written *and from the dust that is on the floor of the Dwelling*, this implies something else. Indeed, it is written: *He makes his sword like dust* (Isaiah 41:2)—archers and catapultiers, masters of harsh Judgment, as implied by what is written: *on the floor of the Dwelling*,

attached below. So, *the priest shall take and put it into the water* (Numbers 5:17).³⁴

“*The waters of bitterness, causing a curse* (Numbers 5:18)—waters of the sea, which are bitter. What is that? The Holy Sea, when it is in a state of Judgment; then they are called *waters of bitterness, causing a curse*. Therefore, seawater below is all bitter.³⁵

“Come and see: Into this Holy Sea flow numerous sweet rivers; but because She is Judgment of the world, Her waters are bitter, since death for all inhabitants of the world is linked to Her. Yet although they are bitter, when they spread, they are sweet.³⁶

“Sometimes, a sea of bitter waters; sometimes, a sea swallowing all other waters—called the Frozen Sea, swallowing all those others, absorbing them within. Sometimes, waters thaw, and from that Sea flows everything streaming to those below.³⁷

“This Sea assumes many aspects. *Cursing waters* (Numbers 5:22)—when the Serpent comes, injecting filth; then, *bitter cursing waters* (ibid., 18). Therefore, the priest performs the procedure below and administers the oath, and the judgment is executed.³⁸

“Come and see: If the woman is found innocent, these waters enter her [125b] and turn sweet, cleansing her, remaining within her until she conceives. Once she conceives, they beautify the embryo in her womb, and a beautiful son emerges, clean, without any blemish.³⁹

“If not, those waters enter her, and she smells an odor of filth, and those waters turn into a serpent in her womb. By that which she corrupted herself, she is punished, and her shame is shown to all, as the Companions have already established.⁴⁰

“Come and see: All women of the world abide in their place, and so by the very place in which they abide, they are judged. Happy is the share of Israel, in whom the

blessed Holy One delights and whom He desires to purify!"⁴¹

Rabbi Hizkiyah opened, "*Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine in the recesses of your house, your children like olive shoots around your table* (Psalms 128:3). *Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine*—just as a vine accepts only its own kind, so a wife in Israel follows the same pattern, accepting only her own mate, like the dove who accepts only her own mate.⁴²

"So, *like a fruitful vine in the recesses of your house*. What is meant by פוריה (*poriyah*), *fruitful, in the recesses of your house*? As is said: פורה (*poreh*), *bearing fruit, of hemlock* (Deuteronomy 29:17); *poriyah*—פורחת (*poraḥat*), *sprouting, generating branches on every side*.⁴³

"Where? *In the recesses of your house*, and not outside on the street, so that she will not betray the supernal covenant. And Solomon said, *who abandons the companion of her youth and forgets the covenant of her God* (Proverbs 2:17). Who is *the covenant of her God*? That place called *covenant*, to which she is attached. Thus, *in the recesses of your house*."⁴⁴

Rabbi Hizkiyah said, "May a stupor come upon the man who allows his wife to expose the hair of her head! This is one of the rules of household modesty. A woman who exposes her hair for adornment brings poverty upon the house, causes her children to be mediocre in their generation, and causes an alien element to abide in the home. Who causes this? That hair exposed on her head. Now, if this is so within the house, how much more so on the street—and how much more so with any other impudence! Therefore, *Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine in the recesses of your house*."⁴⁵

Rabbi Yehudah said, "The hair on a woman's head's [126a] being exposed causes other hair to be exposed, tainting her. Therefore a woman must not allow even the

walls of her house to see one hair of her head, let alone outside.⁴⁶

“Come and see: Just as in the male, hair is harshest of all, so too for the female. Go and see how much damage is caused by a woman’s hair! It has effect above, it has effect below. It causes her husband to be cursed; it causes poverty; it brings an alien element into the home; it deprives her children of repute. May the Compassionate One save us from their impudence!⁴⁷

“So, a woman must be concealed in the corners of the house. And if she does so, what is written? *Your children like olive shoots around your table* (Psalms 128:3). What is meant by *like olive shoots*? Just as an olive tree does not shed its leaves in either winter or summer, and always retains more value than other trees, so her children excel all other inhabitants of the world. Furthermore, her husband is blessed in all: with blessings from above and blessings from below, with wealth, with children, and with grandchildren. As is written: *Behold, surely so is the man blessed who reveres YHVH*, and it is written: *YHVH will bless you from Zion, and you will see the goodness of Jerusalem all the days of your life. And you will see children of your children. Peace upon Israel!* (Psalms 128:4-6)—Holy Israel the Elder!”⁴⁸

THE SECTION OF THE NAZIRITE

If a man acts extraordinarily, making a Nazirite vow ... (Numbers 6:2).⁴⁹

Rabbi El’azar opened, “*Why have I come, when there is no man? Why have I called, when none responds? Is*

My arm too short, that it cannot redeem?... (Isaiah 50:2). *Why have I come...?* How beloved are Israel to the blessed Holy One! For wherever they dwell, He is found among them—because He does not withdraw His love from them.

What is written? *Have them make Me a sanctuary, and I will dwell among them* (Exodus 25:8). *Have them make Me a sanctuary*—unspecified, for every synagogue in the world is called *a sanctuary*, as has been established.⁵⁰

“*Shekhinah* arrives early at the synagogue. Happy is the person who is among the first in synagogue, for by them consummation is completed and they are the first to be sanctified by *Shekhinah*, as has been said. There must be ten at the same time in synagogue, and not arriving bit by bit, so as not to delay completion of the limbs; for the blessed Holy One formed the human being in one moment, arranging all his members as one, as is written: *Has He not made you and set you firmly?* (Deuteronomy 32:6).⁵¹

“Come and see: Once the limbs of the human being were completed, then each and every limb was fittingly arrayed. Similarly, once *Shekhinah* arrives early at the synagogue, ten must appear there together, completing the consummation, and afterward all is enhanced. How is all enhanced? As is said: *In a multitude of people is the king’s glory* (Proverbs 14:28)—so the people who come afterward all constitute the adornment of the body.⁵²

“But when *Shekhinah* comes early and people do not arrive, the blessed Holy One exclaims, ‘*Why have I come, when there is no man?*’ What is meant by *when there is no man*? That the limbs have not been arranged nor the body completed; for when the body is incomplete *there is no man*—so, *when there is no man*, precisely!⁵³

“Come and see: When the body is completed below, supernal sanctity comes and enters this body, and below is transformed according to the pattern above, really! Then all must not open their mouths with mundane words, for Israel abides in supernal perfection, sanctified by supernal holiness. Happy is their share!⁵⁴

“אִישׁ כִּי יִפְלִיא (Ish ki yafli), *If a man acts extraordinarily, making a Nazirite vow...* (Numbers 6:2). What is meant by *if [a man] yafli*? That he separates from other inhabitants of

the world, to sanctify himself corresponding to the pattern above and to become whole. When a person comes to purify himself, they purify him. If a person wishes to sanctify himself, they sanctify him and spread over him supernal holiness, a holiness by which the blessed Holy One is sanctified.”⁵⁵

Rabbi Abba opened, “*Of David. Bless YHVH, O my soul, and everything within me, His holy name* (Psalms 103:1). How deeply should a person examine and know the service of his Lord! For every single day a herald proclaims, saying, ‘*How long, fools, will you love foolishness?*’ (Proverbs 1:22). *Turn back, O wayward children, I will heal your waywardness!* (Jeremiah 3:22),’ and no one inclines his ear. Torah calls out before them, and no one pays attention.”⁵⁶

“Come and see: A person moves through this world and thinks that it belongs to him perpetually, that he will remain in it for generations. While he is still moving in the world, he is put in a neck-iron; while he sits, he is judged in a field forum with others who are accused. If he has an advocate, then he is delivered from punishment, as is said: *If he has an angel over him, one advocate among a thousand, [to vouch for his uprightness, then He is gracious to him and says, ‘Redeem him from going down to the Pit; I have found ransom’]* (Job 33:23-24). Who [126b] is the advocate? These worthy deeds, which stand by a person when he is in need.”⁵⁷

“But if he has no advocate, then he is condemned to depart from the world. At that moment, as he is lying in the King’s neck-iron, raising his eyes he sees two beings coming toward him, writing down in his presence all that he has done in this world and all that he has uttered with his mouth, and he gives an account of it all and they write it down in his presence—as is written: *For behold, He who forms mountains and creates wind declares to a human*

what his conversation is... (Amos 4:13). And he admits all of this.⁵⁸

“Why? Because every act that he committed ascends and stands ready to testify against him—poised to testify against him—and then they all descend to be recorded in his presence, confronting him, not passing away until the time that he is judged for them in that world.⁵⁹

“Come and see: All the actions that a person performs in this world await him—they do not disappear—and when he is led to the grave, they all present themselves before him. Three heralds—one in front of him, one on his right, one on his left—proclaim: ‘This is so-and-so who rebelled against his Lord, rebelling above, rebelling below, rebelling against Torah, rebelling against His commandments. Look at his actions, look at his words! Better for him if he had never been created!’⁶⁰

“As they reach the grave, all the dead are agitated by him, saying, ‘Woe, woe that this one is being buried among us!’ His actions and his words precede him, entering the grave and standing over the body, while his spirit roams around, mourning over the body.⁶¹

“As soon as a person is concealed in his grave, Dumah hastens out, grasping a court of three, who are appointed over judgment of the grave. Three fiery scepters are in their hands, and they judge spirit and body together. Woe for that judgment! Woe for his actions!⁶²

“When he is caught in the King’s neck-iron and judgment has been determined against him, since no advocate has been found on his behalf, the King’s guard descends and stands before him at his feet, with a sharp sword in his hand. The person raises his eyes and sees the walls of the house burning from [the guard’s] flashing fire. Just then, he sees him right in front of him, completely full of eyes, clothed in fire, blazing in the person’s presence. Certainly so, for many people have seen an angel in the

street and stood right in front of him, without anyone else seeing him.⁶³

“Now, you might say, ‘Look at what is written: *He makes His angels spirits, His ministers flaming fire* (Psalms 104:4)! How can [an angel] be seen on earth?’ Well, this matter has already been established, for when he descends he clothes himself in a body, and is seen by whom he is seen in that garment in which he is clothed. Otherwise the world could not bear it, nor could he be seen. All the more so, this one, who is required by all inhabitants of the world.⁶⁴

“‘Three drops on his sword...,’ as the Companions have already established. As soon as he sees [the Angel of Death], his whole body and spirit tremble, and his heart is agitated because it is king of the whole body. His spirit moves through every limb of the body, asking leave of them, like someone asking leave of his friend to go to another place. Then he says ‘Woe’ for what he has done, but it does not benefit him unless he previously applied the remedy of *teshuvah* before that moment arrived.⁶⁵

“The person is afraid and wants to hide, but he cannot. When he sees that he is unable, he opens his eyes, and has to look at him, gazing at him wide-eyed; then he surrenders himself and his soul.

“That moment is the time of Great Judgment to which a person is subjected in this world. Furthermore, the spirit goes roaming through all the limbs, quivering in every direction, and all limbs of the body tremble. As the spirit reaches every single limb, asking leave of it, that limb breaks out in sweat and the spirit departs from it and that limb immediately dies, and so with all of them.

“When the spirit is about to depart, having asked leave of the whole body, *Shekhinah* stands over it, and immediately the soul flies from the body. Happy is the share of one who cleaves to Her! Woe to the wicked who are far from Her and do not cleave to Her!⁶⁶

“How many courts of law must a person pass through when he departs from this world! One is that judgment on high that we have mentioned, when the spirit leaves the body. One is the judgment when his actions and his words precede him and heralds proclaim about him. One is the judgment when he enters the grave; [127a] one is the judgment of the grave; one is the judgment of the worm; and one is the judgment of Hell. And one is the judgment of the spirit that goes wandering through the world, finding no place until its actions have been requited. Surely, *seven periods will pass over him* (Daniel 4:13). Therefore while he is still in this world, a person should fear his Lord and examine his actions every single day and repent of them before his Lord.⁶⁷

“When King David contemplated the judgments of a person on departing this world, he anticipated, saying, ‘*Bless YHVH, O my soul—before you leave the world, now that you are still with the body. And everything within me, His holy name* (Psalms 103:1)—you limbs who participate with the spirit, now that it is still with you, bless the Holy Name early, before the time comes when you will be unable to bless Him and offer your gratitude.’⁶⁸

“Come and see: *If a man acts extraordinarily, making a Nazirite vow* (Numbers 6:2)—anticipating, in this world, by sanctifying himself with the holiness of his Lord.⁶⁹

“*From wine and beer he shall set himself apart; neither wine vinegar nor beer vinegar shall he drink; [no grape steepings shall he drink; and grapes, moist or dried, he shall not eat]* (Numbers 6:3). If wine is forbidden to him, why grapes? For here one should examine: It is written *Drink no wine or beer, you and your sons [with you, when you enter the Tent of Meeting, lest you die]* (Leviticus 10:9). You might think that this includes grapes; but no, grapes are permitted. So here, for the Nazirite, why does Scripture forbid grapes?⁷⁰

“Well, this practice and matter is a sublime mystery, separating oneself from Judgment entirely. You know that the tree by which Adam sinned was a grapevine, and this is mystery of the matter, for wine, beer, and grapes are attached to a single aspect. Wine—above, as has been established. Beer—to the left, since beer issues from wine. Grapes—gathering all of them, and this is the tree by which Adam sinned. So all is attached to a single aspect.⁷¹

“Now, if you say that [the Nazirite] abandons any element of faith—not so! However, any conduct at all of the left side is not fitting for him.⁷²

“Come and see: This mystery I have learned as follows from the Book of Rav Hamnuna Sava, and so it is. It is written: *letting the hair of his head grow wild* (Numbers 6:5)—he must let his hair and his beard grow, and abstain from wine, beer, and grapes, since all of them are of the left side, with no hair hanging.⁷³

“Wine—Mother. Beer—the side to which Levites are linked, who issue from supernal wine, with no hair hanging. Therefore, when the Levites ascended here, they had to remove all their hair, as is said: *Have them pass a razor over all their flesh* (Numbers 8:7).⁷⁴

“Grapes—Lower Mother, gathering wine and beer into Herself. So he separates himself from the whole left side, not exhibiting their activity.⁷⁵

“Grapes—no hair or beard hanging, for the female must cut her hair when she comes to couple with the male, and she has no beard. Consequently, he lets the hair on his head and his beard hang. Mystery of the matter: He is called *a Nazirite of Elohim* (Judges 13:5), not *a Nazirite of YHVH*—separated from Judgment entirely.⁷⁶

“Come and see: Concerning this is written *He shall atone for him*, מאשר חטא על הנפש (*me-asher ħata al ha-nefesh*), *as he has erred in regard to the soul* (Numbers 6:11). It is not written *in regard to נפשו* (*nafsho*), *his soul*, but rather *in regard to ha-nefesh, the soul*. Who is that? Grapes, called

nefesh, soul. Therefore it is written: *hata*, because Her aspect is wine and beer, and he deprived it of the place of Judgment. *Hata*—what is meant by *hata*? Well, he diminished Judgment *in regard to the soul*.⁷⁷

“If so, why *he shall atone for him*? Because now he comes to join with them and these places do not accept him until he consults with the priest, who atones for him—since originally he cast them aside; now that he approaches them, he must bring back to them a reparation of atonement, so that they will accept him. This is mystery of the matter surely, entirely!⁷⁸

“Samson was *a Nazirite of Elohim* (Judges 13:5), so why was he punished? Well, the matter is fine, for *he married the daughter of an alien god* (Malachi 2:11). He should have joined with his own kind, with someone fitting for him; yet he, who was holy, mingled that holiness with *an alien god*, abandoning his appropriate position of holiness. Therefore he was punished.⁷⁹

“Some say that he has no share in that world. Why? Because he said, *Let my soul die with the Philistines* (Judges 16:30), thereby placing his share among that of the Philistines, so that his soul would die with them in that world. This corresponds to what [127b] they used to proclaim to a Nazirite: “Keep away,” we tell a Nazirite, “around, around; don’t come near the vineyard!...” This has already been established by the Companions.⁸⁰

“What is written about the Levites? *Thus you shall do to them to purify them: sprinkle on them expiation water and have them pass a razor over all their flesh and wash their clothes and purify themselves* (Numbers 8:7). Once they remove their hair and do all this, the Levites are called ‘pure,’ not ‘holy.’ But the Nazirite, having separated from this side, is called ‘holy,’ not ‘pure.’ Thus it is written *All the days that he sets himself apart for YHVH, he shall be holy* (Numbers 6:5-6).⁸¹

*“Letting the hair of his head grow wild (Numbers 6:5)—because of what is written: the hair of His head like clean fleece (Daniel 7:9), for he thereby resembles the pattern above.”*⁸²

Rabbi Yehudah said, “By his very hair, he is recognized as holy, as is written: *his locks wavy* (Song of Songs 5:11).”⁸³

It has been taught: Rabbi Shim’on said, “If people only knew what is said about this hair and its mystery, they would know their Lord intimately—as in mystery of mysteries of supernal Wisdom. Until here, mysteries of Torah; from here, crowns of Torah—*Her profit and fee shall be consecrated to YHVH* (Isaiah 23:18).”⁸⁴

IDRA RABBA אדרת רבא

The Great Assembly

It has been taught:¹ Rabbi Shim'on said to the Companions, "How long will we sit on a single-based pillar?² For it is written: *Time to act for YHVH—they have violated Your Torah* (Psalms 119:126). Days are few and the creditor is pressing. A herald proclaims every day, but Reapers of the Field are few and at the edges of the vineyard, not noticing or knowing properly where the place is.³

"Gather, Companions, at the threshing chamber,⁴ wearing coats of mail and lances! Arm yourselves with your equipment: with counsel, wisdom, understanding, knowledge, vision, hands, and feet. Proclaim as your king the one who has power of life and death, so that you may decree words of truth, to which holy ones of the Highest listen, which they delight to know and hear."⁵

He sat down and wept. He said, "Woe if I reveal! Woe if I do not reveal!"⁶

The Companions who were there kept silent. Rabbi Abba rose and said, "If it pleases my Master, behold what is written: *The secret of YHVH is for those who revere Him* (Psalms 25:14), and these Companions revere the blessed Holy One, and they have already entered the Holy Assembly of the Dwelling, some of them entering and emerging."⁷

It has been taught: The Companions were numbered in the presence of Rabbi Shim'on, and they were: Rabbi El'azar, his son, Rabbi Abba, Rabbi Yehudah, Rabbi Yose son of Ya'akov, Rabbi Yitshak, Rabbi Hizkiyah son of Rav, Rabbi Hiyya, Rabbi Yose, and Rabbi Yeisa. Extending hands

to Rabbi Shim'on, raising fingers above, they entered the field among the trees and sat down.⁸

Rabbi Shim'on rose and offered his prayer. He sat down among them, and said, "Let each one place his hands on my potent breast."⁹

They placed their hands, and he grasped them.

He opened, saying, "*Cursed be the man who makes a carved or molten image—a craftsman's handwork [128a]—and sets it up in secret!* (Deuteronomy 27:15)." And they all called out and said, "Amen."¹⁰

Rabbi Shim'on opened, saying, "*Time to act for YHVH—they have violated Your Torah* (Psalms 119:126). Why is it *time to act for YHVH?* Because *they have violated Your Torah.* What is meant by *they have violated Your Torah?* Torah above, which is nullified if this Name is not actualized by its enhancements. This is addressed to the Ancient of Days. It is written: *Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you?* (Deuteronomy 33:29), and it is written *Who is like You among the gods, O YHVH?* (Exodus 15:11)."¹¹

He called Rabbi El'azar, his son, and seated him in front of him, with Rabbi Abba on the other side. He said, "We are the sum of the whole. Now the pillars have been firmly established."¹²

They were silent. They heard a sound and their knees knocked together. What sound? The sound of the winged assembly on high assembling.¹³

Rabbi Shim'on rejoiced, and said, "*I have heard Your sound; I am afraid* (Habakkuk 3:2). There it is fitting to be afraid; for us the matter depends on love, as is written: *You shall love YHVH your God* (Deuteronomy 6:5), and it is written '*I have loved you,*' says YHVH (Malachi 1:2)."¹⁴

Rabbi Shim'on opened, saying, "*One who goes about gossiping reveals a secret, but the faithful of spirit conceals a matter* (Proverbs 11:13). *One who goes about gossiping*—this verse is difficult: since it says *gossiping*, why *one who goes about?* It should say *a man who is gossiping.* What is

meant by *one who goes about*? Well, if someone is unsettled in spirit and untrustworthy, whatever word he hears moves around inside him like a thorn in water, until he casts it out. Why? Because his spirit is unstable. But of one whose spirit is stable, it is written *but the faithful of spirit conceals a matter. The faithful of spirit*—of stable spirit. The matter depends on the spirit.¹⁵

“It is written: *Do not let your mouth make your flesh sin* (Ecclesiastes 5:5), and the world endures only through secrecy. Now, if in mundane matters secrecy is necessary, how much more so in the most mysterious matters of the Ancient of Ancients, which are not transmitted even to supernal angels!”¹⁶

Rabbi Shim'on said, “I will not tell the heavens to listen, nor will I tell the earth to hear, for we sustain the worlds.”¹⁷

It has been taught—mysteries of mysteries: When Rabbi Shim'on opened, the earth quaked and the Companions trembled. He revealed in mystery, and opened, saying, “*These are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before a king reigned over the Children of Israel* (Genesis 36:31). Happy are you, O righteous ones, to whom are revealed mysteries of mysteries of Torah, which have not been revealed to holy ones of the Highest. Who will examine this? Who will be worthy of this? It is testimony to faith of total faith. May the prayer be accepted, that it may not be considered a sin to reveal this.”¹⁸

“And what will the Companions say? For this verse is difficult, since it should not have been written so, because we see that there were numerous kings before the Children of Israel appeared and before they had a king; so what is intended here? Well, it is mystery of mysteries, which humans cannot know or perceive or arouse in their minds.”¹⁹

“It has been taught: Before the Ancient of Ancients, Concealed of the Concealed, had prepared adornments of the King and crowns of crowns, there was neither beginning nor end. He engraved and gauged within Himself, and spread before Himself one curtain, in which He engraved and gauged kings, but His adornments did not endure. As is written: *These are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before a king reigned—Primordial King—over the Children of Israel, the Primordial One* (Genesis 36:31). All those who had been engraved were called by name, but they did not endure, so He eventually put them aside and concealed them. Afterward, He ascended in that curtain and was arrayed perfectly.²⁰

“And it has been taught: An impulse arose in the Will to create Torah, so He generated her. Immediately, she said before Him, ‘He who wishes to arrange and form should first arrange His own array—concealed for two thousand years.’²¹

“It has been taught in the Concealment of the Book: The Ancient of Ancients, Hidden of the Hidden, was arrayed [128b] and prepared—that is, He existed and did not exist, did not actually exist yet was arrayed. No one knows Him, for He is more ancient than the ancients, but in His arrayal He is known—like an elder of elders, more ancient than the ancients, more concealed than the concealed—known by His signs yet unknown.²²

“Master of white—His garment and sparkling countenance. Seated on a throne of flames, to subdue them.²³

“Through 400,000 worlds the whiteness of the skull of His head spreads; and from the radiance of this white the righteous inherit 400 worlds in the world that is coming, as is written: *four hundred shekels of silver at the going merchants’ rate* (Genesis 23:16).²⁴

“In the skull dwell 120 million worlds, moving with it, supported by it. From this skull trickles dew to the exterior

one, filling His head every day; and from that dew, shaken from the head of the exterior one, the dead are awakened in the world that is coming, as is written: *For my head is filled with dew* (Song of Songs 5:2)—it is not written *I have filled with dew* but rather *is filled*. And it is written: *For Your dew is a dew of lights* (Isaiah 26:19)—*lights*: the white light of the Ancient One. From that dew, holy ones of the Highest are sustained, and it is the manna ground for the righteous in the world that is coming.²⁵

“That dew trickles to the Holy Apple Orchard, as is written: *The layer of dew lifted, and look, on the surface of the desert—something fine, flaky* (Exodus 16:14). The appearance of that dew is white, like a crystal stone in which all colors are seen, as is written: *Its appearance was like the appearance of crystal* (Numbers 11:7).²⁶

“The whiteness of this skull radiates in thirteen directions engraved: in four directions on one side, in four directions from His face, in four directions on the other side, and one above the skull, that is, upward. From this the length of His face extends through 3,700,000 worlds, and that is called ארך אפים (*Erekh Appayim*), Elongated Countenance, referring to the length of the face. This Ancient of Ancients is called *Arikha de-Anpin*, Elongated Countenance, and the exterior one, *Ze'eir Anpin*, Small Countenance, compared to the Ancient One, the Elder, Holy of Holies of Holies. When *Ze'eir Anpin* gazes at this one, all below is restored and His face expands and lengthens at that time—but not constantly like the Ancient One.²⁷

“From this skull emerges one white route to the skull of *Ze'eir Anpin*, enhancing the head, and from here to other skulls of those below without number. Each skull offers a payment of tribute to the Ancient of Days as they come to be numbered under the scepter. Corresponding to this, a *beqa per skull* (Exodus 38:26) below when they came to be numbered.²⁸

“In the hollow of the skull, a membrane of air of concealed supernal Wisdom, uninterrupted, and this is not to be found or opened. This membrane envelops the brain of supernal Wisdom, so this Wisdom is covered, not opened, by that membrane.²⁹

“This brain, which is concealed Wisdom, is tranquil and quiescent in its place, like fine wine upon its lees. This accords with what they say: ‘An old man’s mind is concealed, his brain concealed and tranquil.’³⁰

“This membrane is detached from *Ze’eir Anpin*, and so His brain extends into thirty-two paths, as is written: *A river issues from Eden* (Genesis 2:10). Why? Because the membrane is interrupted, not enveloping the brain. In any case, the membrane is interrupted below. This accords with what we have learned in Engravings of Letters: ‘ת (Tav)—namely tracing a mark of the Ancient of Days. Upon it depends תמים דעות (*temim de’ot*), *the perfect in knowledge* (Job 36:4), complete on all sides; concealed, quiescent, and tranquil, like fine wine upon its lees.’³¹

“It has been taught: From the skull of the head hang ten billion, seven thousand five hundred locks of hair—white and clean, like wool when it is clean and untangled, so as not to signify confusion in His array; rather all in place, no strand parting from another, no hair from another.³²

“Every single lock has 410 strands of hair, equivalent to קדוש (*qadosh*), holy, and every single strand [129a] glistens in 410 worlds, and every single world is concealed and hidden away, unknown to anyone but Him, glowing in 720 directions.³³

“In every single strand there is a spring, issuing from the concealed brain, as from behind a wall, and flowing through that strand to the strands of *Ze’eir Anpin*. By this His brain is nourished, and then that brain flows forth in thirty-two paths.³⁴

“Every single lock glistens and dangles, arranged fittingly and beautifully, enveloping the skull—locks of strands arrayed on each of its sides. It has been taught: Every single strand is called ‘a flow of a concealed spring issuing from the concealed brain.’

“It has been taught: By a person’s hair is known what he is—whether judgment or compassion—after the age of forty years. And even when he is young: by his hair, his beard, and his eyebrows.³⁵

“Locks of hair dangle in their array, clean as wool, down to His shoulders. To His shoulders, do you imagine? Rather, to the top of His shoulders, so that the back of the neck may not be seen, since it is written: *Indeed, they have turned their back to Me and not their face* (Jeremiah 2:27). And the hair lifts behind the ears, so as not to cover them, as is written: *so that Your ears may be open*.³⁶

“Hair emerges from behind the ears, all balanced, with no parting—perfectly arranged, fittingly, beautifully, desirable to behold. The desire and joy of the righteous, who are in *Ze’eir Anpin*, is to see and cleave to the arrayal of the Ancient One, concealed of all.³⁷

“Thirteen tresses of hair appear on either side of the skull, toward His face, and within them the hair begins to part. There is no left in this Ancient One; all is right. He is seen and not seen, concealed and not concealed. This pertains to His enhancements, all the more so to Him.³⁸

“Concerning this, Israel yearned to refine in their hearts, as is written: *Is YHVH among us or Ayin, Nothingness?* (Exodus 17:7)—between *Ze’eir Anpin* and *Arikh Anpin*, who is called *Ayin*. Why were they punished? Because they acted not out of love, but rather testing, as is written: *and for their testing YHVH, saying, ‘Is YHVH among us or Ayin?’*³⁹

“In the parting of hair, one path proceeds, illuminating 270 worlds; and from it shines a path by which the righteous are illumined in the world that is coming, as is written: *The path of the righteous is like gleaming light,*

shining ever brighter until full day (Proverbs 4:18). From here, the path branches into 613 paths, diverging in *Ze'eir Anpin*, of which is written *All the paths of YHVH are kindness and truth, for the keepers of His covenant and His precepts* (Psalms 25:10).⁴⁰

“Forehead of the skull—Will of Wills. The will of *Ze'eir Anpin* faces that will, as is written: *It shall be upon his forehead perpetually* לרצון (*le-ratson*), *toward the will...* (Exodus 28:38). That forehead is called *Ratson*, Will, since it reveals the entire head and skull. It is concealed within four hundred worlds, and when revealed, the prayers of Israel are accepted. When is it revealed?”⁴¹

Rabbi Shim'on was silent. He asked again. He said to his son, Rabbi El'azar, “When is it revealed?”

He replied, “At the time of the prayer of *minḥah*.”

He asked, “Why?”

He replied, “Because at that time, Judgment below looms in *Ze'eir Anpin*, and the forehead called *Ratson*, Favorable Will, is revealed at that moment, so wrath subsides and prayer is accepted. As is written: *As for me, may my prayer to You, O YHVH, come at a time of ratson, favor* (Psalms 69:14) —*a time of ratson* from the Ancient of Days, revealing the forehead. Therefore [this verse] was introduced into the prayer of *minḥah* on Sabbath.”⁴²

Rabbi Shim'on said to his son, Rabbi El'azar, “Blessed are you, my son, by the Ancient of Days! You will find favor of the forehead when you have need of it.

“Come and see: Among others below, when the forehead is revealed, impudence prevails, as is written: *You had the forehead of a whore; you refused to be ashamed* (Jeremiah 3:3). Yet here, when the forehead is revealed, desire and complete favor prevail, and all wrath subsides, overwhelmed by it.⁴³

“From this forehead shine four hundred courts of Judgment, as this Favorable Will is revealed, and they all

subside before it, as is written: *Judgment sat* (Daniel 7:10)—that is to say, it *sat* in its place, [129b] and *Judgment* was not executed.⁴⁴

“It has been taught: Hair does not exist in this place because it is revealed and not covered, so that Masters of Judgment will gaze and subside and [Judgment] will not be executed.⁴⁵

“It has been taught: This forehead extends through 270,000 illuminating lamps from supernal Eden. For it has been taught: There is an Eden illumining Eden. Supernal Eden is not revealed, but sealed in concealment, not branching into paths, as we have said. This Eden below branches into its paths—in thirty-two pathways.⁴⁶

“Even though this Eden branches into its paths, no one knows it fully except *Ze'eir Anpin*. As for Eden above, no one knows it or its paths except *Arikh Anpin*. As it is written: *Elohim understands its way, and He knows its place* (Job 28:23). *Elohim knows its way*—Eden below, known by *Ze'eir Anpin*. *And He knows its place*—Eden above, known by the Ancient of Days, concealed of all.⁴⁷

“Eyes of the White Head are different from other eyes. There is no lid over the eye, nor any eyebrows. Why? Because it is written: *Behold, He neither slumbers nor sleeps, the Guardian of Israel* (Psalms 121:4)—Israel above. And it is written: *that Your eyes may be open* (1 Kings 8:52). And it has been taught: Whatever comes in Compassion has no lid over the eye, nor any eyebrows. All the more so, the White Head, which has no need.”⁴⁸

Rabbi Shim'on said to Rabbi Abba, “To what does this allude?”

He replied, “To fish, fish of the sea, whose eyes have neither lids nor brows, and they do not sleep and need no protection for the eye. All the more so, the Ancient of Ancients—who needs no protection; and all the more so, since He watches over all, and all is nourished by Him, and

He does not sleep, as is written: *Behold, He neither slumbers nor sleeps, the Guardian of Israel*—Israel above.⁴⁹

“It is written: *Behold, the eye of YHVH is upon those who revere Him* (Psalms 33:18), and it is written: *The eyes of YHVH range over the whole earth* (Zechariah 4:10). There is no contradiction. One refers to *Ze’eir Anpin*, the other to *Arikh Anpin*. Nevertheless, there are two eyes, turning into one. This eye is white within white, and a white including all whites.⁵⁰

“The first white shines, ascending and descending to be absorbed, for it is bound in a bundle. It has been taught: This white struck and kindled three lamps—called *Hod* (Splendor), *Hadar* (Majesty), and *Hedvah* (Joy)—and they glow joyously, perfectly.⁵¹

“The second white shines, ascending and descending, and it strikes and kindles three other lamps—called *Netsah* (Endurance), *Hesed* (Love), and *Tif’eret* (Beauty)—and they glow joyously, perfectly.

“The third white glows and shines, ascending and descending, emerging from the secret recess of the brain, and it strikes the middle, seventh lamp. A path radiates to the lower brain, and a path radiates to the lower heart, and all those lamps below blaze.”⁵²

Rabbi Shim’on said, “How fine! The Ancient of Days will open his eye upon you.

“It has also been taught: White within white, and a white including all whites. The first white shines, ascending and descending to three lamps on the left side, and they glow and bathe in this white like someone bathing his body from what was coating him.⁵³

“The second white shines, ascending and descending to three lamps on the right side, and they glow and bathe in this white like someone bathing in fine fragrances and aromas from what was coating him before.⁵⁴

“The third white shines, ascending and descending, and a radiance of whiteness emanates from deep within the

brain. It strikes the black hair as needed, and the head and the brain within the head, and illumines the three remaining crowns—as should be revealed, if it pleases the Ancient One, concealed of all.⁵⁵

“It has been taught: This eye is not closed, and they are two, turning into one. All is right, there is no left. It neither slumbers nor sleeps, needs no protection. No one protects it; it protects all, watches over all. From the watching of this eye, all are nourished.⁵⁶

“It has been taught: If this eye closed for one moment, none could endure. Therefore it is called open eye, supernal eye, holy eye, eye of watchfulness, eye that neither [130a] sleeps nor slumbers, eye that is protector of all, eye sustaining all. Of this is written *He that has a good eye* יְבוֹרָךְ (yevorakh), *will be blessed* (Proverbs 22:9). Do not read *yevorakh, will be blessed*, but rather יְבַרְךָ (yevarekh), *will bless*. For this is called *He that has a good eye*, through which He blesses all.⁵⁷

“It has been taught: There is no illumination for the lower eye, to be washed of its redness and blackness, except when it is bathed by the white light of the supernal eye called *He that has a good eye*. No one knows when this supernal holy eye illumines and bathes the lower eye. And the supremely righteous are destined to see this through wisdom, as is written: *For eye-to-eye they will see*. When? *When YHVH returns to Zion* (Isaiah 52:8). And it is written: *For eye-to-eye You are seen, YHVH* (Numbers 14:14). Were it not for the supernal eye gazing upon and bathing the lower eye, the world could not endure for a single moment.⁵⁸

“It has been taught in the Concealment of the Book: Watchfulness from the lower eye when radiance of above gazes upon it and that radiance of the one above penetrates the one below, as is written: *For eye-to-eye You are seen, YHVH* (Numbers 14:14).⁵⁹

“It is written: *Behold, the eye of YHVH is upon those who revere Him* (Psalms 33:18), and it is written: *The eyes of*

*YHVH range [over the whole earth] (Zechariah 4:10). If people are worthy, the eye of YHVH is upon those who revere Him—the eye above. If they are not worthy, the eyes of YHVH range—those below.*⁶⁰

“For it has been taught: Why was Joseph worthy of not being dominated by the evil eye? Because he proved worthy of being watched over by the supernal good eye, as is written: *A fruitful son is Joseph, a fruitful son* עַלֵי עַיִן (*alei ayin*), *by the eye* (Genesis 49:22). Why is he *a fruitful son*? *Alei ayin, by the eye*—that is to say, because of the eye watching over him.⁶¹

“It is written: *He that has a good eye will be blessed* (Proverbs 22:9). Why is it referred to as one? Come and see: In the eyes of the one below there is a right eye and a left eye; there are two, in two colors. However, here there is no left eye; both of them attain a single rung, and all is right. Therefore, *eye—one, and not two.*⁶²

“It has been taught: This eye, the eye of watchfulness, is constantly open, constantly smiling, constantly joyous—which is not so with those below, mingled of red, black, and green: three colors. They are not constantly open, for they have a lid, a fold, over the eye. Thus it is written *Awake! Why do You sleep, O YHVH? Rouse Yourself!* (Psalms 44:24); *Open Your eyes* (Daniel 9:18).⁶³

“When they are opened, on some they are opened for good, and on some they are not opened for good. Woe to him upon whom they are opened and the eye is mingled with red, and red confronts him, covering the eye! Who can be saved from it?⁶⁴

“As for the Ancient of Days, a good eye—white within white, a white including all whites. Happy is the share of one upon whom He gazes with one of these whites! Surely it is written: *He that has a good eye will be blessed* (Proverbs 22:9); and it is written: *O House of Jacob! Come, let us walk in the light of YHVH* (Isaiah 2:5).⁶⁵

“It has been taught: Even so, the name of the Ancient One is concealed from all, never expressed in the Torah except in one place, where *Ze’eir Anpin* swore to Abraham, as is written: *בי ושבועתי* (*Bi nishba’ti*), *By that which is within Me I swear, declares YHVH* (Genesis 22:16)—*declares Ze’eir Anpin*. And it is written: *By you shall Israel bless* (ibid. 48:20)—Israel above. And it is written: *Israel, in you I glory* (Isaiah 49:3)—Israel spoke this. Yet we have learned: ‘The Ancient of Days spoke it.’ Both this and that are fine.⁶⁶

“It has been taught: *As I watched, thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days sat* (Daniel 7:9). *Thrones were cast down*—what does this mean?”⁶⁷

He said to Rabbi Yehudah, “Stand erect and establish this throne!”⁶⁸

Rabbi Yehudah said, “It is written: *His throne, flames of fire* (ibid.), and the Ancient of Days sat upon this throne. Why? As it has been taught: If the Ancient of Days does not sit upon this throne, the world cannot endure that throne. When the Ancient of Days sits upon it, this is in order to subdue that throne, and whoever rides reigns.

“At the time when He moves from this throne and sits upon the other throne, the first throne is *cast down*, for only the one on which the Ancient of Days sits has dominion.”⁶⁹

Rabbi Shim’on said to Rabbi Yehudah, “Your path and your seating are prepared by the Ancient of Days!

“Come and see! It is written: *I, YHVH, the first, and with the last I am He* (Isaiah 41:4). All is *He*, and *He* is concealed on all sides, like the nose.⁷⁰

“By the nose, the face is recognized.”⁷¹

“Come and see: What is [130b] the difference between the Ancient One and *Ze’eir Anpin*? The former is Master of the Nose. From one nostril, life; from the other, life of life.⁷²

“This nose is an armoire, through which blows breath to *Ze’eir Anpin*. We call it Forgiveness, tranquil pleasure of spirit. For the breath issuing from here, from those nostrils

—one breath streams to *Ze'eir Anpin*, to arouse in the Garden of Eden. And one is a breath of life, by which the son of David will one day be welcomed to know wisdom. From that nostril a breath is aroused, issuing from the concealed brain, destined to settle upon King Messiah, as is written: *The breath of YHVH will alight upon him: a breath of wisdom and understanding, a breath of counsel and power, a breath of knowledge and awe of YHVH* (Isaiah 11:2).⁷³

“Look, there are four breaths here, yet we have spoken of one! Why three? Rise, Rabbi Yose, and speak!”⁷⁴

Rabbi Yose rose and said, “In the days of King Messiah no one will say to another, ‘Teach me this wisdom,’ for it is written as follows: *No longer will a man teach his brother... for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest* (Jeremiah 31:34). At that time the Ancient of Days will rouse a breath, issuing from the concealed brain, and when He draws this forth, all breaths below will be aroused with it. Who are they? The holy crowns of *Ze'eir Anpin*, which are six other breaths, described as follows: *a breath of wisdom and understanding, a breath of counsel and power, a breath of knowledge and awe of YHVH*.⁷⁵

“For we have learned: It is written *Solomon sat on the throne of YHVH as king* (1 Chronicles 29:23), and it is written *The throne had six steps* (1 Kings 10:19), and King Messiah is destined to sit upon seven. There are six, and the breath of the Ancient of Days above them makes seven. And as for three being mentioned, there are three breaths embracing three others.”⁷⁶

Rabbi Shim'on said to him, “Your breath will find rest in the world that is coming!

“Come and see what is written: *Thus says YHVH: From four winds, come, O breath!...* (Ezekiel 37:9). Now, what are the four winds of the world doing here? Well, four breaths will be aroused—there are three, and one of the concealed Ancient One makes four. So they are, for when

this one issues, along with it emerge three included within three others.⁷⁷

“Eventually the blessed Holy One will generate one breath comprised of all of them, as is written: *From four breaths, come, O breath!* It is not written here *Four breaths, come!* but rather *From four breaths, come!* In the days of King Messiah no one will need to teach another, for their breath, encompassing all breaths, will know everything: *wisdom and understanding, counsel and power, knowledge and awe of YHVH*, because of the breath comprised of all breaths. Therefore it is written *From four breaths*—four included in seven supernal rungs that we have mentioned.⁷⁸

“And it has been taught: All of them are included in this breath of the Ancient of Ancients, issuing from the concealed brain to the nostril of the nose.

“Come and see what is the difference between one nose and another. The nose of the Ancient of Days—life from all its sides. Regarding the nose of *Ze’eir Anpin*, it is written *Smoke rose from His nostrils, consuming fire from His mouth, coals blazed from it* (2 Samuel 22:9). *Smoke rose from His nostrils*—and from that smoke a fire is kindled as smoke ascends. Afterward, what is meant by *coals blazed from it? From it*—from that smoke, from that nose, from that fire.⁷⁹

“It has been taught: When Rav Hamnuna Sava wished to offer his prayer, he would say, ‘Master of the Nose I seek, Master of the Nose I entreat!’ This corresponds to the mystery of what is written: *For My praise, ׀טןא (ehetom), I restrain the nose, for you...* (Isaiah 48:9). This verse was spoken by the Ancient of Days.⁸⁰

“It has been taught: The length of the nose—375 worlds are filled by that nose, all cleaving to *Ze’eir Anpin*. This is the praise of the configuration of His nose. This and all the configurations of the Ancient of Days are seen and not seen—seen by Masters of Qualities, yet not seen by all.”⁸¹

Rabbi Shim'on opened, saying, "Woe to one who extends his hand into the glorious supernal beard of the holy Elder, hidden and concealed of all—the beard that is most concealed and precious of all His array, the beard not known by those above or those below, the beard that is praise of all praises, the beard that no human prophet or saint has ever approached to see, the beard that hangs by its hair to the navel of the heart, white as snow, most glorious of all, concealed of all, faith of all faith![82](#)

"It has been taught in the Concealment [131a] of the Book: This beard, faith of all, proceeds from His ears—descending and ascending around the holy mouth; descending, ascending, and covering the abundant offering of spices; great white of the glorious, descending evenly and covering to the navel.[83](#)

"This is the glorious beard, perfect faith, within which stream thirteen flows—springs of fine anointing oil, arranged in thirteen enhancements.[84](#)

"First enhancement: Hair is arranged from above, beginning from the curl of the hair of the head ascending arrayed above the ears, and descending in front of the opening of the ears, in one thread evenly, to the top of the mouth.[85](#)

"Second enhancement: Hair is arranged from the top of the mouth, ascending to the other top in symmetrical array.[86](#)

"Third enhancement: From the middle, beneath the nose, beneath the two nostrils, emerges a single path. Hair ceases on that path, while either side is filled with hair, perfectly arranged around that path.[87](#)

"Fourth enhancement: Hair is arranged, descending beneath the mouth, from one top to the other in symmetrical array.[88](#)

"Fifth enhancement: Beneath the mouth emerges another path, balancing the upper path, and these two paths are traced on the mouth, here and there.[89](#)

“Sixth enhancement: Hair is arranged, ascending and emerging from below to above, covering the offering of fine spices until the top of the mouth. Hair descends to the top of the lower path of the mouth.[90](#)

“Seventh enhancement: Hair stops, and two apples appear in an offering of spices, lovely and beautiful to behold. By them is fulfilled *In the light of the king’s face is life* (Proverbs 16:15).[91](#)

“Eighth enhancement: One cord of hairs emerges around the beard and hangs evenly to the navel.[92](#)

“Ninth enhancement: Hairs mingle with that hanging hair, not protruding from one another.[93](#)

“Tenth enhancement: Hair descends beneath the beard, covering the throat beneath the beard.

“Eleventh enhancement: One strand does not part from another, and they are measured by a perfect standard.[94](#)

“Twelfth enhancement: No hair overhangs the mouth, and the mouth is clear on all sides, with lovely hair all around.

“Thirteenth enhancement: Hair hangs beneath the beard on either side in fine glory, in beautiful glory, covering to the navel.[95](#)

“None of the face of the fragrant offering is seen except for those beautiful white apples that generate life to the world and radiate joy to *Ze’eir Anpin*.[96](#)

“Through these thirteen enhancements flow forth thirteen springs of anointing oil, streaming to all those below, who glow from that oil and are anointed by that oil. By these thirteen enhancements is distinguished the glorious beard, concealed of all, that of the Ancient of Ancients. From the two beautiful apples of His face shines the face of *Ze’eir Anpin*, and every calyx and blossom existing below shines and glows from that light.[97](#)

“These thirteen enhancements appear in the beard, and with the perfection of the beard by its enhancements a

person is called faithful, for whoever sees his beard attributes faithfulness to him.⁹⁸

“It has been taught in the Concealment of the Book: Of these thirteen enhancements dependent upon the glorious beard, some are manifested in the world, and thirteen gates of Compassion are opened. Whoever extends his hand to swear is as if he swears by the thirteen enhancements of the beard. This pertains to *Arikh Anpin*. For *Ze’eir Anpin*, how many?”⁹⁹

He said to Rabbi Yitshak, “Stand erect and twirl the curls of the Holy King’s enhancements! How are they arranged?”¹⁰⁰

Rabbi Yitshak rose. He opened, saying, “*Who is a God like You, removing iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His people? He does not retain His wrath forever, for He delights in love. He will return and have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. You will grant truth to Jacob, love to Abraham, as You swore to our fathers from days of old* (Micah 7:18–20).

“It has been taught: Thirteen attributes appear here, all issuing from thirteen springs of anointing oil in the enhancements of [131b] the holy beard of the Ancient of Ancients.¹⁰¹

“It has been taught: Hidden of the Hidden! Arrangement of His beard is hidden and concealed—hidden and not hidden, concealed and not concealed, in its enhancements known and not known.¹⁰²

“First enhancement. We have already learned that every single hair, every single strand, does not cling to its neighbor, and the strands of the beard begin their arrangement from that of the hair of the head.¹⁰³

“Here one should examine: If all strands of the hair of the head and strands of the glorious supernal beard are equivalent, why are these long and those not long? Why are

strands of the beard, which are not so long, coarse, whereas those of the head are not coarse?[104](#)

“Well, all strands of the head and the beard are evenly balanced. Those of the head extend to the shoulders to reach the head of *Ze’eir Anpin*, from the flow of the brain to His brain. Therefore they are not coarse, and should not be so.[105](#)

“For we have learned as follows: Why is it written *Wisdoms cry aloud outside, in the squares she lifts her voice* (Proverbs 1:20)? This verse is difficult: first it is written *Wisdoms cry aloud outside*, and then, *in the squares she lifts her voice*—its beginning does not match the end, nor its end the beginning! However, *Wisdoms cry out in the streets*—when it flows from the concealed brain of *Arikh Anpin* to the brain of *Ze’eir Anpin* through those strands, it is as if two brains join outside, becoming one brain, for the lower brain has no existence without the existence of the upper brain. And when there is flow from one to the other, it is written *she lifts her voice*—in the singular.[106](#)

“Because of the flow from brain to brain through those strands, they are not coarse. Why? Because if they were coarse, nothing could flow through them to the brain. Thus, no wisdom emerges from a person who is coarse and angry, as is written: *Words of the wise said gently are heard* (Ecclesiastes 9:17). From here we learn that if the hair on a person’s head is coarse, wisdom does not settle within him.[107](#)

“Consequently, they are long, to bring benefit to all. What is meant by ‘all’? To enter the spinal cord, which drinks from the brain. Therefore the hair of the head does not overhang the hair of the beard; for the hair of the head hangs and rises over the ears, behind, not overhanging the beard, because one must not mingle with the other, since each branches out on its own path.[108](#)

“It has been taught: All those hairs, whether of the head or of the beard, are completely white as snow. And it

has been taught: Those of the beard are all coarse. Why? Because they are strongest of the strong, to bequeath thirteen attributes that are bestowed below.[109](#)

“We have learned as follows: In front of the ears hairs begin, for they are alone, not mingling with the others. Now, if you say that there are no others like them—not so! For we have learned: *Who is a God like You—one; removing iniquity—two; and passing over the transgression—three; of the remnant of His people—four; He does not retain His wrath forever—five; for He delights in love—six; He will return and have compassion upon us—seven; He will subdue our iniquities—eight; and You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea—nine; You will grant truth to Jacob—ten; love to Abraham—eleven; as You swore to our fathers—twelve; from days of old—thirteen.* Corresponding to this: *A compassionate and gracious God...* (Exodus 34:6-7), and those are below.[110](#)

“Now, you might say, ‘How could Moses not utter these supernal ones?’ Well, Moses needed only the place where Judgment prevails, and where Judgment prevails, one must speak as he did. And Moses spoke at a time when Israel had sinned and Judgment was looming, so Moses spoke only in a place where Judgment is found. But in this other place, the prophet arranges the ordered praise of the Ancient of Days.[111](#)

“Those thirteen enhancements of the beard are powerful, so as to break and subdue all decrees of Judgment. Who can behold the supernal holy beard, concealed of the concealed, and not be put to shame? Therefore all its hairs are coarse, powerfully arrayed.[112](#)
[132a]

“Now, you might say, ‘If so, look, the hairs below are black! Why aren’t these like those?’ Because it has been taught: It is written *his locks wavy, black as a raven* (Song of Songs 5:11)—just as Torah was given to Israel in white fire upon black fire.[113](#)

“Essence of the matter: because these hairs exist on behalf of the brain, to be conveyed to the brain below. As for their being above the beard, the beard is by itself, as are all its enhancements. The beard is by itself, and the hairs [of the head] are by themselves.[114](#)

“First enhancement—enhancement beginning from the start of the hair of the head. We have learned: The entire beard derives from the brain of the head. Yet here this is not expounded, for here is simply this enhancement, descending from the start of the hair of the head. So it is.[115](#)

“From this beard is perceived all that comes from the head of a thousand worlds, sealed with a pure signet ring, a ring including all rings.[116](#)

“The length of each hair descending in front of the ears is not long, nor does one cling to another, nor do these hairs descend. As they extend, they flow and dangle.[117](#)

“The beginning of the first enhancement is thirty-one even locks, extending to the top of the mouth, and every single lock contains 390 strands. The thirty-one even locks within the first enhancement are strong, to subdue below, numerically equivalent to לֵא (EI). What is meant by EI? Strong, able.[118](#)

“Within each lock branch out thirty-one worlds, powerful and dominating, to scrutinize—thirty-one on this side and thirty-one on that side. And every single one of these worlds branches into a thousand worlds of yearning for great delight. All is concealed in the top of the beard, embracing strength, and they are included in this EI. Even so, this EI is overwhelmed by the Compassion of the Ancient of Days—sweetened, absorbed, and diffused within it.[119](#)

“Why to the mouth? Because it is written *Judgment sat* (Daniel 7:10). What is meant by *Judgment sat*? It sat in its place, not prevailing. This corresponds to what is written: פֶּלֵא (Pele), *Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty* לֵא (EI), *God* (Isaiah

9:5)—*EI* who is mighty, yet He is assuaged by the holy beard of the Ancient of Days. And the mystery written—*Who is EI, a God, like You?* (Micah 7:18)—refers to the Ancient of Days, to the enhancement of the holy supernal beard.^{[120](#)}

“The first world emerging from the first enhancement gains dominion, descending and ascending to a million and a billion shield-bearing warriors, who are held by it—like a chest sealed by a large clasp.^{[121](#)}

“The second world emerging from this enhancement gains dominion, descending and ascending to fifty-seven thousand rungs of wailers, held by it to be subdued—like the nape of an animal’s neck by a thorny cane.^{[122](#)}

“The third world emerging from this enhancement gains dominion, descending and ascending to ninety-six thousand howlers, held by it like vestments on an emperor.^{[123](#)}

“By this enhancement all of them are subdued and assuaged, like the bitterness of tears sweetened in the Great Sea.^{[124](#)}

“Who can behold this enhancement of the holy supernal glorious beard and not be put to shame? Who can behold the secrecy of locks of hair hanging from this Elder, sitting adorned with a crown of crowns—crowns of all crowns, crowns not included with crowns, crowns unlike other crowns, crowns to which crowns below are linked. Therefore to these enhancements are linked those enhancements below.^{[125](#)}

“Enhancements were arranged because it is necessary to bless whoever requires a blessing. For corresponding to all enhancements that are arranged, blessings appear, and whatever is enacted is enacted. All is encompassed by these enhancements. All rise toward the enhancements of the King, the Ancient One, concealed of all, and all are sweetened by these enhancements of the Ancient King.^{[126](#)}

“It has been taught: If the Ancient of Ancients, Holy of Holies, were not arrayed in these enhancements, those

above and those below would not exist, and all would be as if it were not.^{[127](#)}

“It has been taught: How far do these enhancements of the beard radiate? Until thirteen below. Whenever [132b] these thirteen are manifested, all share the count of these thirteen. Consequently, the beard of the Ancient King is most precious of all.^{[128](#)}

“Because it is most hidden and precious of all, it is not mentioned anywhere in the Torah nor is it revealed. And from this beard is revealed the beard of the High Priest above, from whom the beard descends to the beard below, of the high priest. Just as the beard of the High Priest is arrayed in eight enhancements, so the high priest has eight adornments when oil descends upon his beard, as is written: *Like fine oil on the head, running down upon the beard, the beard of Aaron, descending over the collar of his robes* (Psalms 133:2).^{[129](#)}

“How do we know? As is written: *Look, how good and how pleasant is the dwelling of brothers* גַּם יַחַד (gam yahad), *fully together!* (Psalms 133:1)—*gam, also*, to include the high priest below. For as long as the high priest below officiates in the high priesthood, it is as if the High Priest above does likewise.^{[130](#)}

“This is one enhancement of the beard of the Ancient of Ancients, concealed of all.”

Rabbi Shim'on said to him, “You are worthy of beholding the glory of the enhancements of the beard and the Countenance of Days of the Ancient of Ancients. Happy is your share, and happy is my share along with you in the world that is coming!^{[131](#)}

“Rise, Rabbi Hizkiyah! Stand erect and celebrate the glory of the enhancements of the holy beard!”^{[132](#)}

Rabbi Hizkiyah rose. He began, saying, “*I am my beloved's, and his desire is upon me* (Song of Songs 7:11).

What brought about that *I am my beloved's*? Because *his desire is upon me*.[133](#)

“I was contemplating, and behold, I saw a precious light of supernal lamps, shining and ascending in 325 directions. One darkness was bathing in that light, like someone washing off what is coating him in a deep river whose branching waters stream and flow in every direction. That light rose to the shore of the supernal deep sea, by whose opening all fine and precious openings are released.[134](#)

“I asked, ‘What is the meaning of that which I saw?’

“They opened, saying, ‘You have seen *removing iniquity* (Micah 7:18).”

He said, “This is the second enhancement.” He sat down.[135](#)

Rabbi Shim'on said, “Now the world is rendered fit. Blessed are you, Rabbi Hizkiyah, by the Ancient of Ancients!”

Rabbi Shim'on said, “All lamps—you Companions, who are in this holy ring—I call the highest heaven and the highest holy earth as witnesses that I see now what no human has seen since the day that Moses ascended Mount Sinai the second time. I see my face shining like the light of the powerful sun that is destined to radiate healing for the world, as is written: *For you who revere My name the sun of righteousness will shine, with healing in its wings* (Malachi 3:20).[136](#)

“Furthermore, I know that my face is shining, whereas Moses did not know or see, as is written: *Moses did not know that the skin of his face was radiant* (Exodus 34:29).[137](#)

“Furthermore, I see with my own eyes these thirteen engraved before me, shining like lamps. When each one of them is elucidated, issuing from your mouths, it ascends and is crowned and arrayed, concealed within recesses of the enhancements of the beard, while all the others remain.

As each one is elucidated, issuing from your mouths, it shines and is crowned, sitting like a king among his legions. When the elucidation is completed, it ascends and is adorned with a holy crown, arranged and concealed, taking its place among the enhancements of the holy beard. And so with every single one.¹³⁸

“Gird yourselves, holy Companions, for there will never be a monumental event like this until King Messiah appears!¹³⁹

“Rise, Rabbi Hizkiyah, a second time!”¹⁴⁰

It has been taught: Before Rabbi Hizkiyah could stand, a voice issued, declaring, “One messenger does not perform two missions.”¹⁴¹

Rabbi Shim'on trembled, and said, “Each and every one in his place. Yet through me and Rabbi El'azar, my son, and Rabbi Abba, perfection will alight upon us.¹⁴²

“Rise, Rabbi Hiyya!”

Rabbi Hiyya rose. He opened, saying, “*I said, 'Ah, YHVH Elohim! Look, I do not know how to speak, for I am but a youth* (Jeremiah 1:6). Now, did Jeremiah not know how to speak? What about all the words that came out of his mouth before he said this? Could he have uttered a falsehood, as is written: *I do not know how to speak?*¹⁴³

“Well, perish the thought that he intended this! Rather, it has been taught as follows: What is the difference between דבור (*dibbur*), speaking, and אמירה (*amirah*), saying? Saying does not require raising one's voice, [133a] whereas speaking requires raising the voice and proclaiming words. How do we know? As is written: וידבר אלהים (*Va-ydabber Elohim*), *God spoke, all these words* (Exodus 20:1), and it has been taught: The whole world heard that *dibbur*, speech, and trembled; so it is written *va-ydabber, spoke*, and not ויאמר (*va-yomer*), *said*. Here, too, it is written: *Look, I do not know* דבר (*dabber*), *how to speak*—to proclaim and to reprimand the world by the Holy Spirit.¹⁴⁴

“If so, look at what is written: וידבר יהוה (Va-ydabber YHVH), *YHVH spoke, to Moses* (Exodus 6:10)! Well, who was as exalted a prophet as Moses, whose level no other human attained? For he heard *dibbur*, speaking, in proclamation yet did not fear or tremble; whereas other prophets, even by *amirah*, saying, are shaken and filled with fear.¹⁴⁵

“It has been taught: The first enhancement of the beard and the second serve to restore the third, as is written: *Behold, all these God performs twice, thrice with a man* (Job 33:29).¹⁴⁶

“Come and see! The first two enhancements bring about the third, for look: ‘Third enhancement: From the middle, beneath the nose, beneath the two nostrils, emerges a single path. Hair ceases on that path.’ Why does it cease? Because of what is written: *and passing over transgression* (Micah 7:18), and this path is prepared for passage. So it lies beneath the two nostrils and hair does not grow on this path, on account of ‘subduing iniquities’; and it is written: *passing over transgression*—providing passage to the holy mouth, so that it may say, *I have forgiven* (Numbers 14:20).¹⁴⁷

“It has been taught: Numerous registrars await that mouth, but it is not revealed to any of them, for it ascends and is crowned and concealed—known and unknown.¹⁴⁸

“It has been taught in the Concealment of the Book: What is the meaning of *passing over transgression*? If they are worthy, *passing over*; if they are not worthy, *transgression*. What is implied by *passing over* פֶּשָׁה (*pesha*)? That שׁ (*shin*) precedes פֶּ (*pe*). If they are not worthy—standing still, not *passing over* into *Ze’eir Anpin*.¹⁴⁹

“What is the difference between one and the other? In *Ze’eir Anpin*, when that path descends from beneath His nostrils, it is written *The nose of YHVH flared against them*, וילך (*va-yelekh*), *and he went* (Numbers 12:9). What is meant by *and he went*? That a breath of wrath shoots forth from those nostrils, and whoever is found there is ‘gone’ and no

longer exists—as is written: *For the breath of YHVH blows upon him* (Isaiah 40:7).¹⁵⁰

“Of *Arikh Anpin* is written *passing over* [transgression], and it is written: *A breath passes, purifying them* (Job 37:21). Here is written *and passing over transgression*—by that path. There, *YHVH will pass to strike Egypt* (Exodus 12:23).¹⁵¹

“Happy is the share of one who is worthy of this! This is the third enhancement—of the path of the glorious holy supernal beard of the Ancient of Ancients.”¹⁵²

Rabbi Shim’on said, “Surely the blessed Holy One will benefit you abundantly and gladly protect you.

“And it has been taught: The verse *I will rejoice greatly in YHVH* (Isaiah 61:10) refers to the Ancient of Days, for He is joy of all.¹⁵³

“It has been taught: When this path of the beard of the Ancient of Days is revealed, all the wailers and howlers and Masters of Judgment are shut up and silenced, and no one can open his mouth to inflict harm, because this path signifies silence. Consequently, whoever makes a gesture urging silence designates this path—a sign of signs of the Holy Ancient One.¹⁵⁴

“Fourth enhancement: Hair is arranged, descending beneath the mouth, from one top to the other—as is written: *of the remnant of His people* (Micah 7:18); as is said: *You will offer up prayer for the remnant that is found* (2 Kings 19:4), actually *found*. *The remnant*—as is written: *The remnant of Israel shall do no iniquity and speak no falsehood* (Zephaniah 3:13).¹⁵⁵

“Fifth enhancement: Another path emerges beneath the mouth—as is written: *He does not retain His wrath forever* (Micah 7:18).¹⁵⁶

“Rise, Rabbi Yose!”¹⁵⁷

Rabbi Yose rose, and opened, saying, “*Happy the people who has it so, happy the people whose God is YHVH!*

(Psalms 144:15). *Happy the people* לֹשְׂכָהּ לוֹ (*she-kakhah lo*), *who has it so*. What is meant by *she-kakhah, who so?* As is said: *The king's fury* שְׂכָהּ (*shakhakhah*), *abated* (Esther 7:10), *subsiding from wrath.*[158](#)

“Alternatively, subsiding through wrath—as is written: *If* כָּהּ (*kakhah*), *this, is how You treat me, kill me, please, instantly* (Numbers 11:15); this is Judgment of Judgments. *Happy the people whose God is YHVH—Compassion of Compassions.*[159](#)

“Alternatively, שְׂכָהּ (*she-kakhah*)—the Name comprising all names. The blessed Holy One causes His anger to pass away and calms down *Ze'eir Anpin* and passes over [the transgression of] all those outside.[160](#)

“For it has been taught: The path of the holy supernal enhancement—the Ancient of Ancients—descending in His beard beneath the nostrils, and this path below, are entirely equivalent, one [133b] above and one below. Above, *passing over transgression*; below, *He does not retain His wrath forever*. And we have learned: *He does not retain*—because there is no place to stay. Just as above provides a place to pass, so below provides a place to pass.[161](#)

“We have learned: Wherever a path is revealed in this Ancient One, concealed of all, it is good for all those below, for thereby counsel appears, benefiting all. As for what is sealed, not revealed, there is no counsel, and no one knows it except for Him alone, just as Eden above is unknown by anyone other than the Ancient of Ancients. Of this is written *How great are Your works, O YHVH, Your thoughts are very deep* (Psalms 92:6).”[162](#)

Rabbi Shim'on said, “Your works will be established for the world that is coming by the Ancient of Ancients!

“Sixth enhancement: Hair is arranged, ascending from below to above, covering the offering of fine spices until the top of the mouth. Hair descends to the top of the lower path of the mouth.[163](#)

“Rise, Rabbi Yeisa, and array this enhancement!”¹⁶⁴

Rabbi Yeisa rose, and opened, saying, “*My love shall never depart from you* (Isaiah 54:10), and it is written *With love of the world will I have compassion upon you* (ibid., 8). These verses contradict each other!”¹⁶⁵

“They do not, for we have learned: There is *love*, and then there is *love*! There is inner *love*, and there is outer *love*. Inner *love*—of the Ancient of Ancients, which we have mentioned, concealed in this side of the beard called ‘the edge of the beard.’ A person must not destroy this side because it is the inner *love* of the Ancient of Days. Therefore, concerning the priest below, it is written: *They shall not make any baldness on their head, and the edge of their beard they shall not shave* (Leviticus 21:5). Why? So as not to destroy the paths of *love* of the Ancient One—and the priest derives from this side.”¹⁶⁶

“It has been taught in the Concealment of the Book: In every manner *love* must be increased and fashioned, not cut or eliminated from the world.”¹⁶⁷

“That which is written: *My love shall never depart from you*—this is *love* of the Ancient of Days. *With love of the world—love* that is called *love of the world*, which is another one, as is written: *I said, ‘The world is built by love’* (Psalms 89:3).¹⁶⁸

“This *love* of the Ancient of Ancients is true *love*, and true *love* does not pertain to life of the body, but rather to life of the soul. Thus it is written *for he delights in love* (Micah 7:18). This is the sixth enhancement of the glorious beard of the Ancient of Ancients.”¹⁶⁹

“Seventh enhancement: Hair stops, and two apples appear in an offering of spices, lovely and beautiful to behold.”¹⁷⁰

Rabbi Shim’on opened, saying, “*Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest, [so is my beloved among the young men]* (Song of Songs 2:3). *Like an apple tree*—just as an apple is composed of three colors, so with the blessed

Holy One: two apples include six colors, and these two apples, which are the seventh enhancement, are equivalent to all six enhancements that we have mentioned. By them is fulfilled *In the light of the king's face is life* (Proverbs 16:15).¹⁷¹

“It has been taught: From these apples issues life to the world, and they manifest joy to *Ze'eir Anpin*. It is written: *May YHVH shine His face upon you* (Numbers 6:25), and it is written *In the light of the king's face is life. The king's face*—those two apples in an offering of spices that I mentioned. *May YHVH shine His face upon you*—the outer face, which, when it shines, brings blessing to the world.¹⁷²

“It has been taught: Whenever these outer lamps shine, the whole world is blessed and wrath is nowhere to be found. Now, if this is so with these outer ones, how much more so with the two apples that shine constantly, rejoice constantly!¹⁷³

“It has been taught: When these two apples are revealed, *Ze'eir Anpin* appears joyful, and all those lamps below shine, and all worlds delight, perfectly fulfilled. All rejoices and glows, and all goodness does not cease. All are filled simultaneously, all delight simultaneously.¹⁷⁴

“Come and see: As for the outer face, it sometimes shines and sometimes darkens. Thus it is written *May He shine His face upon us. Selah* (Psalms 67:2)—which implies that it is not always so, but only when the apples above are revealed.¹⁷⁵

“It has been taught: These apples that are concealed shine and glow white constantly, some of them shining in 370 directions. All of the first six enhancements of the beard are included therein. As is written: *He will return and have compassion upon us* (Micah 7:19). *He will return*—because sometimes they are covered and sometimes revealed, as is written: *He will return*. And in the one below, it is *truth*. This is the seventh enhancement, [134a]

including six in the two apples within the Ancient of Ancients.¹⁷⁶

“Eighth enhancement: One cord of hairs emerges around the beard and hangs evenly to the navel.¹⁷⁷

“Rise, El’azar, my son, array this enhancement!”¹⁷⁸

Rabbi El’azar rose. He opened, saying, “All depends upon מזל (*mazzal*), even the Torah scroll in the היכל (*heikhal*).¹⁷⁹

“This statement has been established in the Concealment of the Book, and so it says. But does all depend upon *mazzal*? We have learned: The Torah scroll is holy, its case is holy, the *heikhal* is holy. And it is written: *One called to another, saying, ‘Holy, holy, holy’* (Isaiah 6:3)—there are three, corresponding to the Torah scroll, whose *heikhal* is holy, whose case is holy, and it itself is holy. The Torah was given in three aspects of holiness, on three levels, in three days. *Shekhinah* is in three; the Tablets and the Ark are in three. All depends upon the Torah scroll, yet it depends upon *mazzal*? It is written: *By signs in the heavens do not be dismayed* (Jeremiah 10:2). Should that which exists in such a state of holiness be dependent upon מזלא (*mazzala*)?¹⁸⁰

“Well, it has been established as follows in the Concealment of the Book: This precious holy cord, upon which all hairs of the beard depend, is called *mazzal*. Why? Because all the holiest holies of holies depend upon this *mazzala*.¹⁸¹

“Although the Torah scroll is holy, ten types of holiness take no effect upon it until it enters the *heikhal*; once it does so, it is called ‘holy with ten types of holiness.’ Correspondingly above, the *heikhal* is not called by its name until ten types of holiness unite.¹⁸²

“It has been taught: All depends upon *mazzal*—namely this cord upon which all hairs depend. Why *mazzal*? Because מזולי (*mazzalei*), signs of the zodiac, are suspended from it, and those above and those below נזולי (*nazelei*), flow, from it.

Therefore it hangs, and upon it depend all things of the world and those above and below. Even the Torah scroll in the *heikhal*, adorned with ten types of holiness, is not exempt from this principle—along with all other holy things, all of which depend on this.¹⁸³

“Whoever sees this enhancement is subdued and overwhelmed by it, as is written: *He will subdue our iniquities* (Micah 7:19).”¹⁸⁴

Rabbi Shim'on said to him, “You are blessed, my son, by the Holy of Holies, most Ancient of all!

“Ninth enhancement: Hairs mingle with that hanging hair, not protruding from one another.”¹⁸⁵

“Rise, Rabbi Abba!”¹⁸⁶

Rabbi Abba rose, and said, “These hairs mingling with those hanging ones are called *the depths of the sea* (Micah 7:19), since they issue from the residue of the brain. From this place, all powers demanding punishment for the sins of humans are cast down and overwhelmed.”¹⁸⁷

Rabbi Shim'on said, “You will be blessed by the Ancient of Days!

“Tenth enhancement: Hair descends beneath the beard, covering the throat beneath the beard.”¹⁸⁸

“Rise, Rabbi Yehudah!”¹⁸⁹

Rabbi Yehudah rose. He opened, saying, “*They will enter caves in the rocks and clefts in the cliffs, from the fear of YHVH and the glory of His majesty, when He rises to terrify the earth* (Isaiah 2:19). *From the fear of YHVH*—it is well known that the one who is outside is called *the fear of YHVH*.¹⁹⁰

“*The glory of His majesty*—those hairs beneath the beard, called *the glory of His majesty*.¹⁹¹

“Two: *You will grant truth to Jacob* (Micah 7:20), and the eleventh—that one strand does not part from another—*love to Abraham* (ibid.).¹⁹²

“Twelfth enhancement: No hair overhangs the mouth, and the mouth is clear on all sides, with lovely hair all around.[193](#)

“This enhancement—that they are all eliminated from the mouth—is so that there will be no trouble, just as it should be. What is meant by ‘trouble’? Judgment. Wherever there is Judgment, trouble appears. Now, are the hairs of the beard trouble or Judgment? Surely, they all display Compassion! Yes, but so that there be no trouble in exhaling the breath to *Ze’eir Anpin*.[194](#)

“For it has been taught: From this holy supernal mouth, Holy of Holies, blows a breath. What breath? A breath pouring into *Ze’eir Anpin*, enveloping Him, and by this breath are enveloped all those below. As this breath issues, it divides into thirty-seven thousand directions, each one extending independently to its place, and whoever is worthy of being enveloped by it is enveloped. Therefore hair is not found on the mouth, since breath issues, and nothing else should interfere with it or approach it.[195](#)

“This is hiddenness of all, grasped neither above nor below—concealed within utmost concealment, unknown. [134b] This is the one unadorned, having no enhancement. Consequently, the breath proceeding outside, enveloping the faithful prophets, is called ‘the mouth of *YHVH*,’ but in this Ancient of Ancients it is not expressed, and there is no one who knows His breath beside Himself. Therefore its hairs lie symmetrically around the mouth, which is clear on all sides.[196](#)

“In this the patriarchs trusted, to be enveloped by this breath spreading in so many directions from the place surrounded symmetrically by all the hair, as is written: *as You swore to our fathers* (Micah 7:20).[197](#)

“This is the twelfth holy supernal enhancement, from which unfurl twelve boundaries above, twelve boundaries below, twelve boundaries of the twelve tribes of the patriarchs, as is written: *as You swore to our fathers*.”[198](#)

“Thirteenth enhancement: Hair hangs beneath the beard on either side in fine glory, in beautiful glory, covering to the navel. None of the face of the fragrant offering is seen except for those beautiful white apples.”[199](#)

Rabbi Shim'on said, “Happy is the share of whoever is present in this holy supernal assembly of ours! Happy is his share in this world and in the world that is coming! For we are sitting amid supernal fire surrounding us. Behold, all the sublime enhancements of the holy beard have been arrayed and adorned, encircling their places.”[200](#)

“This thirteenth enhancement—this fine enhancement, to which they are joined! What yearning to raise the head toward it! From it dangle all those joined to *Ze'eir Anpin*; from it dangle those above and those below. This is the perfect enhancement, completing all enhancements, consummating all.”[201](#)

“It has been taught: These enhancements are called *days of old* (Micah 7:20), days most ancient of all. Those appearing in *Ze'eir Anpin* are called *days of the world* (Isaiah 63:9).[202](#)

“It has been taught: These *days of old* are all arranged in the enhancements of the beard of the Ancient of Ancients, and this thirteenth one includes them. All hidden treasures above and below are included in this *mazzala*, from which all flows, as has been said. This day is not included among them; rather it includes all.”[203](#)

“At the time when the Ancient of Days is aroused, that enhancement will be called יום אחד (*yom ehad*), *one day*, in which He intends to glorify His beard, as is written: *He will be known to YHVH* (Zechariah 14:7)—*He* alone, more than all; *He*, encompassing all; *He*, not called by any known name.”[204](#)

“For we have learned: Wherever there is day, there is night, since there is no day without night. Because that time will be the beard's glory and *He* alone will exist, it will be called neither day nor night. For day is only called so

from our perspective, and night is only called so from our perspective.²⁰⁵

“Since this enhancement encompasses all, it is not known or seen. From it flows anointing oil in thirteen directions—springs for all those below, who glow from that oil.²⁰⁶

“Thirteen enhancements of the holy supernal beard are arrayed, and these enhancements of the beard descend in countless directions. How they spread and how they radiate cannot be seen; they are hidden from all, concealed from all. No one knows a bodily place in this Ancient One. In their expansion, all are included, as has been said.²⁰⁷

“He is known and unknown, concealed and not concealed. Of Him is proclaimed *I am YHVH, איהו (hu), He, is My name; My glory I will not yield to another* (Isaiah 42:8); and it is written: *Hu, He, made us, and not we ourselves* (Psalms 100:3). It is also written: *The Ancient of Days sat* (Daniel 7:9)—*sat*, surely: *sat* in His place, unknown to anyone; *sat*, not to be found. And it is written: *I praise You, for awesomely and wondrously am I made; wondrous are Your works* (Psalms 139:14).”²⁰⁸

Rabbi Shim'on said to the Companions, “When this canopy that you see over us was spread, I saw all these enhancements descending within it, illumining this place—and one curtain, a vestment of holiness, spread over four columns in four directions.²⁰⁹ [135a]

“One column was situated from below to above, with a spade in its hand. On the spade are four keys, sharpened on all sides, grasping the canopy, lowering it from above. Similarly with the second, third, and fourth columns.²¹⁰

“Between each column are attached eighteen supportive feet, glowing in the vestment, engraved in that canopy. Similarly in all four directions.

“I saw these enhancements shining upon it, awaiting the words of our mouths—to be crowned, each ascending to

its place. As it was arranged by our mouths, every single one ascended and was crowned, arrayed in the arrangement bestowed here by each of our mouths. As each of us opened his mouth to arrange a certain enhancement, that enhancement sat waiting for the word to issue from your mouth, and then it was crowned, ascending to its place to be adorned.[211](#)

“All the columns on either side rejoice upon hearing what they do not know and they listen to your voices. How many chariots appear here for your sake! Happy are you in the world that is coming, for all these words issuing from your mouths are holy words, worthy words, not deviating to the right or the left.[212](#)

“The blessed Holy One delights in hearing and listening to these words, eventually decreeing that in the world that is coming you will utter all these holy words a second time. Of you is written *Your palate is like fine wine—flowing to my beloved smoothly, stirring the lips of sleepers* (Song of Songs 7:10). What is meant by *stirring the lips of sleepers*? Even in the world that is coming your lips will be astir in His presence.[213](#)

“Now focus your minds to arrange the enhancements of *Ze’eir Anpin*—how He is arrayed and how He is clothed in His enhancements by the enhancements of the Ancient of Days, Holy of Holies, Concealed of the Concealed, concealed from all. Now it is incumbent upon you to decree a true, fine, and beautiful judgment, and to arrange all enhancements thoroughly.[214](#)

“The enhancements of *Ze’eir Anpin* were arrayed by the enhancements of *Arikh Anpin*, and His enhancements spread on this side and on that, like the appearance of a human being—to draw in a breath of the Concealed One on all sides, in order to sit upon the Throne, as is written: *Upon the image of a throne, an image like the appearance of a human being upon it above* (Ezekiel 1:26). *Like the*

appearance of אדם (adam), a human being—including all images. Like the appearance of adam—including all names. Like the appearance of adam—in whom are concealed all worlds above and below. Like the appearance of adam—including all secrets uttered and prepared before the world was created, even if they did not endure.[215](#)

“It has been taught in the Concealment of the Book: The Ancient of Ancients, before preparing His enhancements, fashioned kings and gauged kings, but they did not endure; so He eventually put them aside and concealed them for a later time, as is written: *These are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before a king reigned over the Children of Israel* (Genesis 36:31). *In the land of Edom*—in the place where all judgments exist. None of them endured until the White Head, Ancient of Ancients, was arrayed. When He was arrayed, He arranged all enhancements below, arranging all enhancements of those above and below.[216](#)

“From here we learn: If any head of a nation is not prepared first, his nation is not prepared. If he is prepared, they are all prepared; and if he is not prepared first, they cannot be prepared. How do we know this? From the Ancient of Days, for until He Himself was arrayed in His enhancements, all those that He intended to arrange did not endure, and all those worlds were destroyed, as is written: *There reigned in Edom Bela son of Beor* (Genesis 36:32). *There reigned in Edom*—a precious secret: the place where all judgments cluster, from where they dangle.[217](#)

“*Bela son of Beor*—it has been taught: He is the harshest of all decrees of Judgment, through whom band together one million wailers and howlers.[218](#)

“*And the name of his city was Dinhabah* (Genesis 36:32). What is דנהבה (*Dinhavah*)? That is to say, דין הב (*Din hav*), Give judgment—as is said: *The leech has two daughters*—הב הב (*Hav, hav*), ‘Give!’ ‘Give!’ (Proverbs 30:15).[219](#)

“As soon as he ascended to settle, he did not endure, nor could he. Why? Because *Adam* had not been arranged. Why? Because the arrangement of *Adam* and His image comprise all, and all can [135b] settle in Him; and since this arrangement of *Adam* did not exist, they could not endure or settle, and they were nullified.^{[220](#)}

“Would you ever imagine that they were nullified? Look, they are all included in *Adam*! Rather, they were nullified and removed from that arrangement, until the image of *Adam* appeared. When this image appeared they were all engraved and transformed into another existence. Some of them became fragrantly firm, some of them not entirely so, and some of them not at all.^{[221](#)}

“Now, you might say, ‘But it is written *He died... he died* (Genesis 36:33–39)—implying that they were nullified completely.’ Not so! Rather, anyone who descends from his original rung of existence is said to have died, as is written: *The king of Egypt died* (Exodus 2:23)—meaning that he descended from the rung that he occupied. Once *Adam* was arrayed, they were called by different names and became fragrantly firm through existing in Him, enduring in their places.^{[222](#)}

“All of them were called by different names, except for the one of whom is written *The name of his wife was Mehetabel daughter of Matred daughter of Mezahab* (Genesis 36:39). Why? Because these were not nullified like the others. Why? Because they were male and female—like a palm tree, which flourishes only when it is male and female. So now they were male and female, and death is not applied to them as it is to the others, and they endured, though they did not settle. Once the image of *Adam* was established, they were transformed into another existence, settling securely.^{[223](#)}

“It has been taught: When an impulse arose in the will of the White Head to enhance His glory, He arranged,

prepared, and generated from the Lamp of Adamantine Darkness a single spark. He breathed upon it and it flamed; His will arose and it scattered in 370 directions. Then the spark stood still, and pure air began to issue, whirling and expanding, and a single mighty skull emanated in four directions.[224](#)

“Within this pure air, the spark was absorbed, grasped, and enveloped. Would you ever imagine ‘within it’? Rather, concealed within it, and so this skull expanded in its directions, while this air is secreted in the secrecies of the Ancient of Days, in the breath that is treasured away.[225](#)

“In this skull fire spread on one side and air on the other, with pure air presiding over this side and pure fire presiding over the other. What is fire doing here? Well, it is not fire, but rather this spark enveloped in the pure air, illumining 270 worlds, and from its side stems Judgment. Therefore this skull is called ‘the mighty skull.’[226](#)

“In this skull dwell 90,000,000 worlds, moving with it, supported by it. Into this skull trickles dew from the White Head, filling it constantly, and from this dew the dead are destined to be revived.[227](#)

“That dew comprises two colors. From the aspect of the White Head, its color is white, including all whites, entirely white; but when it settles in this head of *Ze’eir Anpin*, red appears in it—like a crystal, which is white, yet the color red appears within the color white.[228](#)

“Therefore it is written: *Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake—these to eternal life, those to shame and eternal contempt* (Daniel 12:2). *To eternal life*—because they deserve that white, coming from the aspect of the Ancient of Days, *Arikha de-Anpin*, Elongated Countenance. *To shame and eternal contempt*—because they deserve that red of *Ze’eir Anpin*. All is included in that dew, as is written: *For Your dew is a dew of lights* (Isaiah 26:19)—two! And that dew drips every day to the Apple Orchard, colored white and red.[229](#)

“This skull shines in two colors, on this side and on that. Some of the pure air expands from the skull to His face into 1,500,000 worlds, and therefore He is called *Ze'eir Anpin*, Small Countenance. When the need arises, His face expands and lengthens, for He gazes upon the face of the Ancient of Ancients, and He has compassion on the world.^{[230](#)}

“From this skull emerges one route to all those below, and they offer a payment of tribute to the Ancient of Days as they come to be numbered [136a] under the scepter. Corresponding to this, *a beqa per skull* (Exodus 38:26) below when they came to be numbered, and this *beqa* provides a payment of tribute to the Ancient of Days.^{[231](#)}

“In the hollow of the skull are found three cavities in which the brain resides, with a thin membrane covering them—but not a hard, sealed membrane like that of the Ancient of Days. Consequently, this brain extends, emerging into thirty-two paths, as is written: *A river issues from Eden...* (Genesis 2:10).^{[232](#)}

“It has been taught: In three cavities of the skull resides the brain. From one cavity a bubbling spring bursts forth in four directions, and from the brain residing in this cavity issue thirty-two paths, breaths of Wisdom.^{[233](#)}

“From the second cavity bursts and spreads another spring, and fifty gates open. To these fifty gates are linked fifty days of Torah, fifty years of Jubilee, fifty thousand generations—when the blessed Holy One intends to restore His breath to Himself, dwelling within Him.^{[234](#)}

“From the third cavity emerge a million chambers and porticos upon which דעתא (*Da'ta*), Knowledge, settles and in which it dwells. This cavity places its abode between the other two, and all those chambers are filled from both sides, as is written: וברעת (*Uv-da'at*), *And by knowledge, rooms are filled* (Proverbs 24:4).^{[235](#)}

“These three cavities permeate the whole body on one side and the other. The entire body is linked with them,

intermingling with them in all aspects; throughout the whole body they spread.[236](#)

“It has been taught: From the skull of the head hang ten billion and one hundred million locks of black hair, interwoven and mingling with one another. It is impossible to count the strands of every single lock, and to each lock cling purities and impurities. Here are linked reasons of Torah relating to pure and impure.[237](#)

“On all aspects that are pure and on all aspects that are impure lie locks interwoven and coarse—some of them smooth and some of them coarse. In every single lock, strands appear in heaps of wavy curls, glistening and dangling—like a mighty hero victorious in battles—arranged beautifully and powerfully, distinguished as grand and mighty cedars, as is written: *distinguished as the cedars* (Song of Songs 5:15). Locks arranged in dangling curls, from one side to the other upon the skull.[238](#)

“It has been taught: They appear in heaps of wavy curls because they flow from many springs of the three channels of the brain. From the spring of one cavity of the skull, hair flows smoothly, forming heaps of curls dangling from numerous springs streaming from this cavity.[239](#)

“From the second cavity issue fifty springs, and hair flows smoothly from those springs, forming heaps of curls dangling and mingling with other locks.[240](#)

“From the third cavity emerge a million chambers and porticos, and hair flows smoothly from all of them, forming heaps of wavy curls, mingling with other locks. Therefore those locks are heaps of wavy curls.[241](#)

“All the flows drawn from the three cavities of the skull’s brain, and all those locks, hang down and cover the sides of the ears. Therefore it is written: *Incline Your ear, O YHVH, and hear* (2 Kings 19:16).[242](#)

“Upon this depend right and left, radiance and darkness, Compassion and Judgment. All right and left

depend upon this, not upon the Ancient One.[243](#)

“In the parting of hair appears one narrow path, connected to the same path in the Ancient of Days. From this path branch 613 paths, dividing into paths of commandments of Torah, as is written: *All the paths of YHVH are kindness and truth, [for the keepers of His covenant and His precepts]* (Psalms 25:10).[244](#)

“It has been taught: To every single lock cling one million wailers and howlers, dangling from each lock of those coarse ones—and from the smooth ones, masters of balance. So there is right and left.[245](#)

“Forehead of the skull—scrutinizing providence, not revealed except when the wicked must be called to account and their deeds examined.[246](#)

“It has been taught: When this forehead is revealed, all Masters of Judgment are aroused, and the whole world is delivered to Judgment—[136b] except at the time when prayers of Israel ascend before the Ancient of Days, and He wishes to have compassion upon His children: He reveals the forehead of the Will of Wills and illumines that of *Ze’eir Anpin*, and Judgment is soothed.[247](#)

“In this forehead emerges one measure, extending from the brain that generates fifty gates. Spreading, it becomes a forehead scrutinizing the wicked of the world, those who are not ashamed of their deeds—as is written: *You had the forehead of a whore; you refused to be ashamed* (Jeremiah 3:3). And it has been taught: Hair does not exist in this place on the forehead, so that it can be revealed to those who are impudent in their sins.[248](#)

“When the blessed Holy One is aroused to delight with the righteous, the face of the Ancient of Days shines upon the face of the Youthful of Days, and His forehead is revealed and illumines this forehead. Then it is called a *time of favor* (Psalms 69:14). Whenever Judgment looms, and this forehead of *Ze’eir Anpin* is revealed, the forehead of

the Ancient of Ancients is revealed, and Judgment is soothed and not enacted.[249](#)

“It has been taught: This forehead expands into two hundred thousand reddest of the red, adhering to it, included in it. When it is revealed, they are all empowered to destroy—were it not for the revealing of the forehead of the Will of Wills, which shines upon this forehead and upon all of them, and then all are assuaged.[250](#)

“It has been taught: Twenty-four supernal judgments appear, all of them called נצחִים (*Netsahim*), each one called נצח (*Netsah*), which in consecutive letters is מצח (*Metsah*), Forehead. There is *Metsah*, and there is *Netsah* that is *Netsahim*—corresponding to what we have learned: נצח נצחִים (*netsah netsahim*), *forever and ever* (Isaiah 34:10). They are in מצחא (*mitsha*), the forehead, some of them expanding into the body in well-known places.[251](#)

“It has been taught: What is meant by *Moreover*, נצח (*Netsah*), *the Eternal One of Israel does not lie and does not regret, for He is not a human to have regret* (1 Samuel 15:29). This mystery we have established: All that *Netsah* spreading through the body sometimes looms over the world to execute Judgment—and it turns back in regret, not enacting Judgment, if they turn back in repentance. Why? Because the matter pertains to the place called *Adam, human*, and He can regret. But if this *Netsah* appears revealed in the place called Head—in this *mitsha*, forehead—then it is neither the time nor the place to regret. Why? Because it does not pertain to the place called *Adam, human*, since neither the face nor the nose is revealed, just the forehead alone; and wherever the face does not appear, it is not called *Adam, human*. Thus, *for He is not adam, a human, to have regret*—as with *Netsah* in the other arrangements of the body.[252](#)

“Eyes of the head are different from other eyes. The painting of the eyebrows above the eyes is colored black.

Heaps of hair hang, forming an array above the eyes at the beginning of the forehead. Adhering to both of them are seven hundred thousand masters of watchfulness, above the eyelashes.[253](#)

“In the cover of the eyes flash fourteen million, adhering to the eyelids, which are the cover, and the providential eye of the Ancient One is above them.[254](#)

“When that cover lifts, He appears as one who awakens from sleep. His eyes open and see the open eye, and are bathed in one whiteness of the good eye, as is written: *bathing in milk* (Song of Songs 5:12). What is meant by *in milk*? In the white of the primordial eye. During that time compassionate providence prevails. Therefore Israel prays that He may open His eyes, to be bathed in this whiteness, as is written: *Awake! Why do You sleep, O YHVH? Rouse Yourself!* (Psalms 44:24). Whenever His eyes are not open, all Masters of Judgment subjugate Israel, and other nations rule over them. But when He opens His eyes, they are bathed in the good eye, and there is Compassion upon Israel; and the eye revolves, wreaking vengeance upon the other nations. This corresponds to what is written: *Awake!* and *Rouse Yourself!* (ibid.). *Awake*—to be bathed in that whiteness. *Rouse Yourself*—to wreak vengeance upon those who subjugate them.[255](#)

“When His eyes open, they are beautiful to behold, like doves—red, black, and green, as implied by what is written: *like doves* (Song of Songs 5:12), white, red, black, and green. White does not appear except when He gazes into the good eye and all those colors are bathed in that white.[256](#)

“From these colors that are revealed emerge seven eyes of supervision, issuing from the black [137a] of the eye, as is written: *Upon one stone seven eyes* (Zechariah 3:9). What is meant by *one stone*? The black of the eye.[257](#)

“From the red emerge seven runners close to the left side, flashing with fire from the north, linked to spread

throughout the world to expose the ways of the wicked, as is written: *The eyes of YHVH range over the whole earth* (Zechariah 4:10).[258](#)

“From the green emerge seven splendors of a cluster of the south, linked to spread throughout the world to expose deeds, as is written: *For His eyes are upon a person’s ways, to know the deeds of all humans* (Job 34:21; 37:7).[259](#)

“When they are bathed in white, they are enabled to watch over masters of truth, benefiting the world for their sake. All such providence is for the good of Israel. And He watches in red upon those who afflict them, as is written: *ראה ראיתי (Ra’oh ra’iti), Seeing have I seen, [the affliction of My people that is in Egypt]* (Exodus 3:7). *Seeing*—to do good for them. *Have I seen*—to take vengeance for their sake upon those afflicting them. Therefore it is written: *Awake! Why do You sleep, O YHVH? Rouse Yourself!* (Psalms 44:24). *Awake* and *Rouse Yourself*—two supervisions, two openings, two benefits: compassion and vengeance.[260](#)

“The first color: red within red, comprising and enveloping all reds, which in its presence are invisible. Around that red circles a single black thread, encompassing it.[261](#)

“The second color: black, like a stone emerging from the abyss in the great sea once in a thousand years. As this stone is about to come forth, a violent shaking overwhelms the sea; and the sound of the sea and its roiling waves is soon heard by the great fish called Leviathan, and this stone emerges from the abyss, rolling through the turbulent sea and then ejected. It is so black that all blacks are masked by its presence. Such is the black of the eye, a black comprising and enveloping all other blacks. Around that black circles a single red thread, encompassing it.[262](#)

“The third color: green of greens, comprising and enveloping all greens. Around that green circle two threads: a red thread to one side and a black thread to the other, encompassing that green.[263](#)

“When the white revolves and the eyes are bathed, all those colors subside and sink below, and none are seen except that white, shining from the Ancient of Days, and all those below shine from it. No color is visible except that white alone, and consequently all masters of red and black vanish—a pair of twins, as is written: *coming up from the washing, all of them twinning* (Song of Songs 4:2). What is meant by *from the washing*? From that bathing by the holy supernal eye. *All of them twinning*—matching one another. As for its saying *Your teeth are like a flock of shorn sheep* (ibid.), this means that their whiteness is like the white of the eyes when they are bathed in the white of the supernal eye.²⁶⁴

“This the righteous are destined to see in the spirit of wisdom, as is said: *For eye-to-eye they will see*. When? *When YHVH returns to Zion* (Isaiah 52:8). And it is written: *For eye-to-eye You are seen, YHVH* (Numbers 14:14).²⁶⁵

“Then, opening of the eyes for the good and opening of the eyes for evil. For good, as is written: *Open Your eyes and see our desolation* (Daniel 9:18). Here, for good. And for evil, as is written: *Your eyes will see Jerusalem a tranquil abode, a tent not to be packed up, whose pegs will never be pulled out* (Isaiah 33:20). Here, for good and for evil, since one is not performed without the other.²⁶⁶

“It has been taught in the Concealment of the Book: What is the meaning of *Your eyes will see Jerusalem a tranquil abode*? Now, is Jerusalem a tranquil abode? Look at what is written: צדק (Tsedeq), *Justice, lodged in her* (ibid. 1:21), and wherever Judgment is found is neither serene nor tranquil! However, *Your eyes will see Jerusalem, O tranquil abode—O tranquil abode* is addressed to the Ancient of Days, that He may gaze upon these eyes. For He is a serene and tranquil eye, an eye of Compassion, an eye that does not move from one watchfulness to another. Therefore it is spelled עינה (einekha), *your eye*, deficiently, and not עיניה (einekha), *your eyes*.²⁶⁷

“As for its saying *Jerusalem* and not *Zion*, so it must be, in order to subdue [137b] the Judgment found in Her and to have compassion upon Her.[268](#)

“It has been taught: *The eyes of YHVH your God are perpetually upon her from the beginning of the year [to the end of the year]* (Deuteronomy 11:12)—corresponding to what is written: *Justice lodged in her* (Isaiah 1:21), for decrees of Judgment exist in Her more than in any other place. In the time to come, one eye of Compassion will be upon Her—the eye of the Ancient of Ancients—as is written: *With great compassion will I gather you* (Isaiah 54:7). Since it says *compassion*, why *great*? Well, there is compassion, and then there is compassion! The Compassion of the Ancient of Ancients is called *great compassion*, whereas the Compassion of *Ze’eir Anpin* is called simply *compassion*, since it includes right and left, Judgment and Compassion. Therefore, *With great compassion will I gather you*—that of the Ancient of Days.[269](#)

“It has been taught: In these eyes—in two of its colors: red and black—dwell two tears. When the Holy of Holies wishes to have compassion upon Israel, He sheds two tears to be sweetened in the great sea. Who is the great sea? The sea of supernal Wisdom. That is to say, they are bathed in the whiteness of the bubbling spring issuing from great Wisdom, and He has compassion upon Israel.[270](#)

“It has been taught in the Concealment of the Book: The nose of *Ze’eir Anpin*—by the nose, the face is recognized. By this nose, the statement is elucidated: *Smoke rose from His nostrils, consuming fire from His mouth, coals blazed from it* (2 Samuel 22:9). *Smoke rose from His nostrils*—in this smoke are included fire and burning coals, for there is no smoke without fire and no fire without smoke. All are kindled and emerge from the nose.[271](#)

“It has been taught: When these three unite, included in this smoke issuing from the nose, the nose contracts and exhales, and out comes smoke—black and red and a color in between. This is called Wrath, Fury, and the Destroyer.[272](#)

“Now, you might say, ‘Wrath and fury, as is written: *I was terrified of the wrath and the fury* (Deuteronomy 9:19), and they are black and red smoke. But where do we find the Destroyer?’ Well, as is written: *before YHVH destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah* (Genesis 13:10), and the Destroyer *destroyed* with blazing fire.[273](#)

“It has been taught: There are five *Gevuran*, Powers, in this *Ze’eir Anpin*, and they amount to 1,400 *Gevuran*, spreading through His nose, the mouth, the arm, the hand, the fingers. Thus it is written *Who can utter גבורות (gevurot), the powers of, YHVH?* (Psalms 106:2). It is written *gevurot, powers*, yet it is written *Yours, O YHVH, are the greatness והגבורה (ve-ha-gevurah), and the power* (1 Chronicles 29:11). Well, we have learned as follows: When all those *Gevuran* unite, they are called one *Gevurah*.[274](#)

“All those *Gevuran* begin descending from the nose, and from each of these dangle 10,004,000,000, and from this smoke that He spews from His nose dangle 10,000,000,405, from the side of this *Gevurah*. All those *Gevuran* are suspended from the nose, and it is written: *One generation to the next will praise Your deeds, וגבורותיך יגידו (u-gvurotekha yaggidu), and Your powers will be conveyed* (Psalms 145:4). When this *Gevurah* begins, all those *Gevuran* flame sharply, descending to *the flame of the whirling sword* (Genesis 3:24).[275](#)

“It is written: *For we are about to destroy this place* (Genesis 19:13), and it is written *before YHVH destroyed Sodom [and Gomorrah]* (ibid. 13:10); *YHVH rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah [brimstone and fire]* (Genesis 19:24). However, it has been taught as follows: It is not enough for the wicked that they fail to turn the Attribute of Judgment

into the Attribute of Compassion, but they turn the Attribute of Compassion into the Attribute of Judgment![276](#)

“How can they do so, when it is written *I am YHVH—I have not changed* (Malachi 3:6)? Well, whenever the Ancient of Ancients, the White Head, is revealed—Will of Wills—great Compassion pervades all. And when He is not revealed, all judgments of *Ze’eir Anpin* lie in wait, and if one may say so, this Compassion executes that Judgment—most Ancient of all.[277](#)

“It has been taught: When the Ancient of Ancients, Will of Wills, is revealed, all the lamps called by this Name shine and Compassion exists for all. But when the Concealed of the Concealed is not revealed and these lamps do not shine, judgments are aroused and Judgment is enacted. Who causes this Judgment? The Will of Wills, who is not revealed. Thus, the wicked turn Compassion into Judgment.[278](#)

“As for its saying here *from YHVH out of heaven* (Genesis 19:24), this pertains to *Ze’eir Anpin*, as implied by what is written: *out of השמים* (*ha-shamayim*), *heaven*—*אש ומים* (*esh u-mayim*), fire and water, Compassion and Judgment, excluding the one who contains no Judgment at all.[279](#)

“It has been taught: This nose is small, and when smoke begins [138a] to emerge, it comes out hurriedly and Judgment is executed. Who prevents this nose from spewing smoke? The nose of the Holy Ancient One, who is called *ארך אפים* (*Erekh Appayim*), Long-nosed, Long-suffering, of all.[280](#)

“This corresponds to the mystery that we have learned: *YHVH! YHVH!* (Exodus 34:6)—a pausal sign interposing between them. As we have learned: *Moses! Moses!* (Exodus 3:4)—wherever a name is mentioned twice, a pausal sign interposes between them: *Abraham! Abraham!* (Genesis 22:11); *Jacob! Jacob!* (ibid. 46:2); *Samuel! Samuel!* (1 Samuel 3:10). In all cases, a sign interposes between them

—except for *Moses! Moses!* where no such sign interposes. Why?[281](#)

“*Abraham! Abraham!*—the latter complete, the former incomplete; for now he had become complete by ten tests. Therefore, a pausal sign interposes between them, for now he was not as before.[282](#)

“*Jacob! Jacob!*—the latter complete, the former incomplete; for now he had been gladdened with the news that Joseph was alive, and *Shekhinah* had settled upon him. Furthermore, now he had become complete on earth—a holy tree corresponding to the pattern above, with twelve boundaries, with seventy branches—which he was not before. So the latter was complete, the former incomplete, and a pausal sign interposes between them.[283](#)

“*Samuel! Samuel!*—a sign interposing between them. Why? The latter was complete, the former incomplete; for now he was a prophet, whereas before he was not.[284](#)

But *Moses! Moses!*—no sign interposing between them, for since the day that he was born, he was complete, as is written: *She saw that he was good* (Exodus 2:2).[285](#)

“Here, too, *YHVH! YHVH!*—a sign interposing between them, the latter complete in every way.[286](#)

“Moses spoke in a place of Judgment, to bring them from the Holy Ancient One down to *Ze'eir Anpin*. For we have learned as follows: ‘How great is the power of Moses, who conveyed the attributes of Compassion below!’[287](#)

“When the Holy Ancient One is revealed to *Ze'eir Anpin*, all appear in Compassion; the nose is assuaged, and no smoke emerges, as we have learned, for it is written: *For My praise, אֶתְמוּ (ehetom), I restrain the nose, for you...* (Isaiah 48:9).[288](#)

“It has been taught regarding the two nostrils: From one nostril issues fiery smoke, subsiding into the Hollow of the Great Abyss. From the other nostril issue flames of fire, flaring into four thousand worlds on the left side, consuming anyone who manages to approach. It is called

fire of YHVH (Numbers 11:1), a fire devouring and consuming all other fires. This fire cannot be assuaged except by sacrificial fire, and this smoke issuing from the other nostril cannot be assuaged except by sacrificial smoke of the altar.[289](#)

“All depends upon the nose. Thus it is written *YHVH smelled the pleasing aroma* (Genesis 8:21), for all depends on the nose—that this nose may smell the smoke and red fire, whereby the offering is accepted with favor. This corresponds to what is written: *The nose of YHVH will flare against you* (Deuteronomy 11:17); *My nose will flare* (Exodus 22:23); *lest the nose of YHVH flare* (Deuteronomy 6:15)—all referring to *Ze’eir Anpin*.[290](#)

“It has been taught: *Incline Your ear, O YHVH, and hear* (2 Kings 19:16). This ear is an ear formed beneath the hair, with the hair hanging over it. The ear is for hearing, and it is formed by designs engraved within—like someone digging a winding stairway, from one direction to another. Why winding? In order to hear good and evil.[291](#)

“It has been taught: From this winding within the ears dangle all those winged beings, of whom is written *For a bird of heaven will carry the voice, and a winged creature will report the word* (Ecclesiastes 10:20).[292](#)

“Within this ear drips a trickle from the three cavities of the brain to the hollow of the ears. By means of that trickling, the voice enters that winding and is tested in the trickling as either good or evil. Good, as is written: *For YHVH hears the needy* (Psalms 69:34); evil, as is written: *YHVH heard and His nose flared, and the fire of YHVH blazed against them* (Numbers 11:1).[293](#)

“This ear is concealed outside, and the winding enters within that hollow of trickling from the brain, to draw in the sound so that it will not escape, but rather be guarded and enclosed on every side. So it is a secret. Woe to one who reveals secrets, for whoever does so is as if he

impaired the arrangement above, which was prepared in order to absorb secrets, so that they not escape![294](#)

“It has been taught: When [Israel] cries out in distress, and hair is withdrawn from over the ears, the voice enters the ears, into that hollow of trickling from the brain, and it strikes the brain, and then emerges through the nostrils. The nose contracts and heats up, fire and smoke spew from those nostrils, [138b] and all the *Gevuran*, Powers, are aroused to wreak vengeance.[295](#)

“Before fire and smoke emerge from those nostrils, that voice ascends, striking the top of the brain, and two tears flow from the eyes; then from His nostrils issue smoke and fire, by that voice conducting them outside.[296](#)

“By that voice entering the ears, all these are drawn and aroused. Thus it is written *YHVH heard and His nose flared, and the fire of YHVH blazed against them*. By that hearing of the voice, all is aroused.[297](#)

“And it has been taught: It is written *Incline Your ear, O YHVH* (2 Kings 19:16)—that is, ‘Bend six billion’: those winged beings dangling from these ears, all called ‘Ears of YHVH.’ As for its saying *Incline Your ear, O YHVH*, this means the *ear* of *Ze’eir Anpin*.[298](#)

“On the aspect of one cavity of the brain, the ears depend. Of the fifty gates emerging from that cavity, this is one gate flowing forth, opening through that hollow of the ear. It is written: *For the ear tests words* (Job 34:3), and similarly, *He tests hearts and conscience* (Psalms 7:10). Regarding the expansion of this cavity of fifty gates spreading through the body, that cavity spreads in the place inhabited by the heart. ‘Testing’ is associated with the ear, and ‘testing’ is associated with the heart, since both expand from the same place.[299](#)

“It has been taught in the Concealment of the Book: Just as this ear tests to distinguish between good and evil, so it is entirely. For in *Ze’eir Anpin* there is a side of good and of evil, right and left, Compassion and Judgment. This ear is

included in the brain, and because it is included there—in one particular cavity—it is included with the voice entering there. ‘Hearing’ is attributed to the ear, and included with hearing is *Binah*, Understanding—‘Hear!’ implies ‘Understand!’ Contemplate that all is evenly balanced. These words have been given to Masters of Qualities, to hear, to contemplate, and to know.³⁰⁰

“Come and see what is written: *YHVH, I have heard of Your hearing; I am afraid. YHVH, Your deed, in the midst of years revive it; in the midst of years make it known. In wrath remember compassion* (Habakkuk 3:2). This verse is well known, for when the holy prophet heard, contemplated, and knew—fathoming these configurations—it is written *I am afraid*, for it is fitting to fear and be shattered in His presence. This applies to *Ze’eir Anpin*.³⁰¹

“When he contemplated and knew, what is written? *YHVH, Your deed, in the midst of years revive it*. This was spoken to the Ancient of Days. Wherever we find יהוה יהוה (*YHVH, YHVH*), spelled twice with יהוה (*YHVH*)—or with אדני (*Adonai*) and יהוה (*YHVH*)—one refers to *Ze’eir Anpin* and one to the Ancient of Ancients, even though all are one and called by one Name.³⁰²

“We have learned: When is it considered ‘the complete Name’? When it is written יהוה אלהים (*YHVH Elohim*), for this is the complete Name—Ancient of All and *Ze’eir Anpin*. The totality is called the complete Name, whereas the others are not so called. As we have established: *YHVH Elohim planted a garden in Eden* (Genesis 2:8)—the complete Name in planting the Garden. Everywhere, *YHVH Elohim* is the complete Name. As for *YHVH YHVH*—embracing all; at that time, Compassion is aroused in all.³⁰³

“*YHVH, Your deed, in the midst of years revive him*—spoken to the Ancient of Days. *Your deed*—what is meant by *Your deed*? *Ze’eir Anpin*.³⁰⁴

“*In the midst of years*—Primordial Years, called *days of old* (Micah 7:20), and they are not called Years of the

World. Primordial Years are *days of old*; Years of the World are *days of the world* (Malachi 3:4). Here, *in the midst of years*. Who are years? Primordial Years.³⁰⁵

“Revive him. Whom? *Ze’eir Anpin*, all of whose radiance is sustained by those years. Therefore he said, *Revive him*.³⁰⁶

“*In wrath remember compassion*—that supernal *Hesed*, by which Compassion is aroused for all: for whoever needs Compassion and whoever deserves Compassion.”³⁰⁷

It has been taught: Rabbi Shim’on said, “I call as witnesses all those who stand over us, that these words rejoice in all worlds, and the words rejoice in my heart. Within the supernal curtained canopy they are concealed, ascending, and the Ancient of All—hidden and concealed from all—treasures them away.³⁰⁸

“When I began to speak, the Companions did not know that all these words would arouse here. Happy is your share, O Companions who are here! Happy is my share along with you in this world and in the world that is coming!”

Rabbi Shim’on opened, saying, “*You, cleaving to YHVH your God, are alive every one of you today!* (Deuteronomy 4:4). Who is a holy nation like Israel, of whom is written *Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people delivered by YHVH!* (Deuteronomy 33:29)? For their cleaving in this world is to this Name—and in the world that is coming, even more than here; [139a] for there they are not separate from Him, from that bond in which the righteous are bound, as is written: *הַדְּבָקִים בַּיהוָה* (*ha-deveqim ba-YHVH*), *cleaving in YHVH*. It is not written *הַדְּבָקִים אֶל יְהוָה* (*ha-deveqim el YHVH*), *cleaving to YHVH*, but rather *ba-YHVH, in YHVH*, actually!³⁰⁹

“It has been taught: When holy anointing oil descends from the precious supernal holy beard, hidden and concealed from all, to the beard of *Ze’eir Anpin*—³¹⁰

“Now, you might say, “The beard is nowhere to be found, and Solomon said only *his cheeks* (Song of Songs

5:13), never mentioning a beard.’ However, we have learned as follows in the Concealment of the Book: All that is concealed and hidden away—not mentioned or revealed—is most sublime and precious of all, precisely because it is concealed and hidden. Since the beard is the praise and precious perfection of the face, Scripture treasured it away, and it remains unrevealed.^{[311](#)}

“This beard—perfection of the face, beauty of *Ze’eir Anpin*—is arrayed in nine enhancements. When the precious beard of the Ancient of Ancients shines upon this beard of *Ze’eir Anpin*, thirteen springs of supernal oil flow into this beard, and twenty-two enhancements appear within it, from which stream the twenty-two letters of the holy Torah.^{[312](#)}

“It has been taught: This beard proceeds from His ears, descending and ascending, and covers an offering of spices. What is ‘an offering of spices’? As is said: *like a bed of spices* (Song of Songs 5:13)—not *a bed of [spices]*.^{[313](#)}

“This beard of *Ze’eir Anpin* is arrayed in nine enhancements, with black hair, beautifully arranged like a handsome man, of whom is written *distinguished as the cedars* (Song of Songs 5:15).^{[314](#)}

“First enhancement: Hair is arranged from above. That spark—Scintilla of Adamantine Darkness—escapes the realm of pure air and strikes below the hair of the head, beneath the locks over the ears. It descends in front of the opening of the ears, strand by strand, until the top of the mouth.^{[315](#)}

“Second enhancement: Hair emerges, ascending from the top of the mouth to the other top of the mouth’s opening; and descending beneath the mouth to the other top, strand by strand, beautifully arranged.^{[316](#)}

“Third enhancement: From the middle, beneath the nose, beneath the two nostrils, emerges a single path. Tiny coarse hairs fill that path, with other hair filling each side around the path. A path does not appear below at all, only

that path above, descending to the top of the lips, where it is submerged.[317](#)

“Fourth enhancement: Hair emerges and is arranged, ascending and covering His jowls—the offering of spices—as with the Ancient One.[318](#)

“Fifth enhancement: Hair stops, and two apples appear, one on each side—red as a red rose, glowing in 270 worlds flashing from them.[319](#)

“Sixth enhancement: Hair emerges as one cord around the beard and hangs down to the top of the belly, not descending to the navel.[320](#)

“Seventh enhancement: No hair overhangs the mouth, and the mouth is clear on all sides, with hair set perfectly all around.[321](#)

“Eighth enhancement: Hair descends beneath the beard, covering the neck so that it is not seen. All those hairs are thin, strand upon strand, full on all sides.[322](#)

“Ninth enhancement: Hairs join, all evenly, until the hair that hangs—all in beautiful symmetry, like a mighty hero victorious in battles.[323](#)

“By these nine enhancements flow forth nine springs of anointing oil from that anointing oil above, flowing on to all those below. These nine enhancements appear in this beard, and by perfectly arranging the beard a human below is considered a mighty hero; for anyone who sees his beard standing firm will attribute mighty power to him. Until here, arrangement of the supernal beard of *Ze'eir Anpin*.”[324](#)

Rabbi Shim'on said to his son, Rabbi El'azar, “Rise, my son, my holy son! Twirl the beard and these, its enhancements.”[325](#) [139b]

Rabbi El'azar rose. He opened, saying, “*From confinement I called to Yah. Yah answered me with expanse. YHVH is with me, I do not fear; what can a human do to me? YHVH is with me, helping me, and I will see the defeat of my foes. Better to shelter in YHVH than to trust in a human.*”

Better to shelter in YHVH than to trust in princes (Psalms 118:5–9). It has been taught: There are nine enhancements of the beard here, and King David needed these enhancements in order to conquer other kings and nations.[326](#)

“Come and see: Having uttered these nine enhancements, he then said, *All the nations have surrounded me; with the name of YHVH I will surely cut them down* (Psalms 118:10). He said, ‘All these enhancements that I have mentioned—why do I need them? Because *all the nations have surrounded me*. And by arranging nine enhancements, which are *the name of YHVH*, I will eliminate them from the world,’ as is written: *with the name of YHVH I will surely cut them down*.[327](#)

“It has been taught in the Concealment of the Book: David uttered nine enhancements here—six with the Holy Name, for there are six Names, and three with *human*. Now, if you say, ‘There are only two,’ there are actually three, since *princes* are in the category of *human*.

“It has been taught: Six Names, as is written: *From confinement I called to Yah—one. Yah answered me with expanse—two. YHVH is with me, I do not fear—three. YHVH is with me, helping me—four. Better to shelter in YHVH—five. Better to shelter in YHVH—six.*

“*Human*, three, as is written: *YHVH is with me, I do not fear; what can a human do to me?—one. Better to shelter in YHVH than to trust in a human—two. Better to shelter in YHVH than to trust in princes—three*.[328](#)

“Come and see mystery of the matter: Wherever אדם (*adam*), *human*, is mentioned here, it is mentioned only together with the Holy Name, as is fitting; for *adam* exists only with what befits Him. And what befits Him? The Holy Name, as is written: *YHVH Elohim formed הָאָדָם (ha-adam), the human* (Genesis 2:7)—by the complete Name, which is *YHVH Elohim*, befitting Him. Consequently, here *adam* is mentioned only with the Holy Name.[329](#)

“It has been taught: It is written *From confinement I called to Yah. Yah answered me with expanse*—twice: *Yah, Yah*, corresponding to His two jowls, to which hair adheres. Once [David] saw hair flowing and hanging down, he began saying *YHVH is with me, I do not fear. YHVH is with me, helping me*—with a name that is not lacking, with a name that is holy. With this Name, *adam* is mentioned.[330](#)

“As for his saying *What can adam, a human, do to me?*—so it is. For it has been taught: All those holy crowns of the King, when He is arrayed in His adornments, are called *Adam*, the image comprising all. What is infused into them is called the Holy Name, whereas the sheath and what it contains is called *YHVH*, is called *Adam*—all-inclusive, the sheath along with its contents.[331](#)

“These nine enhancements were uttered by David because if someone grasps the beard of the King, then whatever he desires, He will do for him. Why the beard and not the body? Well, the body follows the beard; the beard does not follow the body.[332](#)

“This enumeration proceeds in two manners. One, as we have mentioned. The second: *From confinement I called to Yah*—one. *Yah answered me with expanse*—two. *YHVH is with me, I do not fear*—three. *What can a human do to me?*—four. *YHVH is with me, helping me*—five. *And I will see the defeat of my foes*—six. *Better to shelter in YHVH than to trust in a human*—seven. *Better to shelter in YHVH*—eight. *Than to trust in princes*—nine.[333](#)

“*From confinement I called to Yah*—what does this signify? Well, in all that David said here, he was referring to the enhancement of the beard. As for his saying *From confinement I called to Yah*—from the place where the beard begins to spread, which is a constricted place in front of the ears, above, beneath the hair [of the head]. Therefore he said, *Yah, Yah*, twice. And of the place where the beard spreads, descending from His ears to expand, he said *YHVH is with me, I do not fear*—for that place is not constricted.

All of this David required in order to subdue kings and nations, by means of the glory of this beard.[334](#)

“It has been taught in the Concealment of the Book: Whoever sees in a dream that he is holding in his hand the beard of an eminent man, or stretching out his hand toward it, let him know that he is complete with his Lord, and that those who harass him will be subdued beneath him.[335](#)

“It has been taught: The supernal beard is arranged in nine enhancements, and that is the beard of *Ze’eir Anpin*.[336](#)

“First enhancement: [140a] The hair is arranged from above, emerging from in front of the opening of the ears, beneath the locks hanging over the ears, and the hair descends, strand by strand, to the top of the mouth.[337](#)

“It has been taught: All these strands in the beard are coarser than all the strands in the locks of hair on the head. The hairs of the head are long, whereas these are not; some of the hairs of the head are smooth and some are rough.

“When the white hair of the Ancient of Days flows to the hair of *Ze’eir Anpin*, it is written *Wisdoms cry aloud outside* (Proverbs 1:20). What is meant by *outside*? In this *Ze’eir Anpin*, where two brains join.[338](#)

“Now, how could you imagine two brains? Say, rather, four brains. Three brains in *Ze’eir Anpin*, located in the three cavities of the skull; and one brain securely tranquil, including all the other brains, from which proceed even flows through white hair to this *Ze’eir Anpin*, to the three brains within Him.[339](#)

“So there are four brains in this *Ze’eir Anpin*, and consequently four portions are completed in the compartments of tefillin, which include the Holy Name of the Ancient of Ancients and *Ze’eir Anpin*. For this is perfection of the Holy Name, and it is written: *All the peoples of the earth will see that the name of YHVH is proclaimed over you, and they will be in awe of you* (Deuteronomy 28:10). *The*

name of YHVH—the actual *name of YHVH*, that is, the four channels of the compartments of tefillin.³⁴⁰

“Thus, *Wisdoms cry aloud outside*, since here they are found; for Wisdom of the Ancient of Ancients, Concealed of the Concealed is not to be found nor is it available, being a wisdom concealed from all and not branching out.³⁴¹

“Since four brains join this *Ze’eir Anpin*, four springs flow from Him in four directions, branching off from one spring gushing with them all; so they are four.³⁴²

“It has been taught: This Wisdom-included-in-four flows through these hairs, תליין תלין על תלין (*taleyan tillin al tillin*), hanging in heaps of wavy curls, each one flowing on in its direction. A million, a hundred million, dangle from them—beyond counting—as is written: *his locks* תלתלים (*taltallim*), *wavy* (Song of Songs 5:11)—תלי תלים (*tillei tillim*), heaps upon curly heaps. All of them too coarse and rough to be broken—like hard flint and solid rock—so that they make holes and springs underneath the hair, and mighty springs flow in every direction, on every side. Since these hairs are black and dark, it is written *Revealing depths out of darkness, bringing to light pitch-blackness* (Job 12:22).³⁴³

“It has been taught: These hairs of the beard are uniquely rough, more so than the other hairs of the head, because these alone spread out pervasively, potent in their pathways.³⁴⁴

“Why are they rough? If because they are all Judgment—not so, for in these enhancements are found Compassion and Judgment. When thirteen streaming springs of oil descend, they become entirely Compassion.³⁴⁵

“Rather, it has been taught: All these hairs of the beard are rough. Why? All those of Compassion must be rough in order to subdue Judgment, and all those that are Judgment are surely rough. In either case, they must be rough, from two aspects. When the world needs Compassion, Compassion intensifies and triumphs over Judgment. And when it needs Judgment, Judgment intensifies and triumphs

over Compassion. So they must be rough from two aspects. When Compassion is needed, the hairs of Compassion stand out, and the beard is manifested by those hairs, and all is Compassion. When Judgment is needed, the beard is manifested by those hairs. All is based on the beard.³⁴⁶

“When the holy white beard is revealed, all of these and all of those are illumined and bathed—like someone bathing in a deep river from what was coating him. All of them are established in Compassion, and Judgment is nowhere to be found. When all these nine shine as one, all are bathed in Compassion.³⁴⁷

“Therefore Moses said another time, *YHVH is slow to anger and abounding in kindness* (Numbers 14:18), whereas he did not say *truth*—because mystery of the matter is those nine attributes shining from the Ancient of Days to *Ze’eir Anpin*. When Moses spoke the second time, he uttered nine enhancements, namely enhancements of the beard appearing in *Ze’eir Anpin*, descending from the Ancient of Days and illumining [140b] Him. Thus, *truth* depends upon the Ancient One, and now Moses did not utter it.³⁴⁸

“It has been taught: The hairs of the head of *Ze’eir Anpin* are all coarse, heaps upon curly heaps, and not smooth. For as I have said, three brains in three cavities are found in Him, shining from the concealed brain. Because the brain of the Ancient of Days is calm and tranquil—like fine wine upon its lees—His hairs are all smooth, anointed with fine oil. Thus, *clean—like clean fleece* (Daniel 7:9).³⁴⁹

“However, those of *Ze’eir Anpin* are coarse yet not coarse; for all of them hang down and are not crinkly. Therefore, Wisdom flows forth, but not Wisdom of Wisdom, which is calm and tranquil. For we have learned that no one knows the brain of the Ancient of Days except Himself, nor the brain of *Ze’eir Anpin* except Himself, as is written: *Elohim understands its way, and He knows its place* (Job 28:23). *Elohim knows its way*—referring to *Ze’eir Anpin*. *And He knows its place*—referring to the Ancient of Days.”³⁵⁰

Rabbi Shim'on said, "My son is blessed by the blessed Holy One in this world and in the world that is coming!"

"Second enhancement: Hair emerges, ascending from the top of the mouth to the other top of the mouth's opening; and descending beneath the mouth to the other top, strand by strand, beautifully arranged.³⁵¹

"Rise, Rabbi Abba!"³⁵²

Rabbi Abba rose. He opened, saying, "When the array of this beard is arranged in royal enhancements—like a mighty hero, handsome to behold, noble and dominant, as is written: *Great is our Lord and mighty in power* (Psalms 147:5)—and when He is assuaged by the enhancements of the precious holy beard, gazing upon Him, then He is called, by virtue of His radiance, *A compassionate... God* (Exodus 34:6).³⁵³

"This second enhancement, when it shines with the radiance of the Ancient of Days, is called *abounding in kindness*. And when they gaze upon one another, it is called by another enhancement: *and truth* (Exodus 34:6), for faces shine.³⁵⁴

"It has been taught: This second enhancement is called *removing iniquity*, corresponding to the Holy Ancient One. However, because of that path proceeding in the third enhancement beneath the two nostrils, and the tiny coarse hairs filling that path, *removing iniquity and passing over transgression* (Micah 7:18) are not applied, and are established in another place.³⁵⁵

"It has been taught: Three hundred and seventy-five kindnesses are included in the *Ḥesed*, Kindness, of the Ancient of Days, all called Primordial Kindnesses, as is written: *Where are Your former kindnesses?* (Psalms 89:50). All of them are contained in the *Ḥesed* of the Holy Ancient One, concealed of all, whereas the *Ḥesed* of *Ze'eir Anpin* is called '*Ḥesed of the World*.'³⁵⁶

“In the Concealment of the Book, the Primordial *Hesed* of the Ancient of Days is called *abounding in kindness*, and that of *Ze'eir Anpin* simply *kindness*. Therefore it is written: *and abounding in kindness* (Exodus 34:6), and also *keeping kindness* (ibid., 7), simply. We have established that this *abounding in kindness* inclines toward *Hesed*, illumining it and kindling its lamp.[357](#)

“It has been taught: This path descending beneath two nostrils, with tiny hairs filling that path, is not called *passing over transgression*, since there is no place for passing over, from two aspects. One, because of the hairs occupying that path, making it difficult to pass. And the other, because that path descends to the top of the lips, and it is written *His lips are roses* (Song of Songs 5:13), red as roses; [*dripping*] *liquid myrrh* (ibid.), intensely red. This path here, in two hues, threatens and shows no mercy. Consequently, one who wishes to threaten strikes twice with his hand on that path.[358](#)

“Fourth enhancement: Hair emerges and is arranged, ascending and descending over His jowls, the offering of spices. This enhancement is fitting, beautiful to behold, supernal splendor![359](#)

“It has been taught: Supernal splendor issues and is adorned, flowing fittingly to the jowls. This is called ‘splendor of the beard,’ from which dangle splendor and majesty—garments of glory in which He is clothed, the precious purple cloak, as is written: *You are clothed in splendor and majesty* (Psalms 104:1). Adornments in which He is dressed; arrayed in this image of *Adam* more than in any other image.[360](#)

“It has been taught: [141a] When this splendor is illumined by the radiance of the supernal beard, it spreads through the other glowing enhancements, and this is *removing iniquity* on one side, and *passing over*

transgression on the other. Therefore it is written: *his cheeks* (Song of Songs 5:13).[361](#)

“In the Concealment of the Book, splendor is called תפארת (*Tif'eret*), Beauty; it is Beauty that is *passing over transgression—His beauty is passing over transgression* (Proverbs 19:11).[362](#)

“It has been taught: We have established this Beauty solely in relation to the ninth enhancement, as is said: *The beauty of young men is their strength* (Proverbs 20:29). This is called Beauty. Yet upon contemplating, they attain equilibrium.”[363](#)

Rabbi Shim'on said, “You are worthy, Rabbi Abba, to be blessed by the Holy Ancient One, from whom all blessings issue.

“Fifth enhancement: Hair stops, and two apples appear, one on each side—red as a red rose, glowing in 270 worlds.[364](#)

“When these two apples shine on both sides from the radiance of two apples, red is withdrawn and white appears. Of this is written *May YHVH shine His face upon you and be gracious to you* (Numbers 6:25), for when they shine, the world is blessed. And as red disappears, it is written *May YHVH lift up His face to you* (ibid., 26), meaning: ‘May wrath be removed, vanishing from the world.’[365](#)

“It has been taught: All the lights shining from the Holy Ancient One are called Primordial Kindnesses, and because of them all those Kindnesses of the World shine.[366](#)

“Sixth enhancement: Hair emerges as one cord around the beard. This is called one of the five edges [of the beard], deriving from Kindness and Compassion, and one must not destroy this kindness, as has been said. Thus it is written *Do not ruin the edge of your beard* (Leviticus 19:27).[367](#)

“Seventh enhancement: No hair overhangs the mouth, and the mouth is clear on all sides.³⁶⁸

“Rise, Rabbi Yehudah!”³⁶⁹

Rabbi Yehudah rose. He opened, saying, “*This sentence by decree of the watchers* (Daniel 4:14). How many thousands and myriads are infused and sustained by this mouth, dependent upon it! All of them are called ‘mouth of *YHVH*,’ as is written: *By the breath of His mouth all their array* (Psalms 33:6). By that breath issuing from the mouth are enveloped all those outside, who depend on this mouth.³⁷⁰

“By that breath, as it spreads, faithful prophets are enveloped, all of whom are called ‘mouth of *YHVH*.’ At the place where the breath emerges, nothing else mingles, since all those mouths are waiting to be enveloped by that streaming breath.³⁷¹

“This enhancement rules over all six, for here they are all sustained, holding firm. Therefore hairs lie symmetrically around the mouth, which is clear on all sides.”³⁷²

Rabbi Shim’on said, “Blessed are you by the Holy Ancient One!

“Eighth enhancement: Hair descends beneath the beard, covering the neck so that it is not seen. For we have learned: ‘On high there is no neck and no fatigue.’ However, when He wages war it is visible, in order to manifest might. For we have learned: A thousand worlds are joined to it, as is written: *A thousand shields hang upon it* (Song of Songs 4:4). *A thousand shields*—a mystery in the Concealment of the Book. *All the weapons of הגבורים* (*ha-gibborim*), *the warriors* (ibid.)—coming from the side of *Gevurah*, one of those *Gevuran*, Powers.³⁷³

“Ninth enhancement: Hairs join, all evenly, until the hair that hangs—all in beautiful symmetry, like a mighty hero

victorious in battles. For all those hairs follow those that hang, and the consummation of them all is those hanging ones. All is drawn to this, as is written: תפארת (*Tif'eret*), *The beauty of, young men is their strength* (Proverbs 20:29). He appeared at the Sea like a fine young man, as is written: *a young man like the cedars* (Song of Songs 5:15)—like a hero performing mighty deeds. This is *Tif'eret*, Beauty—power, might, and compassion.”[374](#)

It has been taught: Rabbi Shim'on said, “All these enhancements and all these matters I wish to reveal to Masters of Qualities, masters who have been weighed in the balance—not to those who have entered and not emerged. For whoever has entered and not emerged, better for him if he had never been created!”[375](#)

“The principle of all: The Ancient of Ancients and *Ze'eir Anpin* are all one—He was all, is all, will be all; He did not change, will not change, does not change. He is arrayed in these enhancements—an image comprising all images, an image comprising all names. The image [141b] appearing in its facets in this image is not actually in this image, but rather resembles this image, when diadems and crowns conjoin in total perfection.”[376](#)

“Therefore the image of *Adam* is the image of those above and those below, who are included in him. Since this image includes above and below, the Holy Ancient One arrayed His adornments and those of *Ze'eir Anpin* in this image.”[377](#)

“Now, you might say, ‘What is the difference between one and the other?’ Well, all is evenly balanced—but by us paths are separated, by us Judgment comes into being, and from our perspective they differ from one another. These mysteries are transmitted only to the Reapers of the Field, and it is written: *The secret of YHVH is for those who revere Him* (Psalms 25:14).”[378](#)

“It is written: וַיִּצַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים (Va-yiytser YHVH Elohim), *YHVH Elohim formed, the human* (Genesis 2:7). וַיִּצַר (Va-yiytser), *Formed*—with two *yods*, completing an arrangement within an arrangement. Why two *yods*? Mystery of the Holy Ancient One and mystery of Ze’eir Anpin—צַר ” ” (yod yod tsar), *yod, yod, formed*.[379](#)

“What did He form? He formed a form within a form, and this is *va-yiytser, formed*. And what is ‘a form within a form’? Two names, called ‘the complete name’: *YHVH Elohim*. This is the mystery of the two *yods*—forming a form within a form, arrayal of the complete name: *YHVH Elohim*.[380](#)

“In what were they included? In this supernal image called *Adam—Adam*, comprising male and female.[381](#)

“אֵת (Et) (Genesis 2:7)—amplifying the meaning to include generating and proliferating the species issuing from Him, from male and female.[382](#)

“*Dust from the earth* (ibid.)—dazzling topaz of a signet ring, deep within.[383](#)

“Why all this? In order to draw forth and infuse within Him concealed of concealed, consummation of all concealed, as is written: וַשְׁמַת חַיִּים (nishmat hayyim), *the breath of life* (Genesis 2:7)—וַשְׁמַתָּא (nishmeta), the soul-breath, upon which all *life* of those above and below depends, and by which it is sustained.[384](#)

“*And the human became a living soul* (Genesis 2:7)—pouring forth, entering the adornments in this manner; drawing forth that *nishmeta* from rung to rung to the end of all rungs, so that the *nishmeta* will manifest in all and spread through all, nothing else existing.[385](#)

“Whoever separates this from the world is like one who separates this *nishmeta*, making it seem that there is some *nishmeta* other than this. Consequently, he and his memory will be eradicated for generations upon generations.[386](#)

“In this *Adam* the entirety of male and female begins to be arranged. Once the beard is arrayed in its enhancements,

this begins from His chest, between the two arms, in the place where the hairs of the beard hang, called *Tif'eret*. This *Tif'eret* expands, arranging two chests, and is drawn backward, forming the skull of the Female—totally concealed on all sides by the hair, by the face of the head. As one whole were they made in this *Tif'eret*—*Adam*, male and female, as is written: כַּתְּפֹאֶרֶת אָדָם (*ke-tif'eret adam*), *like the beauty of a human, to dwell in a house* (Isaiah 44:13).³⁸⁷

“When the face of the head of the Female was created, one lock of hair hung behind *Ze'eir Anpin*, hanging over the head of the Female, and hairs were aroused in Her head—all of them red, mingled with various colors, as is written: *The dangling locks of your head like purple* (Song of Songs 7:6). What is meant by *purple*? Colors blended with colors.³⁸⁸

“It has been taught: This *Tif'eret* spreads from the navel of the heart and penetrates, passing through to the other side and arranging the Female, from face to navel—beginning from the navel and consummating at the navel.³⁸⁹

“Again this *Tif'eret* spreads, arranging the innards of the Male, conducting into here all mercies and every aspect of compassion. It has been taught: To these innards adhere six hundred thousand masters of compassion, called ‘masters of the innards,’ as is written: ‘*Therefore My innards yearn for him. I will surely show him compassion,*’ says YHVH (Jeremiah 31:20).³⁹⁰

“It has been taught: This *Tif'eret* is comprised of both Compassion and Judgment. Compassion spreads through the Male, passing through and penetrating to the other side and arranging the innards of the Female, on the side of Judgment, and Her innards are arranged.³⁹¹

“It has been taught: The Male is arrayed on His side in 248 enhancements included in Him, some internal and some external, some of Compassion and some of Judgment. All those [142a] of Judgment cling to His back, from where

the Female extends, and they adhere to Her sides, spreading.³⁹²

“It has been taught: Five types of lewdness are revealed in Her from the aspect of five judgments, and five judgments spread through 248 paths. We have learned as follows: ‘A woman’s voice is lewdness; a woman’s hair is lewdness; a woman’s leg is lewdness; a woman’s hand is lewdness; a woman’s foot is lewdness.’ Even though our Companions did not teach these last two, they are actually more than lewd!³⁹³

“It has been taught in the Concealment of the Book: The Male extended and was arrayed in His enhancements. The enhancement of His covering was arrayed, and this is His phallus. The length of that phallus is 248 worlds, all of them suspended from the mouth of the phallus, called *yod* (*yod*). As soon as *yod* is revealed—mouth of the phallus—supernal *Hesed* is revealed. This phallus is *Hesed*, called after and dependent upon this mouth of the phallus. It is not called *Hesed* until *yod* of the phallus is revealed.³⁹⁴

“Come and see that Abraham was not called ‘complete’ in this *Hesed* until he revealed *yod* of the phallus. As soon as it was revealed, he was called ‘complete,’ as is written: *Walk in My presence and be תמים (tamim), complete* (Genesis 17:1)—really *complete*! It is also written: *I have been tamim, complete, before Him, and have kept myself from sin* (2 Samuel 22:24). How does the beginning of this verse pertain to the end? Well, whoever reveals this *yod* and is careful not to insert the *yod* into a foreign domain will be complete in the world that is coming and will be bound in the bundle of life. What is meant by ‘into a foreign domain’? As is written: *he married the daughter of an alien god* (Malachi 2:11). Therefore it is written: ‘*I have been tamim before Him—and since I have been tamim by revealing the yod, I have kept myself from sin.*’³⁹⁵

“Once this phallus extended, the side of *Gevurah* extended, from those *Gevuran*, Powers, on the left side of the

Female. It sank into the Female in a certain place and was designated as nakedness—covering of the whole Female body. That place is considered total nakedness—to conceal the site of that phallus called *Hesed*, in order to assuage this *Gevurah* comprising five *Gevuran*. And this *Hesed* comprises five types of *Hesed*. *Hesed*, right; *Gevurah*, left. One is assuaged by the other, and it is called *Adam*—comprised of two sides.³⁹⁶

“Therefore, among all those crowns—before the Ancient of Ancients prepared adornments of the King, built worlds, and established arrangements enduringly—that Female was not sweetened and they did not endure, until supernal *Hesed* descended and they did endure and the enhancements of the Female were sweetened by this phallus called *Hesed*. As is written: *These are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom* (Genesis 36:31)—the place where all judgments are found, namely the adornments of the Woman. It is not written *who were* [*in the land of Edom*] but rather *who reigned*; for She was not sweetened until all was arranged and this *Hesed* emerged. As is written: *He died, he died* (Genesis 36:33–39), for they did not endure—Judgment was not sweetened by Judgment.³⁹⁷

“Now, you might say, ‘If so—that they are all Judgment—look at what is written: *Saul from Rehoboth-on-the-River reigned in his stead* (Genesis 36:37), which surely does not seem like Judgment!’³⁹⁸

“Well, it has been taught: All of them are Judgment except for one who endured: the last. As for *Saul from Rehoboth-on-the-River*, this is one aspect, a crown, spreading forth *from Rehoboth-on-the-River*—who is *Binah*, from whom fifty gates open in all directions of the world, shining and sparkling, as is written: מרחובות (*me-rehovot*), *from Expanses, on-the-River*.³⁹⁹

“None of them endured. Do not say that they were nullified; rather, they did not endure in that kingdom of the Female side until this last one of all was aroused and emanated, as is written: *Hadar reigned in his stead*

(Genesis 36:39). What is meant by הדר (Hadar), Majesty? Supernal *Hesed*.[400](#)

“The name of his city was Pau (ibid.). What is meant by פאו (Pa’u), Pau? By this a person who attains the Holy Spirit פעי (pa’ei), exclaims.[401](#)

“And the name of his wife was Mehetabel (ibid.)—here they were sweetened by one another, and she is called *his wife*, which is not written about any of the others.[402](#)

“*Meheitav’el*, Mehetabel—one sweetening the other.[403](#)

“*Matred* (ibid.)—restorations from the side of *Gevurah*.[404](#)

“*Mei zahav*, *Me-zahab*—one sweetening the other, intermingling; *Mei zahav*, Waters of Gold, Compassion and Judgment.[405](#)

“Until here, Woman cleaves to Male. On their sides they separate, in arms and legs.[406](#)

“Arm of the Male—one right, one left. First arm—[142b] three joints linked together, and two arms combined. Could you imagine that they combined? Rather, three joints in the right and three joints in the left; three joints were included in joints of the left. Therefore דרועא (dero’a), arm, is written pertaining only to one, whereas the right is not described as זרוע (zero’a), arm—it is called ימינך (Yeminekha), *Your right, O YHVH* (Exodus 15:6); ימין (Yemin), *The right of, YHVH* (Psalms 118:16), with three joints of the patriarchs, which they inherited as their share.[407](#)

“Now, you might say, ‘Surely they are found in the three cavities of the skull!’ Well, it has been taught: All those three spread and link throughout the whole body; the whole body is linked with these three, and they interlink in the right arm.[408](#)

“Therefore David yearned, and said, *Sit at My right hand* (Psalms 110:1), because he was joined to the patriarchs and sat there, completing the Throne. Thus it is

written *A stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone* (ibid. 118:22), because he sat at the right hand, as is written: *You will rest, and arise for your share* לקץ הימין (*le-qets ha-yamin*), *at the end of the right hand* (Daniel 12:13)—that is to say, like one who attains the love of the King. Happy is the share of one to whom the King extends His right hand, receiving him under His right hand!⁴⁰⁹

“When this right sits and joints do not extend and the arm does not stretch out, it sits with the three joints that we have mentioned. But when the wicked are aroused and spread through the world, three others are aroused, which are harsh Judgment, and He stretches out the arm. And when He stretches out this arm, it is the right, but is called זרוע (*zero'a*), *arm of, YHVH* (Isaiah 51:9); זרועך הנטויה (*zero'akha ha-netuyah*), *Your outstretched arm* (Deuteronomy 9:29).⁴¹⁰

“When these three are included with the other three, all is called ‘right,’ and it performs Judgment and Compassion, as is written: *Your right, O YHVH, glorious in power. Your right, O YHVH, smashes the enemy* (Exodus 15:6), since Compassion is aroused in them.⁴¹¹

“It has been taught: To this right are joined 3,700,000,000, who are called ‘right’—and 1,850,000,000 from the arm, who are called *arm of YHVH*. Upon each side depends the arm. Consequently, both one and the other are called תפארת (*Tif'eret*), *Beauty*, as is written: *Who sent to be at Moses' right—the right. The arm—the left*. And it is written: זרוע תפארתו (*zero'a tif'arto*), *the arm of His beauty* (Isaiah 63:12)—one with the other.⁴¹²

“It has been taught: In the left hand, 450 shield-bearing warriors, clinging to every single finger; and on every single finger, 10,000 shield-bearing warriors. Go and reckon how many there are in the whole hand!

“That right hand is called Holy Assistance, coming from the right arm, from three joints. Although it is called ‘hand,’ it constitutes assistance, as is written: *Look, my hand is*

with you (2 Samuel 3:12). Joined to this are 10,620,000 masters of assistance throughout the world, and they are called Upper Hand of YHVH, Lower Hand of YHVH. Even though everywhere 'hand' denotes the left, if they are worthy, *the right of YHVH*—the hand is included with the arm, becoming assistance, and is called *the right*. If not, Lower Hand of YHVH.[413](#)

“It has been taught: When harsh judgments are aroused to descend upon the world, here is written: *The secret of YHVH is for those who revere Him* (Psalms 25:14).[414](#)

“It has been taught in the Concealment of the Book: All judgments deriving from the Male are harsh at the beginning and calm at the end, whereas all those deriving from the Female are calm at the beginning and harsh at the end. If they had not been formed as one, the world would be unable to bear it. Finally, the Ancient of Ancients, concealed of all, separated one from the other, and united them to be sweetened as one.[415](#)

“When He separated them, He cast *dormita*, a deep slumber, upon *Ze'eir Anpin* and separated the Female from His back, arraying all Her adornments and concealing Her for His day, to bring Her to the Male. As is written: *YHVH Elohim cast a deep slumber on the Adam, and he slept* (Genesis 2:21). What is meant by *and he slept*? As is written of Him: *Awake! Why do You sleep, O YHVH?* (Psalms 44:24).[416](#)

“*And He took one of his sides* (Genesis 2:21). What is meant by *one*? This is the Female. She ascended and was adorned, while in Her place were embedded Compassion and Kindness, as is written: *and closed the flesh in her place* (ibid.)—and it is written: *I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh* (Ezekiel 36:26).[417](#)

“As Sabbath was about to enter, He was creating spirits, demons, and whirlwinds, and before He completed them, *Matronita* came in Her adornments and sat before Him.

When She did so, He left those creatures and they were not completed. Since *Matronita* was sitting with the King [143a] and they joined face-to-face, who would dare to come between them? Who would approach them?[418](#)

“Accordingly, secret of the matter: The conjugal duty of disciples of the wise who know this mystery is from Sabbath to Sabbath.[419](#)

“When they united, they were sweetened by one another—a day on which all are sweetened. Consequently, judgments were sweetened by one another, and those above and those below were harmoniously arranged.[420](#)

“It has been taught in the Concealment of the Book: The Holy Ancient One wished to see if judgments had been assuaged. These two cleaved to one another, and from the side of the Female issued harsh Judgment, which the world could not endure. As is written: *The Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore קין (Qayin), Cain, and she said, ‘קניתי (qaniti), I have acquired, a man with YHVH’* (Genesis 4:1)—but it was not so, because She had not been sweetened, and the potently harsh Serpent had injected Her with the slime of harsh Judgment, so She could not be assuaged.[421](#)

“When this Cain emerged from the side of the Female, he emerged potently harsh—potent in his judgments, harsh in his judgments. Once he had emerged, She was soon weakened and assuaged, and She brought forth another, sweeter one. The first one prevailed, since he was potently harsh and all judgments had aroused with him.[422](#)

“Come and see what is written: *When they were in the field* (Genesis 4:8)—*in the field* that is known above, *in the field* called Field of Apple Trees. This Judgment defeated his brother, for he was harsher than him; he overwhelmed him and concealed him beneath himself. Until the blessed Holy One was aroused by this, and He removed [Cain] from His presence, sinking him into the hollow of the Great Abyss, and He immersed his brother in the depth of the Great Sea, which sweetens supernal tears.[423](#)

“From them, souls descend into the world, according to the way of each person. Although they are concealed, they expand toward one another, forming one body, and from this body descend souls of the wicked—brazen sinners. Do you imagine from both of them together? Rather, one on his side, and one on the other.[424](#)

“Happy are the righteous, who draw their souls from this holy body called *Adam*, comprising all, a place where holy diadems and crowns conjoin in the bundle of a cluster.[425](#)

“Happy are you, O righteous ones! For all these holy words have been uttered in the supernal Holy Spirit—a spirit absorbing all holy spirits, a spirit to which those above and below listen. Happy are you, Masters of Qualities, Reapers of the Field, for you will know these words and contemplate them! You will know your Lord face-to-face, eye-to-eye. By these words, you will attain the world that is coming, as is written: *You will know today and take to your heart that YHVH is Elohim in the heavens above and on the earth below; there is none else* (Deuteronomy 4:39). *YHVH, the Ancient of Days, is Elohim. He is one. Blessed is His name forever and ever.*”[426](#)

Rabbi Shim'on said, “I see the upper below and the lower above! The upper below—the image of *Adam*, arrayal of supernal totality.[427](#)

“It has been taught: It is written *The righteous one is the foundation of the world* (Proverbs 10:25), comprising six in a cluster as one, this and that, as is written: *His thighs, pillars of ׀׀ (shesh), six* (Song of Songs 5:15).[428](#)

“It has been taught in the Concealment of the Book: In *Adam* were included upper crowns in general and in particular. In *Adam* were included lower crowns in particular and in general. Upper crowns in general, as has been said, in the image of all these arrangements. In particular—in fingers of the hands, five within five.[429](#)

“Lower crowns, in toes of the feet, which are particular and general, since the body does not appear with them and they are outside the body. Therefore they did not inhabit a body, since the body was withheld from them.[430](#)

“If so, what is meant by *On that day His feet will stand* (Zechariah 14:4)? Well, the *feet* of the body—Masters of Judgments, wreaking vengeance upon the enemies of Israel, and they are endowed with feet. Some of them are dregs, and the Masters of Judgments below cling to the lower crowns.[431](#)

“It has been taught: All those arrangements above in the holy body, male and female—totality of *Adam*—are drawn from one another, joined to each other. They saturate one another, like blood flowing through a cluster of veins, here and there, this way and that, from one place to another, saturating the body and each other. Similarly, all the holy crowns in the body saturate one another, illuminating each other, until all worlds are illumined and blessed by them.[432](#)

“It has been taught: All those crowns [143b] that are not included in the body are loathsome and impure, defiling anyone who approaches them to gain information from them.[433](#)

“It has been taught: What explains their craving for disciples of the wise? Well, because they see in them a holy body, and they wish to be included through them in that body.[434](#)

“Now, you might say, ‘If so, what about holy angels, who are not in the realm of the body?’ No! If, heaven forbid, they were outside the realm of the body, they would not be holy and would not endure. It is written: *His body was like topaz* (Daniel 10:6); *Their brows were full of eyes* (Ezekiel 1:18); *the man Gabriel* (Daniel 9:21)—all in the realm of *Adam*. Except for those who are not in the realm of the body, who are impure, defiling whoever approaches them.[435](#)

“It has been taught: All of them derive from the spirit of the left, which was not assuaged in *Adam*. They were excluded from the realm of the holy body, not cleaving to it. So all of them are impure—wandering and roaming through the world, entering the Hollow of the Great Abyss to cling to that primordial Judgment who emerged in the category of ‘body’—called Cain, below. They roam through the whole world, fluttering, unable to cling to the realm of the body. Consequently, they are outside all of the camps above and below, being impure, of whom is written *Outside the camp shall his dwelling be* (Leviticus 13:46).[436](#)

“With the spirit called Abel—who was somewhat assuaged, in the realm of the holy body—others emerge, who are somewhat assuaged, and they cling to the body, yet do not cling. They are all suspended in the air, escaping the realm of the impure, hearing what they can hear from above and below—from them [others] know whatever they tell them.[437](#)

“It has been taught in the Concealment of the Book: Once the totality of *Adam* had been sweetened above—the holy body, male and female—they united a third time, and sweetness of all emerged and worlds above and below were assuaged. From here, the world above and below was completed, from the aspect of the holy body. Worlds embrace, merging with one another, becoming one body. Since they are all one body—*Shekhinah* above, *Shekhinah* below; the blessed Holy One above, the blessed Holy One below. Spirit is drawn forth, entering one body, and throughout all of them nothing is seen except one—*Holy, holy, holy is YHVH of Hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory* (Isaiah 6:3), for all is one body.[438](#)

“It has been taught: Once they were sweetened by one another—as is written: *Bangles of gold we will make for you, with spangles of silver* (Song of Songs 1:11)—Judgment was bound with Compassion, and She was sweetened by the Male. Thus one does not rise without the

other, like a palm tree, in which one does not flourish without the other. Concerning this we have learned: One who excludes himself in this world from the realm of *Adam* cannot later—when he departs this world—enter the realm of *Adam*, called ‘the holy body.’ Rather, he enters those who are not called *Adam* and who are excluded from the realm of the body.⁴³⁹

“It has been taught: *Bangles of gold we will make for you, with spangles of silver*—for Judgments have been assuaged by Compassion, and there is no Judgment that does not contain Compassion. Of this is written *Lovely are your cheeks in bangles, your neck in strings of beads* (Song of Songs 1:10). *In bangles*—as is said: *bangles of gold*.⁴⁴⁰

“*In strings of beads*—as is written: *spangles of silver*.⁴⁴¹

“*Your neck*—in the realm of Female, *Matronita*. So, the Temple above, Jerusalem, and the Temple.⁴⁴²

“All this, once She is sweetened by the Male and all is formed as *Adam*—totality of Faith. Why Faith? Because within Him is found all faith.⁴⁴³

“It has been taught: When the soul departs from anyone called *Adam* and he dies, it is forbidden to leave him overnight in a house, making him lodge on the ground—because of the dignity of that body, so that no disgrace may appear on it, as is written: אדם ביקר בל ילין (*Adam bi-yqar bal yalin*), *A human does not abide in glory* (Psalms 49:13)—*Adam*, who is *yeqar*, *glory*, of all glory, *bal yalin*, *shall not spend the night*. Why? Because if this is done, *he is likened to beasts that perish* (ibid.). Just as beasts do not possess or display a holy spirit, here, too, like beasts—a body without a spirit. This body is glory of all; no disgrace should appear upon it.⁴⁴⁴

“It has been taught in the Concealment of the Book: Whoever causes this precious body without spirit to remain overnight causes a defect in the body of the worlds. For on account of [144a] this, the holy crown of the King does not spend the night in the Land—as is written: *Righteousness*

lodged in her (Isaiah 1:21)—because She sees the precious body, called image of the King, like one of the beasts, as is written: *he is likened to beasts that perish.*[445](#)

“It has been taught: *The sons of Elohim saw the daughters of האדם (ha-adam), humankind...* (Genesis 6:2). *The sons of Elohim*—those who were concealed, falling into the Hollow of the Great Abyss.[446](#)

“*The daughters of ha-adam*—the well-known *Adam.*[447](#)

“It is written: *and they bore them children; these are the heroes מעולם (me-olam), of old...* (Genesis 6:4)—from the one who is called *olam*, world, as we have learned: *days of the world* (Isaiah 63:9).[448](#)

“*Men of השם (ha-shem), the Name* (Genesis 6:4)—from them spirits and judgments issue into the world, clinging to the wicked.[449](#)

“*The Nephilim were on earth* (ibid.)—excluding those other ones who were not *on earth*. Uzza and Aza’el were *on earth; the sons of Elohim were not on earth*. It is a mystery, and all has been said.[450](#)

“*YHVH regretted having made האדם (ha-adam), the human, on earth* (Genesis 6:6)—excluding *Adam* above, who was not *on earth*. *YHVH regretted*—referring to *Ze’eir Anpin.*[451](#)

“*ויתעצב (Va-yit’atsev), And He was pained, to His heart* (ibid.)—it is not said *ויעצב (Va-ye’atsev), And He pained*, but rather *va-yit’atsev, and He pained Himself*, for the matter depended on Him, excluding the one who is not pained.[452](#)

“*To His heart*—it is not written *in His heart* but rather *to His heart*, like someone expressing his pain and complaining to his master; for He displayed this to the heart of all hearts.[453](#)

“*YHVH said, ‘I will wipe out האדם (ha-adam), humankind, whom I created, from the face of the earth* (Genesis 6:7)—excluding *Adam* above. But if you say, ‘*Adam* below, alone’—not to exclude at all, since one cannot exist without the other.[454](#)

“Were it not for Wisdom, concealed of all, all would have been rearranged as in the beginning, as is written: *I am Wisdom. I dwell in shrewdness* (Proverbs 8:12)—do not read שכנתי (*shakhanti*), *I dwell*, but rather שיכנתי (*shikkanti*), *I cause to dwell*. Were it not for this, the world would not exist, as is written: *YHVH by wisdom established the earth* (ibid. 3:19); and it is written: *And Noah found favor in the eyes of YHVH* (Genesis 6:8).⁴⁵⁵

“It has been taught: All brains depend upon this brain. Wisdom is totality of all, and this concealed Wisdom empowered and ordained the arrayal of *Adam*, stabilizing it, as is written: *Wisdom strengthens the wise by ten rulers* (Ecclesiastes 7:19)—who are the complete array of *Adam*.⁴⁵⁶

“*Adam* is the arrangement, and within exists the spirit, as is written: *For האדם (ha-adam), the human, sees what is visible, but YHVH sees into the heart* (1 Samuel 16:7).⁴⁵⁷

“In this array appears perfection, faith of all, poised upon the Throne, as is written: *an image like the appearance of a human being upon it above* (Ezekiel 1:26), and it is written: *Behold, with the clouds of heaven came one like a human being; he reached the Ancient of Days and was brought before Him* (Daniel 7:13).⁴⁵⁸

“Until here, words are concealed and meanings clear. Happy is the share of one who knows and examines them, and does not err in them! For these words have been given only to Masters of Qualities, Reapers of the Field, who have entered and emerged. It is written: *For the ways of YHVH are right; the righteous walk in them, [while transgressors stumble in them]* (Hosea 14:10).⁴⁵⁹

It has been taught: Rabbi Shim'on wept. He raised his voice, saying, “If by these words revealed here, the Companions are hidden away in the chamber of the world that is coming and they depart from this world, that would be fitting and fine, for [these words] have not been revealed to any inhabitant of the world.”⁴⁶⁰

Then he said, “I retract! For it is revealed before the Ancient of Ancients, Concealed of all Concealed, that I have not acted for my own glory, nor for the glory of my father’s house, nor for the glory of these Companions—but rather so that they not err in His ways, nor enter the gates of His palace in shame, nor be hindered. Happy is my share with them in the world that is coming!”[461](#)

It has been taught: Before these Companions emerged from that threshing chamber, Rabbi Yose son of Ya’akov, Rabbi Hizkiyah, and Rabbi Yeisa died, and the Companions saw holy angels carrying them in that canopy.[462](#)

Rabbi Shim’on uttered a word, and they settled down. He cried out, saying, “Perhaps, heaven forbid, a decree of punishment has been issued against us, for by our hand has been revealed what has not been revealed since the day that Moses stood on Mount Sinai, as is written: *He was there with YHVH forty days and forty nights* (Exodus 34:28). What are we doing here if they were punished because of this?”[463](#)

He heard a voice: “Happy are you, Rabbi Shim’on! Happy is your share—and these Companions standing with you! For to you has been revealed what has not been revealed to all the powers above. [144b] But come and see, for it is written: *At the cost of his firstborn he shall lay its foundation, and at the cost of his youngest he shall set up its gates* (Joshua 6:26). All the more so, for—by great, intense desire—their souls cleaved [above] at the moment they were taken away. Happy is their share, for they departed in perfection—which is not so with those who preceded them!”[464](#)

Why did they die? It has been taught: While words were being revealed, those above—who are in chariots—trembled, and a voice was aroused in 250 worlds, for ancient words were being revealed below. While the souls of these ones were being sweetened by those words, their

souls departed by a kiss and were bound in that canopy and carried away by supernal angels.[465](#)

Why these ones? Because on a previous occasion they entered and did not emerge, whereas all the others entered and emerged.[466](#)

Rabbi Shim'on said, "How happy is the share of these three, and happy is our share on account of this!"

The voice issued a second time, saying, "*You, cleaving to YHVH your God, are alive every one of you today!* (Deuteronomy 4:4)."[467](#)

They rose, and no place they looked at failed to exude fragrance. Rabbi Shim'on said, "From this you can infer that the world is blessed because of us."[468](#)

Everyone's face shone so brightly that no one could look at them.[469](#)

It has been taught: Ten entered and seven emerged. Rabbi Shim'on was happy, and Rabbi Abba was sad.[470](#)

One day Rabbi Shim'on was sitting, and Rabbi Abba was with him. Rabbi Shim'on said a word, and they saw these three being brought by supernal angels, who were showing them treasure chambers on high, due to their honor, and they entered mountains of pure balsam. Rabbi Abba's mind was eased.[471](#)

It has been taught: From that day on, the Companions did not leave Rabbi Shim'on's house; and when Rabbi Shim'on was revealing secrets, only they were present. Rabbi Shim'on would call out to them, "We seven are the eyes of YHVH, as is written: *Those seven are the eyes of YHVH* (Zechariah 4:10). This has been said for us!"[472](#)

Rabbi Abba said, "We are six lamps shining from the seventh, for you are seventh of all. Surely, the six exist only by the seventh, for all depends on the seventh!"[473](#)

Rabbi Yehudah called him "Sabbath of all those six," as is written: *Sabbath for YHVH, holy*. Just as *Sabbath for YHVH is holy*, so is Rabbi Shim'on *Sabbath for YHVH, holy*.[474](#)

Rabbi Shim'on said, "I am surprised about that hairy one with girded loins—why was he absent from our threshing chamber while holy words were revealed?"⁴⁷⁵

Just then, Elijah arrived, with three diadems illumining his face. Rabbi Shim'on said to him, "Ah, the one who was absent for the carved goat cake of his Lord on the day of the wedding celebration!"⁴⁷⁶

He replied, "By your life, Rabbi! Seven days before you entered the threshing chamber, all those who would come and appear with Him were selected by the blessed Holy One. And I pleaded before Him to be invited, clinging to His shoulders; but I couldn't be, because that same day He sent me to perform miracles for Rav Hamnuna Sava and his companions, who were imprisoned by edict of the royal crown. I brought about a miracle for them, casting down the rampart of the king's palace, and they were trapped in the magical entanglement, in which forty-five officers died. I extricated Rav Hamnuna and his companions and cast them into the valley of Ono, saving them. Then I prepared bread and water for them, since they hadn't eaten for three days, and that whole day I didn't part from them."⁴⁷⁷

"When I returned, I found the canopy carried by all those columns, with three of the Companions upon it. I asked them, and they told me, 'The share of the blessed Holy One from the wedding celebration of Rabbi Shim'on and his Companions.'⁴⁷⁸

"Happy are you, Rabbi Shim'on, and happy is your share—and that of those Companions sitting before you! How many rungs are arranged for you in the world that is coming! How many glowing lamps are destined to illumine you!

"Come and see: This day, on account of you, Rabbi Pinḥas son of Ya'ir, your father-in-law, has been adorned with fifty crowns. I myself accompanied him through all those rivers of mountains of pure balsam, and he has already selected his place, where he is established."⁴⁷⁹

He said to him, “Are the righteous bound in a cluster of crowns [145a] on festivals and Sabbaths more than on other days?”[480](#)

He replied, “And even all those outside, as is written: *From new moon to new moon and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to bow down before Me—says YHVH* (Isaiah 66:23). If these come, how much more so the righteous![481](#)

“*From new moon to new moon—why?* Because the patriarchs—Holy Chariot—are crowned.[482](#)

“*And from Sabbath to Sabbath—for the seventh of all those days is crowned, as is written: God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it* (Genesis 2:3). You are Rabbi Shim’on, seventh of the six. You will be crowned and hallowed more than all! And because of you, three delights found on the seventh will be relished by the righteous in the world that is coming. It is written: *You will call the Sabbath ‘delight,’ the holy of YHVH ‘honored’* (Isaiah 58:13). Who is *the holy of YHVH*? Rabbi Shim’on son of Yoḥai, who is called *honored* in this world and in the world that is coming.”[483](#)

COMMENTARY ON NASO (continued)

Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, "Thus shall you bless the Children of Israel, saying to them:" (Numbers 6:23).¹

Rabbi Yitshak opened, "וְחֶסֶד יְהוָה (Ve-ḥesed YHVH), *The love of YHVH, is forever and ever upon יְרֵאָו (yere'av), those in awe of Him, and His righteousness to*

children's children (Psalms 103:17). How great is יְרֵאָה (yir'ah), awe, in the sight of the Omnipresent, for included in awe is humility, and included in humility is חֲסִידוּת (ḥasidut), devotion. Consequently, whoever possesses fear of sin possesses all of them, and whoever does not fear Heaven possesses neither humility nor devotion.²

"It has been taught: Whoever emerges from awe and is robed in humility—humility is preferable, and he includes them all, as is written: *The heel of humility is awe of YHVH* (Proverbs 22:4). For whoever possesses fear of Heaven attains humility, and whoever possesses humility attains ḥasidut, devotion. Whoever possesses fear of Heaven attains them all: humility, as is written: *The heel of humility is fear of YHVH; ḥasidut, devotion, as is written: Ve-ḥesed YHVH, The love of YHVH, is forever and ever upon yere'av, those who fear Him.*³

"It has been taught: Every person who possesses ḥasidut, devotion, is called 'Angel of [145b] YHVH Tseva'ot,' as is written: *For the lips of a priest guard knowledge, and teaching is sought from his mouth; for he is an angel of YHVH Tseva'ot* (Malachi 2:7). Why did the priest attain being an *angel of YHVH Tseva'ot?*"⁴

Rabbi Yehudah said, "Just as *an angel of YHVH Tseva'ot* is priest above, so *an angel of YHVH Tseva'ot* is priest below. Who

is *an angel of YHVH Tseva'ot*? Michael the great prince, issuing from *Ḥesed* above, and he is the high priest above. The high priest below, as it were, is called *an angel of YHVH Tseva'ot* since he comes from *Ḥesed*. What is *Ḥesed*? Compassion. Therefore, a priest does not appear on the side of Judgment. How did the priest attain *Ḥesed*? Through awe, as is written: *Ve-ḥesed YHVH, The love of YHVH, is forever and ever upon those in awe of Him.*⁵

“Alternatively, *The love of YHVH is מעולם ועד עולם (me-olam ve-ad olam), forever and ever, upon those in awe of Him. What is meant by עולם (olam) and עולם (olam)?*”

Rabbi Yitshak said, “As has been established in the Holy *Idra: olam, world, one; olam, world, two.*”⁶

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “If so, מן העולם ועד העולם (min ha-olam ve-ad ha-olam), *from the world to the world.*”⁷

He replied, “They are two worlds, turned back into one.”⁸

Rabbi El'azar said to Rabbi Yitshak, “How long will you seal your words? *From the world to the world*—principle of supernal mystery: *Adam* above and *Adam* below, corresponding to *world* and *world*. It is written: *days of olam, the world* (Isaiah 63:9), and similarly *years of olam, the world*. This has already been established in the Holy Supernal *Idra.*”⁹

“*Upon those who fear Him*—for whoever is sin-fearing is called *Adam*. When?”¹⁰

Rabbi El'azar said, “If he possesses awe, humility, and devotion—totality of all.”

Rabbi Yehudah said, “But we have learned: Totality of male and female!”¹¹

He replied, “Certainly so! For whoever is joined male to female is called *Adam*, and is then sin-fearing. Not only that, but he is imbued with humility; not only that, but he is imbued with *ḥesed*. And whoever is not male with female possesses neither awe nor humility nor *ḥasidut*, devotion. So the former is called *Adam*, totality of all; and since he is

called *Adam*, *Ḥesed* prevails, as is written: *I said, 'The world is built by ḥesed, love' (Psalms 89:3)—for it cannot be built if male and female are not found. And it is written: The love of YHVH is from world to world upon those in awe of Him. Those in awe of him—totality of Adam.*¹²

“Alternatively, *ve-ḥesed, The love of, YHVH is from world to world upon those in awe of Him.* This refers to the priests, who come from the side of *Ḥesed* and obtain this inheritance descending *from the world above to the world below. Upon those in awe of Him—the priests below. And it is written: He shall atone for himself and for his house (Leviticus 16:6)—to be included in the category of Adam.*¹³

“*And His righteousness to children’s children—for he becomes worthy of children’s children.*”

Rabbi Yehudah said, “If so, why *and His righteousness?* The verse should read *and His love.*”¹⁴

Rabbi El’azar replied, “This corresponds to the secret that we have learned: *בזאת (Be-zot), With this (Leviticus 16:3)—as is written: for from man was זאת (zot), this one, taken (Genesis 2:23), and similarly: לזאת (Le-zot), This one, shall be called Woman (ibid.), and zot, this, includes man, namely Ḥesed. Zot is Female, Ḥesed Male. Thus, Male, issuing from the white side, is called Ḥesed, whereas Zot is called Tsedeq (Righteousness), issuing from the red side; so She is called Woman, as is written: וצדקתו (ve-tsidqato), and His righteousness. Why His righteousness? The righteousness of Ḥesed, His mate, to sweeten one another. Therefore we have learned: Every priest who has no mate is forbidden to serve, because it is written *He shall atone for himself and for his house.*”¹⁵*

Rabbi Yitshak said, “Because *Shekhinah* does not dwell in one who is not married, and the priest, more than anyone in the nation, must be a dwelling place of *Shekhinah*. Once *Shekhinah* dwells in them, *Ḥesed* dwells in them, and they are called *ḥasidim*, devoted ones, and they must bless the people, as is written: וחסידך יברכוכה (Va-ḥasidekha yevarakhukha), *Your*

devoted ones will bless You (Psalms 145:10), and similarly: *Your Thummim and Your Urim* לְאִישׁ חַסִּידֶיךָ (*le-ish ḥasidekha*), *for your devoted man* (Deuteronomy 33:8). Since the priest is called *ḥasid*, he must bless, and therefore it is written: *Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, 'כה (Koh), Thus, shall you bless'* (Numbers 6:23). Why? Because they are called *ḥasidim*, and it is written וְחַסִּידֶיךָ יְבָרְכֻכָּה (*Va-ḥasidekha yevarakhukha*), *Your devoted ones will bless You.*¹⁶

*"Koh, Thus, shall you bless the Children of Israel, saying to them: (Numbers 6:23). Thus shall you bless—in the holy tongue. Thus shall you bless—in awe. Thus shall you bless—in humility."*¹⁷

Rabbi Abba said, *"Koh, Thus, shall you bless.* It has been taught: This *Tsedeq* (Righteousness) is called *Koh* (Thus), for all judgments are aroused from *Koh*. This corresponds to what Rabbi El'azar has said: What is meant by *מכה רבה (makkah rabbah), a great blow* (Numbers 11:33)? That is, *מכה (makkah), a blow—מִן כֹּה (min koh), from Koh* (Thus). And it is written: *You have not listened until koh, now* (Exodus 7:16), as Moses threatened. Similarly, it is written: *בזאת (Be-zot), By this, shall you know that I am YHVH* (ibid., 17). All is one, and it is written: *He did not [146a] take to heart זֹאת (zot), this, too* (ibid., 23), who was poised to destroy his country.¹⁸

*"From this Koh, judgments are aroused; and once Hessed joins with Her, She is sweetened. Therefore, this is transmitted to the priest, who comes from Hessed, so that Koh will be blessed and sweetened, as is written: Koh, Thus, shall you bless—meaning: although this Koh is immersed in judgments, you will assuage Her and bless Her. As is written: Koh, Thus, shall you bless the Children of Israel—through this Hessed, you will bless Koh, sweetening Her toward Israel, so that no judgments may be found in Her, as is written: Koh, Thus, shall you bless the Children of Israel."*¹⁹

"אמור (Amor), Saying, to them. It is not written *אמרו (Imeru), Say, to them* but rather *Amor, Saying—to exclude the time when the unruly increased, so as not to publicize the*

matter, for they were not commanded to make the Name known, as implied by what is written: *Amor, Saying*, in an undefined manner.”²⁰

Alternatively, *Amor, Saying*—since it is written *Thus* תברכו (*tevarakhu*), *shall you bless*, why isn’t it written תאמרו (*to meru*), *shall you say*? Well, Rabbi Yehudah taught: “*Amor, Saying, to them*—if they are worthy, *to them*; if not, merely *saying*.”²¹

Rabbi Yitshak opened, saying, “*I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, and the men who were with me did not see the vision, yet a great terror fell upon them and they fled into hiding* (Daniel 10:7). *I, Daniel, alone saw the vision*—but we have learned: ‘They were prophets, whereas he was not. And who were they? Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.’ Look, the holy has become common! And it is written: *they did not see*. So why were they frightened? Whereas of Daniel it is written *I saw*, yet he was not frightened, although he was not a prophet. Look, the common is holy!”²²

“Well, it has been taught: *If a camp is marshaled against me, my heart will not fear; if battle is roused against me*, בזאת (*be-zot*), *in this, do I trust* (Psalms 27:3). *Be-zot, In this*—the one whom we have mentioned. *Zot, this*—his allotted share, to be possessed, to wreak vengeance on his behalf.”²³

“It has been taught: The blessed Holy One made David into a Holy Chariot with our patriarchs—supernal crowns of all, inherited by our patriarchs.”²⁴

“It has been taught: David inherited the kingdom for himself and for his descendants, and he was fortified in the site of Kingdom above, inheriting this Kingdom for himself and his descendants, which will never be wrested from them throughout all generations. And it has been taught: When this crown of Kingdom is aroused for the descendants of David, no one can withstand it.”²⁵

“*I, Daniel, alone saw*—because he was a descendant of David, as is written: *Among them were the descendants of*

Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (Daniel 1:6). He saw and delighted in this, since it derived from an aspect of the allotted share of his ancestor. Because it was his, he endured, while the others did not.”²⁶

Rabbi Shim'on said, “When *Koh, Thus*, is aroused in its judgments, inhabitants of the world cannot withstand it. But when the priests spread their hands, coming from *Hesed*, supernal *Hesed* is aroused and unites with this *Koh*, who is sweetened and blessed with a beaming face toward *the Children of Israel*, so Judgment is removed from them, as is written: *Koh, Thus, shall you bless the Children of Israel—the Children of Israel*, not other nations.”²⁷

“Therefore the priest, no one else, so that this crown of his, *Hesed*, may be aroused by him. For he is called *hasid*, devoted one, as is written: אִישׁ חַסִּידִיךָ (*ish ḥasidekha*), *your devoted man* (Deuteronomy 33:8); and he comes from the side of *Hesed*, and it is written וְחַסִּידִיךָ יְבָרְכֶכָה (*Va-ḥasidekha yevarakhukha*), *Your devoted ones will bless You* (Psalms 145:10)—do not read יְבָרְכֶכָה (*yevarakhukha*), *will bless You*, but rather יְבָרְכוּ כֹהֵן (*yevarakhu koh*), *will bless Koh. Koh, Thus, shall you bless—with the Explicit Name. Koh, Thus, shall you bless—in the holy tongue.*”²⁸

It has been taught: Rabbi Yehudah said, “When the priest below rises and spreads his hands, all the holy crowns above are aroused and arrayed to be blessed. They shine from the depth of the well, all drawing from the depth that gushes constantly; blessing does not cease, for springs flow to all worlds, which are blessed and saturated by them all.”²⁹

“It has been taught: At that moment there is whispering, then silence in all worlds. This may be compared to a king who wishes to couple with the *matronita* and wants to approach her quietly. During that time all the attendants do not stir, and they whisper, ‘Look, the king is coming to couple with the *matronita!*’ Who is *Matronita*?

Assembly of Israel. Who is Assembly of Israel? Assembly of Israel unspecified.”³⁰

It has been taught: Rabbi Yitshak said, “He must raise the right above the left, as is written: *Aaron raised* יָדָיו (*yadav*), *his hands, toward the people [and blessed them]* (Leviticus 9:22)—it is written יָדוֹ (*yado*), *his hand*, not יָדָיו (*yadav*), *his hands*, because of the esteem of the right over the left.”³¹

Rabbi El’azar said, “This is a mystery, as is written: *He will rule over you* (Genesis 3:16).³²

“It has been taught: When a priest wishes to spread his hands, holiness must be added [146b] to his holiness, for his hands must be sanctified by a holy hand. Who is ‘a holy hand’? A Levite, from whose hands the priest must receive holiness of water, as is written: *You shall sanctify the Levites*—they are surely holy. Of the Levites is written *Your brothers, too, the tribe of Levi—your father’s tribe—bring forward with you, and they will accompany you and serve you* (Numbers 18:2). *Your father’s tribe*—the entirety. From here [we learn]: Every priest who spread his hands must be sanctified by one who is holy, thereby adding holiness to his holiness; and he should not receive holiness of water from anyone else who is not holy.³³

“In the Concealment of the Book it is taught: A Levite by whom a priest is sanctified must first sanctify himself.³⁴

“Why a Levite? Let him be sanctified by the hand of another priest. Well, it has been taught: Another priest must not do so; for, regarding another priest who is imperfect, this complete priest should not be tainted by one who is flawed and imperfect. But a Levite who is complete and worthy of ascending the platform and serving in the Tent of Meeting is considered perfect and is called ‘holy,’ as is written: *You shall hallow the Levites.*”³⁵

Rabbi Tanḥum said, “He is also called ‘pure,’ as is written: *and purify them* (Numbers 8:6). Thus the priest must add holiness to his holiness.”³⁶

It has been taught: When the priest spreads his hands, the fingers should not join one another, so that each of the holy crowns may be blessed individually and fittingly—and because the Holy Name must be expressed in inscribed letters distinctly, not mingling with one another. He should meditate on these matters.³⁷

Rabbi Yitshak said, “The blessed Holy One desired that those above would be blessed, so that those below would be blessed—and that those above would be blessed through those below, by the hand of the holiest of the holy below, as is written: *Your devoted ones will bless You* (Psalms 145:10).”³⁸

Rabbi Yehudah said, “Any priest who does not know this mystery, and whom he blesses, and the nature of the blessing that he offers—his blessing is no blessing. As is written: *For the lips of a priest keep knowledge, and Torah is sought from his mouth* (Malachi 2:7). What is meant by דעת (*da’at*), *knowledge*? *Da’at*, unspecified. *And Torah is sought from his mouth*—those above seek *from his mouth*. What do they seek? *Torah—Torah*, unspecified: how *Torah* above, called simply *Torah*, is unified. This is known as Written Torah and Oral Torah among those supernal crowns. Why? *For he is an angel of YHVH Tseva’ot* (ibid.).

“It has been taught: The priest must meditate on these matters above to unify the Holy Name as is required.”³⁹

Rabbi Shim’on said, “We have learned in the Concealment of the Book: The Holy Name is revealed and concealed. The one revealed is written יוד הוה ואו הוה (Yod He Vav He); the one concealed is written in other letters. And what is concealed? The Hidden of all.”⁴⁰

Rabbi Yehudah said, “Even the revealed one is concealed by other letters, because of Hidden of the Hidden within. For here the priest must permute the Holy Name, bringing down all Compassion, all of which is included in twenty-two letters, twenty-two crowns of

Compassion. In the letters of this Name are concealed twenty-two aspects of Compassion: thirteen of the Ancient One, concealed and hidden of all, and nine revealed by *Ze'eir Anpin*. All of them unite in the permutation of one Name—on which the priest would meditate as he spread his hands—in twenty-two engraved letters.⁴¹

“It has been taught: When there was modest concealment, this Name was revealed to all. Once impudence increased in the world, it was sealed in its letters. For when it was revealed, the priest would meditate and the Name would be expressed. On what did he meditate? On the concealed, hidden and treasured away—and it was revealed and expressed. Once impudence increased in the world, all was sealed in inscribed letters.⁴²

“Come and see that all these twenty-two aspects of Compassion [147a] were spoken by Moses twice. At first, he uttered thirteen attributes of the Ancient of Ancients, concealed of all, in a place where judgments prevailed, to subdue all those judgments, assuaging them. The second time, he uttered nine attributes of Compassion included in *Ze'eir Anpin*, radiating from the Ancient One, concealed of all.⁴³

“All these twenty-two attributes are concealed in these verses: *May YHVH bless you and protect you...* (Numbers 6:24-26)—these three verses and three Names, consisting of twelve letters, included correspondingly. Upon the totality [the priest] would meditate as one, and all worlds would be blessed and those above and those below would be sweetened by twenty-two letters concealed in these three verses, corresponding to twenty-two attributes of Compassion encompassing all worlds. As is written: אמור (*amor*), *saying* (Numbers 6:23), and not אמרו (*Imeru*), *say*. *Saying*—for he must meditate upon all that is concealed on all these rungs. *Saying*—[meditating] upon matters concealed above. אמור (*Amor*), *Saying*—equivalent to 248 bodily members in the human being minus one. Why?

Because all of them depend upon one; and all are blessed by this when the three verses are uttered, as we have said.⁴⁴

“*To them* (Numbers 6:23)—to include in this blessing those above and those below.”⁴⁵

It has been taught: Rabbi Yose said, “One day I was sitting in the presence of Rabbi El’azar son of Rabbi Shim’on. I asked him, ‘Master, what prompted David to say *Human and beast You deliver, O YHVH* (Psalms 36:7)? *Human*, fine; but why *beast*?’⁴⁶

“He replied, ‘Well asked! All is taken into account: if they are worthy, *human*; if not, *beast*.’⁴⁷

“I said, ‘Master, I am seeking mystery of the matter.’⁴⁸

“He replied, ‘All has been said.⁴⁹ Come and see: The blessed Holy One called Israel אדם (*adam*), *human*, corresponding to the pattern above, and He called them בהמה (*behemah*), *beast*—and all in one verse, as is written: *You, My flock—flock of My pasture—are adam, human* (Ezekiel 34:31). *You, My flock—flock of My pasture—here, behemah, beast. Are human—here, adam, human.* Thus Israel is called *human and beast*, so *human and beast You deliver, O YHVH*.⁵⁰

“‘Further mystery of the matter: If they are worthy, *adam, human*, corresponding to the pattern above; if not, they are called *beast*. All are blessed simultaneously: *Adam* above and *beast* below. Especially so, since Israel includes all, as is written: *Human and beast You deliver, O YHVH*.⁵¹

“‘Come and see: No blessing below appears until it appears above, and once it exists above, it exists below. All depends in this manner, for good or for evil. For good, as is written: *I will respond to heaven, and it will respond to earth* (Hosea 2:23). For evil, as is written: *I will punish the host of the heights on high and the kings of the earth on the earth* (Isaiah 24:21).”⁵²

Rabbi Yehudah said, “Therefore it is written: אָמוֹר (*amor*), *saying, to them* (Numbers 6:23), in a general way, so that those above and those below may be blessed. *May YHVH bless you* (ibid., 24)—above, as is written: כֹּה (*Koh*), *Thus, shall you bless* (ibid., 23), first. Afterward, *the Children of Israel* (ibid.). *Saying to them*, in a general way, so that all may be blessed as one. *And protect you*—below.⁵³

“*May YHVH shine His face* (ibid., 25)—above. *And be gracious to you* (ibid.)—below. *May YHVH lift up His face* (ibid., 26)—above. *And grant you peace* (ibid.)—below.”⁵⁴

Rabbi Abba said, “All are blessed as one by twenty-two engraved letters of the Holy Name, encompassed and concealed here; by twenty-two all are blessed. They are Compassion within Compassion, with no Judgment to be found.⁵⁵

“No? But look at what is written: *May YHVH lift up His face to you!*”⁵⁶

Rabbi Abba said, “*May He lift up*—*May He remove and eliminate*, so that Judgment vanish entirely.”⁵⁷

It has been taught: Rabbi Yose said, “When the priest spreads his hands, the people are forbidden to look at him, because *Shekhinah* settles upon his hands.”⁵⁸

Rabbi Yitshak said, “If so, since they don’t see Her, why does it matter? After all, it is written *No human can see Me and live* (Exodus 33:20)—in their lifetime they do not see, but in their death they do!”⁵⁹

He replied, “Because the Holy Name is intimated in the fingers of his hands, and one should be in awe. Even though they do not see *Shekhinah*, they must not look at the hands of the priests, so that the people will not be brazen toward *Shekhinah*.”⁶⁰

It has been taught: At the moment when the priest spreads his hands, and those above and those below are blessed, the people should sit in awe and reverence, realizing that now a time of favor prevails throughout all

worlds, with no Judgment anywhere. This is a moment when the Concealed One, the Ancient of Ancients, manifests in *Ze'eir Anpin* and peace pervades all."[61](#)

Rabbi Shim'on said, "In these three verses, [147b] their beginning is י (yod), י (yod), י (yod): יברכך יהוה (*Yevarekhekha YHVH*), *May YHVH bless you* (Numbers 6:24); יאר יהוה (*Ya'er YHVH*), *May YHVH shine* (ibid., 25); ישא יהוה (*Yissa YHVH*), *May YHVH lift up* (ibid., 26). All to display complete faith, so that the one who needs blessing from the Ancient One may be blessed. *Yod, yod, yod*—so that *Ze'eir Anpin* may be blessed by the Ancient of All. Thus, *May YHVH bless you*—above. *And protect you*—here below. And so with all of them."[62](#)

A *tanna* taught in the presence of Rabbi Shim'on: Whoever is distressed by a dream should come when the priests spread their hands and say, "Master of the universe! [I am Yours and my dreams are Yours], etc." Why? Because at that moment Compassion prevails in the world, and if one offers his prayer out of distress, for him Judgment is turned into Compassion.[63](#)

They shall set My name [upon the Children of Israel] (Numbers 6:27).[64](#)

What is meant by ושמו (*ve-samu*), *They shall set?* Arrange, as is written: *Ve-samu, Set, each of them at his work and at*

his burden (Numbers 4:19). To arrange, by their blessings, crowns of the right on the right and those of the left on the left fittingly. For they must not err, arraying all, so that those above and those below may be blessed.[65](#)

If they do so, then *I Myself will bless them* (Numbers 6:27). Whom? Those priests, as is written: *May those who bless you be blessed* (Genesis 27:29), and similarly: *I will bless those who bless you* (ibid. 12:3). They bless above, and I will bless them. Therefore it is written: *They shall set*, and not *They shall utter* or *They shall mention*.[66](#)

It has been taught: Any priest not beloved by the people should not spread his hands. It once happened that a certain priest rose and spread his hands, and before he finished he turned into a heap of bones. Why? Because he did not bless lovingly. Then another one rose, spread his hands, and blessed—and that day was mended. Any priest who does not love the people, or whom the people do not love, should not spread his hands to bless the people, as is written: *He that has a good eye* יְבוֹרֵךְ (yevorakh), *will be blessed* (Proverbs 22:9). Do not read *yevorakh, will be blessed*, but rather יְבַרֵךְ (yevarekh), *will bless*.⁶⁷

It has been taught: Rabbi Yitshak said, “Come and see what is written about Balaam. When he was entrusted with the task to bless Israel, he gazed with an evil eye so that the blessing would not be fulfilled, and he based his words on that evil eye, as is written: *Utterance of Balaam son of Beor* (Numbers 24:3). What is meant by *son of Beor*? From the one who hated them more than all inhabitants of the world. *Utterance of the man* שֶׁתוּם הָעַיִן (shetum ha-ayin), *whose eye is closed* (ibid.). *Shetum ha-ayin*—עִינָא טַבָּא (di-steim eina tava), who closed his good eye, so that they would not be blessed and the blessing would not be fulfilled.”⁶⁸

Rabbi Yehudah said, “Certainly so! For we find that opening of the eye indicates blessing, as is written: *Open Your eyes and see* (Daniel 9:18), in order to bless. And when Rav Hamnuna Sava used to bless, he would say, ‘May the blessed Holy One open His eyes toward you!’ Whereas of that wicked one, it is written *shetum ha-ayin, whose eye is closed*, so that they would not be blessed through him.”⁶⁹

Rabbi Yitshak said to him, “Therefore when a priest blesses with a benevolent eye, his blessing is fulfilled. And concerning one who does not bless with a benevolent eye, it is written *Do not eat the bread of one with an evil eye, nor desire his delicacies* (Proverbs 23:6)—that is, ‘Do not seek from him any blessing at all.’”⁷⁰

Rabbi Yose said, “Come and see: *YHVH your God did not want to listen to Balaam...* (Deuteronomy 23:6). *To listen to Balaam*—the verse should read *to listen to Balak*, since Balak arranged everything; why *to listen to Balaam*? Well, because he closed his eyes so that Israel would not be blessed.”⁷¹

It has been taught: Rabbi Yose said, “The blessed Holy One said to Balaam, ‘Wicked one! You are closing your eyes so that My children will not be blessed; I will open My eyes, and every word that you say I will turn into a blessing’—as is written: *and YHVH your God turned the curse into blessing for you...* (Deuteronomy 23:6).”

Thus it is written *He that has a good eye will be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor* (Proverbs 22:9). What is meant by *of his bread*? As we have established, for it is written: *The bread of his God, from the most holy...* (Leviticus 21:22)—implying that *from the most holy emerges the bread of his God*, and so it is written *for he gives of his bread to the poor.*⁷²

It has been taught: How beloved is Israel before the blessed Holy One, for those above are blessed only for the sake of Israel! For we have learned: Rabbi Yehudah said in the name of Rabbi Ḥiyya in the name of Rabbi Yose: “The blessed Holy One has sworn that He will not enter heavenly Jerusalem until Israel enters earthly Jerusalem, as is said: *The Holy One is in your midst, and I will not enter the city* (Hosea 11:9)—meaning, as long as *Shekhinah* is here in exile, the Name above is not complete and all restorations are not carried out. As if it were possible, the Name is left [148a] lacking.”⁷³

Rabbi Abba was going to Lydda. He encountered Rabbi Zeira son of Rav, who said to him, “I have seen the face of *Shekhinah*! And whoever sees the face of *Shekhinah* should follow and run after Her, as is written: *Let us know, let us pursue to know YHVH* (Hosea 6:3), and similarly: *Many*

peoples will go and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of YHVH, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us His ways and we will walk in His paths.' For from Zion will come forth Torah, and the word of YHVH from Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:3). So I desire to follow you, to learn some of those sublime words that you taste every day from the holy threshing chamber.⁷⁴

“What is meant by *He believed in YHVH, and He reckoned it as righteousness for him* (Genesis 15:6)? Did the blessed Holy One reckon it for Abraham, or did Abraham reckon it for the blessed Holy One? I myself have heard that the blessed Holy One reckoned it for Abraham, but it does not settle in my heart.”⁷⁵

He replied, “So we have established, yet it is not so. Come and see: ויחשבה (Va-yahsheveha), *and he reckoned her*. It is not written ויחשוב לו (va-yahshov lo), *and he reckoned for him*, but rather va-yahsheveha, *and he reckoned her*—Abraham surely reckoned it for the blessed Holy One. For it has been taught: It is written *He took him outside...* (Genesis 15:5). The blessed Holy One said to Abraham, ‘Leave your astrological speculations!... That is not the way to know My Name. You see, and I see. Abram does not engender; Abraham does engender! From here on, strive on another path. כה (Koh), *So, shall your seed be* (ibid.).’ What is Koh? She is the tenth holy crown of the King—to know His Name—and She is the crown from which judgments are aroused.⁷⁶

“It has been taught: Koh, *So, shall your seed be—your actual seed!* At that moment, Abraham rejoiced—contemplating and knowing His Name, cleaving to Him—for he had been gladdened by Koh. And although judgments are aroused from Her, Abraham *reckoned Her*—that crown, although She is Judgment—as if She were Compassion, as is written: va-yahsheveha, *and he reckoned Her*. What is meant by *and he reckoned Her*? That crown, צדקה (tsedaqah), *as righteousness—Compassion.*”⁷⁷

Rabbi Yitshak said, “*Koh* is the tenth crown and is called *Tsedeq*, Righteousness, and judgments are aroused from Her. And Abraham—even though judgments derive from Her, from this *Tsedeq*—reckoned Her *tsedaqah*, as *righteousness*, from whom no judgments are aroused, for She is Compassion.”⁷⁸

Rabbi Abba said further, “What is meant by *YHVH blessed Abraham* בכל (ba-kol), with all (Genesis 24:1)? As is written: *yes*, כל (khol), all, that is in heaven and on earth (1 Chronicles 29:11).⁷⁹

“It is written: *Koh*, Thus, shall you bless the Children of Israel (Numbers 6:23)—because for the sake of Israel this *Koh* is blessed by the priest, so that Israel will be blessed below and blessing will prevail everywhere. Of the time to come, it is written: *Blessed is YHVH from Zion, dwelling in Jerusalem* (Psalms 135:21).⁸⁰

It happened on the day כלת משה (kallot Mosheh), *Moses consummated, setting up the Dwelling...* (Numbers 7:1).

כלת משה (kallat Mosheh), *the bride of Moses?* Well, this teaches that She entered by the hands of Moses.”⁸¹

Rabbi Yehudah said, “Was She delayed until now from entering Her place? Surely it is written: *Moses could not come into the Tent of Meeting...* (Exodus 40:35).⁸²

Rabbi Yitshak said, “There is no ‘earlier’ and ‘later’ in the Torah.”⁸³

“*It happened on the day* כלת משה (kallot Mosheh), *Moses consummated*—כלה (kallah), the Bride, of Moses, surely! For we have learned: Rabbi Shim’on said: What is meant by *You ascended the heights, you seized a captive...* (Psalms 68:19)? Well, when the blessed Holy One said to him, *Remove your sandals from your feet* (Exodus 3:5), the

It has been taught: Rabbi Yose said, “*On the day* that כלה (kallah), the Bride, entered under the canopy. How do we establish *on the*

mountain trembled, and Michael said before the blessed Holy One, 'Master of the universe! Do you want to destroy the human being? Surely it is written: *Male and female He created them, and He blessed them* (Genesis 5:2), and blessing is found only in one who is male and female; yet You have told him to separate from his wife!' [84](#)

"He replied, 'Moses has already fulfilled the command *Be fruitful and multiply* (Genesis 1:28). Now I want him to marry My *Shekhinah*, and for his sake My *Shekhinah* will descend to dwell with him.' As is written: *You ascended the heights, you seized a captive—Shekhinah, who was married to you.* [85](#)

"*You took gifts* בְּאָדָם (*ba-adam*), *from the human* (Psalms 68:19). It is not written בְּאָדָם (*be-adam*), *from a human*, but rather בְּאָדָם (*ba-adam*), *from the human—from the well-known human* above. On the day that *Shekhinah* descended, the one who married Moses descended, as is written: כַּלַּת מֹשֶׁה (*kallot Mosheh*), *Moses consummated—kallat Mosheh, the bride of Moses, truly!* [86](#)

"Concerning Joshua, it is written: *Remove your sandal* (Joshua 5:15), for he separated [from his wife] only at certain times, since *Shekhinah* was not married to him to such an extent and it was not fitting for him—as is written: *Joshua fell on his face to the ground...* (*ibid.*, 14). [87](#)

"*You took מתנות* (*mattanot*), *gifts, from the human—spelled מתנת* (*mattenat*), *a gift.* Happy is the share of Moses, whose Lord delighted in glorifying him above all inhabitants of the world!" [88](#)

YHVH said to Moses, "One chieftain לְיוֹם (*la-yom*), *a day, one chieftain la-yom, a day, [shall present his offering for the dedication of the altar]*" (Numbers 7:11). What is meant by *la-yom, for a day, la-yom, for a day?* [89](#)

Rabbi Yehudah said, "Days above, which were dedicated [148b] to be blessed by the twelve chieftains—

twelve boundaries, distinguished. Each one was arranged and dedicated with blessing by those chieftains.”⁹⁰

It has been taught: All of them are blessed for the sake of the altar above; and even the one below and even the nations of the world are blessed.⁹¹

For it has been taught: Rabbi Shim'on said, “If these twelve chieftains had not brought their offerings, the world could not have withstood the twelve chieftains of Ishmael, as is written: *twelve chieftains according to their tribes* (Genesis 25:16). Once these chieftains of Israel brought their offerings, they obtained the dominion of all of them. Thus, *one chieftain a day.*”⁹²

Whatever they offered corresponded to the pattern above, so that all would be blessed. *Sixty rams, sixty he-goats* (Numbers 7:88)—as is said: *Sixty גבורים (gibborim), warriors, surrounding her* (Song of Songs 3:7), on the side of *Gevurah.*⁹³

One golden ladle of ten shekels (Numbers 7:14)—as is written in *Ki Tissa* (When You Count). This portion is written in *Ki Tissa*—the total of all the shekels of gold, namely the shekels of the elevation offering.⁹⁴

Parashat Be-Ha'alotekha

“WHEN YOU LIGHT UP” (NUMBERS 8:1-12:16)

Rabbi Yehudah opened, *“He is like a groom coming forth from his canopy... (Psalms 19:6). Happy is the share of Israel, in whom the blessed Holy One delights and to whom He gave the Torah of truth—the Tree of Life—by which a person grasps life in this world and life in the world that is coming! For whoever engages in Torah and grasps her is grasped by life, and whoever abandons words of Torah and separates from Torah is as if he separated from life, since she is life and all her words are life, as is written: For they are life to those who find them... (Proverbs 4:22), and similarly: It will be healing for your navel... (ibid. 3:8).¹*

“Come and see: The Tree of Life embraces from above to below. It is the sun illumining all, its radiance beginning from the top and spreading through the trunk of the tree in a straight path. Two sides adjoin, one to the north and one to the south, one right and one left.²

“When the sun shines, as has been said, by the trunk of that tree it strengthens the right arm, which shines powerfully. And from its power, the left shines, absorbed in its light.³

“He is like a groom coming forth from his canopy. Who is his canopy? The crown with which his mother crowned him on the day of his wedding (Song of Songs 3:11).⁴

*“Coming forth from his canopy—head of all light, as is said in the following verse: From the end of the heavens his going forth (Psalms 19:7), beginning of all, which is from the end of the heavens. Then He comes forth like a groom—a real groom, coming forth to meet his bride, beloved of his soul, with outstretched arms, and she receives him.”*⁵

*“In this manner, He is like a groom coming forth from his canopy—the sun spreads forth toward the west. As soon as the west draws near, the north side is aroused toward it first—drawing near the west, coupling with it in its place—as is said: His left hand beneath my head (Song of Songs 2:6). Afterward, the south side, the right, as is written: his right embracing me (ibid.). Then, rejoicing like a champion running his course (Psalms 19:6)—illuminating the moon, as has been established.”*⁶

*“Come and see: When you light up the lamps (Numbers 8:2)—the supernal lamps, all shining as one from the sun.”*⁷

Rabbi Abba opened, *“Happy the people who know the horn’s blast. O YHVH, they walk in the light of Your presence (Psalms 89:16). This verse has been established, but come and see: Happy are Israel, to whom the blessed Holy One has given the holy Torah, [149a] teaching them His ways, to cleave to Him and keep the commandments of Torah, by which to attain the world that is coming!”*⁸

“He drew them near when they came out of Egypt, for then He delivered them from foreign dominion, elevating them to unite with His Name. Then the people of Israel were called ‘free,’ entirely free, for they no longer dwelled under foreign domination, being united now with His Name, which is supreme above all, ruling over those above and those below.

*“Out of His love for them, He called them My son, My firstborn, Israel (Exodus 4:22), corresponding to supernal holiness. Consequently, He slayed all the firstborn above and below, and untied the bonds and the bound, those above and those below, in order to bring them forth.”*⁹

“Therefore, the blessed Holy One did not seek an angel or a seraph—just Himself. Furthermore, He alone knew how to distinguish, to know all, to untie the bound—which is not within the power of any messenger, but rather in His hand.¹⁰

“Come and see: On the night when the blessed Holy One wished to slay all those firstborn, as has been said—as night dusked, singers came to sing before Him. He said to them, ‘This is not the time, for My children are singing another song on earth.’¹¹

“When the night split, a north wind was aroused, and the blessed Holy One wreaked vengeance, and Israel sang *Hallel* aloud. Then He made them free from all, and supernal angels and all those camps listened to the voices of Israel.¹²

“After they circumcised themselves, with that blood and with the blood of the paschal lamb they marked their houses with three marks *on the lintel and on the two doorposts* (Exodus 12:23). Why? As they have established: because it is a holy mark—and Destruction comes forth and sees that blood marked on the entrance, and he has compassion over Israel, as is written: *YHVH will pass over the entrance and He will not allow the Destroyer [to enter your houses to strike]* (ibid.).¹³

“Here one should examine: If the blessed Holy One Himself slayed in the land of Egypt, and not any messenger, then why is it written *and He will not allow the Destroyer*? The verse should read *and He will not destroy*.¹⁴

“But so it is, for it is written וַיְהוָה (Va-YHVH), *And YHVH, struck every firstborn* (Exodus 12:29). *Va-YHVH, And YHVH*—He and His court; and that court was present here.¹⁵

“From here we learn that one should always display action in order to be saved. For similarly upon the altar, so that the Destroyer will not appear.¹⁶

“This applies to action. When that is not required—for example, on Rosh Hashanah, the Day of Judgment, when

masters of the evil tongue loom over Israel—we need words and supplication, and we need to display by spirit and soul, as we have established and as has been said. How? With a shofar. To display the shofar and to arouse another Shofar. By that sound, we generate Compassion and Judgment as one, all fittingly, just as that supernal Shofar emits a sound blended as one. We proceed to arouse Compassion, to smash Masters of Judgment so that they will not prevail on this day. And when Compassion is aroused, all those supernal lamps shine on this side and on that side. Then, *in the light of the king's face is life* (Proverbs 16:15).¹⁷

“Come and see: When the priest intended to kindle the lamps below and offered fragrant incense—at that moment supernal lamps shine, all is bound fragrantly as one, and joy and gladness pervade all worlds, as is written: *Oil and incense rejoice the heart* (Proverbs 27:9). Thus, *when you light up the lamps* (Numbers 8:2).”¹⁸

Rabbi El'azar, Rabbi Yose, and Rabbi Yitshak were walking on the way. They came upon those mountains of Kurdistan. As they kept going, Rabbi El'azar raised his eyes and saw those towering mountains, dark and terrifying. Rabbi El'azar said to those Companions, “If my father were here, I would not be afraid. But since we are three, Judgment has no place here.”¹⁹

He said to them, “How beloved are words of Torah, for every single word contains sublime mysteries, and Torah is called the supernal כלל (*kelal*), principle. We have learned in the Thirteen Rules of Torah: ‘Whatever was included in *kelal*, a generalization, and was then excluded from the generalization to teach something, was excluded not to teach about itself but to teach about the entire generalization.’ For Torah is [149b] כללא (*kelala*), the generality; so even if a mere story departs therefrom, it does so not to demonstrate something about the story itself—surely, ‘it was excluded not to teach about itself but to

teach about the entire generalization.’ For even though that story or that event departs from *kelala*, the general category, of Torah, it does so not to demonstrate something about itself, but rather to demonstrate about that supernal *kelala* of the whole Torah.²⁰

“For example, it is written: *The ark came to rest... upon the mountains of Ararat* (Genesis 8:4). Surely, this verse departs from *kelala* of Torah and comes as a mere story. What do we care whether it rested here or there? It had to rest somewhere! ‘But to teach about the entire *kelal*.’²¹

“Whoever says that a particular story of Torah comes to display the story itself—may his spirit expire! If so, it is not supernal Torah, Torah of truth. But surely, it is holy supernal Torah, Torah of truth!²²

“Come and see: For a king of flesh and blood, it is undignified to engage in common talk, much less to write it down. Now, would you ever imagine that the supernal King, the blessed Holy One, had no holy words to write, with which to compose the Torah, so that He had to collect all these words about commoners—such as words about Esau, about Hagar, about Laban with Jacob, about the donkey, Balaam, and Balak, about Zimri, and all the other stories that are written—and make a Torah out of them? If so, why is it called *a Torah of truth* (Malachi 2:6)—*Torah of YHVH is perfect; The decree of YHVH is trustworthy; The precepts of YHVH are just; The command of YHVH is lucid; The awe of YHVH is pure?* And it is written: *more desirable than gold...* (Psalms 19:8-11). These are words of Torah!²³

“But surely it is called *Torah of YHVH*, Perfect Torah, and every single word comes to demonstrate other, supernal matters. The wording of a story does not come to signify itself, but rather to signify something about the totality, as has been said.²⁴

“Come and see: *The ark came to rest in the seventh month upon the mountains of Ararat*. So it is with this verse; all the more so with others. When Judgment looms

over the world and judgments prevail, and the blessed Holy One sits on the Throne of Judgment to try the world, within that Throne so many records are engraved, so many notes concealed—within the archival ledger of the King. All those open books are hidden there, so nothing is forgotten by the King. This Throne is established and prevails only *in the seventh month*—on the Day of Judgment, the day on which all inhabitants of the world are called to account, all of them passing before that Throne. Thus, *The ark rested in the seventh month—in the seventh month*, surely, Judgment of the world.²⁵

“*Upon the mountains of אֲרָרַט (ararat), Ararat*—supports of the Throne, Masters of Judgment, wailers and howlers, all of whom appear on that day before the blessed Holy One. How many shield-bearing warriors are aroused on this day, all stationed beneath that Throne in judgment of the world.²⁶

“The people of Israel offer prayer on that day, pleading and supplicating before Him and blowing the shofar. And the blessed Holy One has mercy on them, turning Judgment into Compassion. All those above and below open, saying, *Happy is the people who know the blast* (Psalms 89:16).²⁷

“Therefore, it is vital on this day that the one who blows should know the essence of the matter and concentrate on the blast, performing the act with wisdom. Thus it is written *Happy is the people who know the blast*—and not *who hear the blast*, as has been said.”²⁸

They traveled on, that whole day. As night dusked, they climbed to a certain place and found a cave. They entered it. Rabbi El’azar said, “Let one of us enter farther inside the cave; maybe he’ll find a more convenient spot.”²⁹

Rabbi Yose entered and saw another cave, illumined by a lamp. He heard a voice saying, “*When you light up the lamps, toward the front of the lampstand shall the seven lamps give light* (Numbers 8:2). Here Assembly of Israel

receives light, and Supernal Mother [150a] is crowned, and all those lamps are illumined by Her. Within Her: two slender potent embers, sprouting shoots—all intertwining toward the one above, and from there below.”³⁰

Rabbi Yose heard and rejoiced; he came to Rabbi El’azar. Rabbi El’azar said, “Let us enter, for the blessed Holy One has prepared this for us in order to perform a miracle!”³¹

They entered. As soon as they entered, they saw two people engaged in Torah. Rabbi El’azar said, “*How precious is Your love, O God! Humans find shelter in the shadow of Your wings* (Psalms 36:8).”³²

These stood up, and those sat down, and all of them rejoiced. Rabbi El’azar said, “*How precious is Your love, O God, that we have found you! The blessed Holy One has shown us love in this place—lighting up lamps.*”³³

Rabbi Yose said, “בהעלותך (Be-ha’alotekha), *When you light up* (Numbers 8:2)—really, באדלקותך (be-adlaqutakh), *when you kindle*. For two rituals are performed as one by the priest, a single bond. What is that? Oil and incense, as is said: *Oil and incense ישמח (yesammah), rejoice, the heart* (Proverbs 27:9). For it is written: *Aaron shall burn upon it aromatic incense morning after morning; when he tends the lamps he shall burn it*. And it is written: *And when Aaron lights up the lamps at twilight he shall burn it* (Exodus 30:7–8). Why is it written here בהטיבו (be-hetivo), *when he tends*, whereas there it is written בהעלות (be-ha’alot), *when he lights up*?”³⁴

Rabbi Yehudah said, “All is one.”³⁵

Rabbi Yose said, “בהטיבו (Be-hetivo), *When he enhances*—as is said: *For your caresses טובים מין (tovim mi-yayin), are fine, deriving from wine* (Song of Songs 1:2). *Tovim, Fine—satiated with wine*, as is said: *We were sated with food and we were tovim, fine* (Jeremiah 44:17).”³⁶

Rabbi Yehudah said, “הטבה (Hatavah), *Enhancement*, really! As is said: *וטוב לב (Ve-tov lev), A good-hearted person, has a continual feast* (Proverbs 15:15).”³⁷

“ובהעלות (Uv-ha'alot), *When he lights up*—for when they are watered and saturated by the flow of the streams, then ascension and blessings appear in all, joy in all: *uv-ha'alot, when he elevates.*”³⁸

Rabbi Aḥa said, “When the Deepest of All radiates into the Stream, and the Stream flows in a straight path, watering all, then is written *be-ha'alot, when he elevates*, for they issue from the Deepest of All. *Be-ha'alot, When he elevates*—for it comes from the highest aspect, Depth of All, called Thought. All is one entity. Then Assembly of Israel is blessed, and blessings spread throughout all worlds.”³⁹

Rabbi Yitshak opened, “*I indeed have built You* בית זבול (*beit zevul*), *a lofty house, a firm place for Your dwelling forever* (1 Kings 8:13). *Beit zevul, A lofty house*, surely! When all the hidden treasures of the King are entrusted in Her hands and She controls them, She is called *beit zevul, a lofty house*. There is one heaven called זבול (*zevul*), Loft, for it is situated to receive blessings and arrange all, while She is called *beit zevul, a house of Loft.*”⁴⁰

“Come and see: It is written ולזבולין (*Ve-li-zvulun*), *For Zebulun, he said, 'Rejoice, Zebulun, when you go out, and Issachar, in your tents'* (Deuteronomy 33:18)—indicating that they cooperate as one: the former going out to wage war, the latter sitting engaged in Torah, each giving a share to the other.”⁴¹

“In the allotted territory of Zebulun is the sea, called the Sea of Kinneret, and this is fitting because *tekhelet*, blue, emerges from there; and they have established that below corresponds to the pattern above: Sea of Kinneret above, Sea of Kinneret below; *tekhelet* above, *tekhelet* below—all in one place.”⁴²

“Consequently, Zebulun inherited the role of going out to wage war. How do we know that this is so? As is written: *Peoples they call to the mountain, where they slaughter* צדק

זִבְחֵי (zivḥei tsedeq), *sacrifices of triumph* (Deuteronomy 33:19) —zivḥei tsedeq, *slaughterings of Tsedeq*, surely! Why? *For the plenty of seas they suckle* (ibid.).⁴³

“Issachar gives a share of Torah to Zebulun—a share of Torah, surely! Thus they cooperate as one, so that Zebulun may be blessed by Issachar, for blessing of Torah is blessing of all.”⁴⁴

Rabbi Abba said, “The inheritance of Torah is certainly so, and this sixth rung gives the reward of Torah, bestowing it upon Assembly of Israel, bestowing white to blue. Concerning this we have learned: As soon as one can distinguish between blue and white,’ when colors are recognized; for then it is considered morning, and white comes to the world and blue disappears. Therefore all wars of the King and all weapons of the King are entrusted into Her hands, as we have already established.⁴⁵

“The well dug by princes, delved by nobles of the nation (Numbers 21:18). *The well*—Assembly of Israel. *Dug by princes*—Father and Mother, who gave birth to Her. *Delved by nobles of the nation*—the Patriarchs, for it is written: *Nobles of nations have gathered with the God of Abraham* (Psalms 47:10), so as [150b] to be blessed by them through one rung poised above Her. Who is that? Righteous One. So when this journeys, She journeys with the help of the Patriarchs.⁴⁶

“She is called Well, and She is called Sea. She is called Well when Isaac emerges armed from the side of Mother, coming to be drawn after this one, and He fills Her. Then She is called Well of Isaac—Well of Miriam, as has already been established.⁴⁷

“Sea—when She is illumined by the radiance of Father, She is called Sea. Streams flow toward Her, as is said: *All the streams flow into the sea...* (Ecclesiastes 1:7).⁴⁸

“Ever since the day that Assembly of Israel was exiled, it is written: *Waters vanish from the sea, and a river becomes parched and dry* (Job 14:11). *Waters vanish from*

the sea—Assembly of Israel. *And a river becomes parched and dry*—Righteous One. Of this is written *The righteous one loses* (Isaiah 57:1)—for He was a splendid, glorious river entering Her, gathering all those rivers and streams that draw from the flow of the holy river whose waters never cease, which gushes forth from supernal Eden. He enters Her, filling Her pools, and from there all worlds inherit blessings completely.⁴⁹

“Come and see: When Assembly of Israel is blessed, all worlds are blessed, and Israel below suckles and is blessed from Her—and as we have already established, She protects Israel, as has been said, for it is written: *The angel of Elohim, who was going before the camp of Israel, moved* (Exodus 14:19). *The angel of Elohim*—Assembly of Israel, as we have established, and at that moment She moved with the help of the Patriarchs. When they appear with Her, all appear—and therefore in these verses is conveyed the Holy Name in which the Patriarchs are comprised, as has been established: one verse in order, one backward, and one in order.⁵⁰

“ויסע מלאך (Va-yissa mal’akh), *The angel moved* (Exodus 14:19)—in order, like this:⁵¹

כ	א	ל	מ	ע	ס	י	ו
ה	ה	מ	י	ה	ל	א	ה
ח	מ	י	נ	פ	ל	ך	ל
ו	ל	א	ך	ש	י	ה	נ
י	ך	ח	א	מ	כ	ל	י
מ	ע	ע	ס	י	ו	מ	ה
פ	מ	נ	נ	ע	ה	ד	ו
מ	ע	י	ו	מ	ה	י	נ
מ	ה	י	ך	ח	א	מ	ד

“Here Abraham was adorned with his crowns, and he crowned Assembly of Israel, and all these letters are in a

straight path, proceeding by day, as is said: *By day YHVH ordains* יָסַדוּ (*hasdo*), *His love* (Psalms 42:9). Thus it is written [*The angel of Elohim*] *moved*. When do all move on their journeys? You must say, ‘When the sun shines.’ This is one verse composed of seventy-two letters.⁵²

“The second, of Isaac, similarly consisting of seventy-two letters—imbued with Judgment toward Assembly of Israel. Therefore it is written: *And it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel* (Exodus 14:20)—facing these and those.⁵³

“*And there was the cloud and the dark* (ibid.)—for so it is, since a cloudy day pertains to Isaac, cloud and darkness deriving from him. Consequently, the arrangement of letters is backward—in a tortuous path, not a straight one—like this:⁵⁴

ה	כ	ל	ה	ל	י	ל	ה
ק	ך	ב	ז	ה	א	ל	ז
ה	ל	י	ל	ה	ו	ל	א
ש	כ	ו	י	א	ך	א	ת
י	ה	ע	נ	נ	ו	ה	ח
י	ש	ך	א	ל	ו	י	ה
ו	ב	י	נ	מ	ח	נ	ה
ח	נ	ה	מ	צ	ך	י	מ
ו	י	ב	א	ב	י	נ	מ

“So all those letters are backward, as is written: *and there was the cloud and the dark*. For as soon as Isaac entered with his judgments, *one did not draw near the other all night* (Exodus 14:20). It is written: *one [did not draw near] the other*—those deriving from the side of Abraham did not draw near the others, for they could not, since this Well clung to Isaac, as is said: *and it lit up the night* (ibid.). For when She was filled and joined Isaac, *one did not draw near the other*; and they could not draw near

—until Jacob came and joined Abraham, and he took Isaac and placed him in the middle. Then Faith was linked, each with another, and Israel was saved.⁵⁵

“We have learned: Where the Patriarchs appear, other righteous ones appear with them. So this Name attains other aspects, branching out, although all proceed on one path.⁵⁶

“When this Well shines from the side of Isaac and is bound to him, it becomes a Great Sea, with mighty rolling waves, rising and falling in fury and rage, climbing up, [151a] heaving, and crashing down. Abraham comes toward Her; but because of the rage, fury, and wrath, they do not draw near one another—until Jacob comes and subdues Her rage, reducing and breaking the rolling waves of the Sea. As is written: *And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and YHVH drove the sea with a mighty east wind...* (Exodus 14:21). What is meant by *with a mighty east wind*? Mighty toward Her, to break Her rage.⁵⁷

“And He turned the sea into dry ground, and the waters were split (ibid.)—He emptied the Sea of its raging waters, and the waters split to the side of Abraham and to the side of Jacob, as is written: *and the waters were split*, to one side and the other. Therefore all those letters are in a straight path, fittingly:⁵⁸

ת	א	ה	ש	מ	ט	י	ו
מ	י	ה	ל	ע	ו	ד	י
ו	ה	י	כ	ל	ו	י	ו
ד	ב	מ	י	ה	ת	א	ה
ז	ע	מ	י	ד	ק	ח	ו
ה	ל	י	ל	ה	ל	כ	ה
י	ה	ת	א	מ	ש	י	ו
י	ו	ה	ב	ד	ח	ל	מ
מ	י	מ	ה	ו	ע	ק	ב

“These are in a straight path on the side of Jacob and all those deriving from his side.⁵⁹

“Thus the act of arranging the Holy Name is demonstrated by uniting the Patriarchs, which is a single bond, a faithful bond, becoming a complete Chariot. By uniting the Patriarchs as one, all is accomplished. The Companions know how to walk on a straight path, refining actions fittingly. By this Name, bond of the Patriarchs, are discovered ways to judgment, compassion, assistance, love, awe, Torah, life, death, good, and evil. Happy are the righteous, who know the ways of Torah and know how to walk in the ways of the Holy King! Happy are they in this world and in the world that is coming!⁶⁰

והו ילי סיט עלמ מהש ללה אכא כהת
הזי אלד לאו ההע יזל מבה הרי הקמ
לאו כלי לוו פהל נלב יי מלה חהו
נתה האא ירת שאה ריי אומ לכב ושר
יחו להח בוק מנד אני העמ רהע ייז
ההה מיכ וול ילה סאל ערי עשל מיה
והו דני החש עממ ננא נית מבה פוי
נממ ייל הרח מצר ומב יהה ענו מחי
דמב מנק איע חבו ראה יבמ היי מומ

“Here, the Patriarchs on their journeys—in action, in bonds bound to one another. When they join as one, no one can withstand them.⁶¹

“There are seven clusters into which the three Patriarchs and four others are woven. Head and center in a single cluster. These are the ones who dug the well of water.⁶²

“Second: *זה אל זה (zeh el zeh), one to the other* (Exodus 14:20), and they form one cluster with three *yods*.⁶³

“Third: consummation of all Faith.⁶⁴

“Fourth: two supports, pillars upon which the body stands.⁶⁵

“Fifth: good and evil, a river generating the Tree of Life and Death, deepest of all.⁶⁶

“Sixth: Judgment with Compassion.⁶⁷

“Seventh: mentioned at first, with that head of which we spoke, for it is the center of all. Since it is the center, it is called אָנִי (*ani*), I—sustenance of all the branches, which are joined around it.⁶⁸

“These seven rungs—from one rung to another, one Chariot is revealed, along with all those joined to it. And so it is from rung to rung, all of them following the rung appointed over them. We have already established these matters.⁶⁹

“Come and see: When these rungs appear, all Faith appears. These are the seven clouds that surrounded Israel. Therefore, when *Shekhinah* journeys, She journeys with the Patriarchs; and when these journey, all those other rungs journey with them. Then, Assembly of Israel is adorned fittingly.⁷⁰

“Come and see: Zebulun, whom we mentioned, who inherited the Sea of Kinneret—the Sea of Kinneret, unspecified. If so, what is Judah’s share of it? Well, Judah obtained *Malkhuta* (Kingdom) entirely, joining it on all sides.”⁷¹

Rabbi El’azar said, “Regarding this portion, the fashioning of the lampstand and all its fixtures and everything related to it was already stated. Why here a second time?⁷²

“Well, since the chieftains brought, above, an offering for the altar and its whole suitable array, Scripture comes and relates the fashioning of the lampstand, since the restoration above is by the hand of Aaron—for the lampstand and all its lamps shine through Aaron.⁷³

“Come and see: There are twelve chieftains to inaugurate the altar, and as has been established, there are

twelve tribes on four sides, four units—all twelve corresponding to the pattern above.⁷⁴

“The lampstand [151b] was assigned with seven lamps to be lit by the priest, and the lampstand stood and was fashioned miraculously, as has been established in the account of the lampstand.⁷⁵

“The inner altar and the lampstand stand as one, for the joy of all—as has been established, for it is written: *Oil and incense rejoice the heart* (Proverbs 27:9).⁷⁶

“As we have established, there were two altars. One, innermost of all, since this existed for joy. The other, for offering sacrifices. From one, a flow issues to the other. One who sees will contemplate and know. Mystery of the matter is אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה (*Adonai YHVH*). Therefore, incense was offered only when oil appeared.⁷⁷

“I found in the Book of King Solomon: Incense is for joy and to eliminate a plague. Why a plague? Because Judgment stems from this outer one, whereas joy, delight, and the bond of radiance derive from that inner one, in which all exists. When this is aroused, all Judgment disappears and cannot be enacted. Therefore incense is capable of nullifying a plague. Thus, קִטְרֶת (*qetoret*), incense, is קִשְׁירוֹ (*qeshiru*), binding, of all, and this is offered on that inner one. Happy are Israel in this world and in the world that is coming! Of them is written *He said to me, ‘You are My servant, [Israel, in whom I glory]’* (Isaiah 49:3).⁷⁸

“*Take the Levites from the midst of the Children of Israel* (Numbers 8:6). It has already been established that they had to be conducted, purified, and drawn, to be linked to their place. For they are the Left Arm and the side of Judgment, and whoever derives from the side of Judgment must not let his hair grow, thereby increasing Judgment in the world. Therefore a woman similarly should not let her hair be exposed, but must cover her head and her hair. This we have established, and it has already been discussed.

Then, all those who come from the side of Judgment are blessed. So of the Levites is written *Have them pass a razor over all their flesh...* (ibid., 7). As has been said, the Levites cannot attain their place until the priest elevates them, since the right always conducts the left.⁷⁹

Rabbi Shim'on said, "On the day that the Levites attain their place—by two bulls. Why פרים (*parim*), bulls? Well, they are like bulls, to receive with the left the פרה (*parah*), cow, that is called פרה אדומה (*parah adummah*), a red cow (Numbers 19:2).⁸⁰

"Upon the priest depends all power and restoration, for the whole power of the body abides in the right arm. So the priest is the arm of all Israel, poised to restore the world. Nevertheless, it does not exist alone, but rather with the body and the left—and the body is the essence of all.⁸¹

"Come and see: A Levite would serve for twenty-five years. At the age of twenty-five, he ascends and is crowned in his place, and for twenty-five years he serves. For when a person attains the rung of fifty years, he declines from the potency of fire within him; and once the fiery heat of the body cools down, he impairs the place to which he is connected.⁸²

"Furthermore, the singing voice is no longer so well joined to him—and the voice should not wane but rather strengthen, for it occupies a place of strong Judgment, not weak. So he must not impair the place to which he is connected—which is strong Judgment, not weak. He must not display any weakness at all in any aspect.⁸³

"Happy is the person who engages in Torah and knows its ways, not deviating to the right or the left, as is written: *For the ways of YHVH are straight...* (Hosea 14:10)."⁸⁴

YHVH spoke to Moses in the Desert of Sinai in the second year... (Numbers 9:1). Rabbi Abba said, "Why here the Passover offering, since it was already stated?"⁸⁵

“Well, it was *in the second year*—for Israel thought that the Passover offering was only in Egypt, and now, since they had performed it once in Egypt, they assumed it was no longer necessary. The blessed Holy One came and admonished them about it, so that they would not think that its time had passed in Egypt and it was unnecessary. Therefore, [152a] *in the Desert of Sinai in the second year*—to institute it for all generations.⁸⁶

“Although He had already admonished them in Egypt, now He commanded them a second time in the place where all the commandments of Torah were given. Thus, *in the second year*.⁸⁷

“Why *in the second year, in the first month*? Well, that is a sublime mystery. One, a *year*; another, a *month*. What is the difference between them? *Month* is the moon; *year* is the sun illumining the moon. Then was the time when all the commandments of Torah were transmitted.”⁸⁸

Rabbi Shim'on said, “Woe to the person who says that Torah intended to present a mere story and ordinary words! For if so, we could compose a Torah right now with ordinary words, and more laudable than all of them. If to display matters of the world, even worldly potentates possess words more sublime. If so, let us follow them and make a Torah of them! But all the words of Torah correspond to the following pattern.⁸⁹

“Come and see: The upper world and the lower world are evenly balanced: Israel below, supernal angels above. Of the angels is written *He makes His angels spirits...* (Psalms 104:4). This pertains to the celestial realm. But when they descend below, although they descend, they don garments of this world. If they are not clothed in a garment befitting this world, they cannot endure in this world, nor can the world endure them.⁹⁰

“If this is so with the angels, then concerning Torah—who created them and created all worlds, which exist for

her sake—when she descends to this world, if she does not clothe herself in garments of this world, the world cannot endure.⁹¹

“So this story of Torah is a garment of Torah. Whoever thinks that the garment is the real Torah and not something else, may his spirit expire! He will have no share in the world that is coming! Therefore David said: *Uncover my eyes, so I can see wonders out of your Torah* (Psalms 119:18)—what is beneath the garment of Torah.⁹²

“Come and see: There is a garment visible to all. Those fools, when they see someone in a good-looking garment, look no further. Yet the significance of that garment is the body; the significance of the body is the soul.

“Corresponding to this pattern, Torah has a body—and words of Torah called ‘bodies of Torah.’ This body is clothed in a garment, namely stories of this world. Fools of the world look only at that garment, the story of Torah. Those who know more do not look at the garment, but rather at the body beneath that garment. The wise—servants of the supernal King, those who stood at Mount Sinai—look only at the soul, root of all, real Torah. And in the world that is coming, they are destined to gaze upon the soul of soul of Torah.⁹³

“Come and see: So, too, above—there is garment, body, soul, and soul of soul. The heavens and their hosts are the garment. Assembly of Israel is the body who receives the soul, *Tif’eret Yisra’el* (Beauty of Israel), so She is the body for the soul. The soul that we have mentioned is *Tif’eret Yisra’el*, who is real Torah. The soul of soul is the Holy Ancient One—and all are linked to one another.⁹⁴

“Woe to the wicked who say that Torah is merely a story! They look at this garment and no further. Happy are the righteous who look at Torah properly! As wine must sit in a bottle, so Torah must sit in this garment. Therefore, concerning Torah, one should look only at what is beneath

the garment. So all these words and all these stories are garments.”⁹⁵

לְיִשְׂרָאֵל וַיַּעֲשׂוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (Ve-ya’asu venei Yisra’el), *Let the Children of Israel perform, the Passover offering at its set time* (Numbers 9:2). What is meant by *ve-ya’asu*, *let them make*? Rabbi Yose said, “As has already been said, whoever displays an action below fittingly is as if he ‘makes’ it above, for because of him that entity is aroused above. As it were, he makes it. This has already been said.”⁹⁶ [152b]

אִישׁ אִישׁ (Ish ish), *Any person, who becomes טָמֵא לְנֶפֶשׁ (tame la-nefesh), impure for the soul, or is on a distant journey...* (Numbers 9:10). *Ish ish*, *A person, a person*—why twice? Well, *a person* who is *a person*, worthy of receiving a sublime holy soul, and he impaired himself, and supernal *Shekhinah* does not settle upon him. Why? Because he inflicted it, defiling himself. So, *ish ish*, *a person, a person*—*a person* worthy of being *a person*, yet he defiles himself, so that holiness from above does not settle upon him.”⁹⁷

אוּ בְדֶרֶךְ רְחֹקָה (O ve-derekh reḥoqah), *Or is on a distant journey*. This is one of those ten that are dotted in the Torah—all coming to demonstrate something. What is meant by *ve-derekh reḥoqah*, *on a distant way*? Because a person who defiles himself is then defiled from above. As soon as they defile him above, he is *on a distant way*—from that way to which the seed of Israel cling. Surely he joins *a distant way*, distancing himself from approaching you, linking with you, as you are linked.”⁹⁸

Rabbi Yitshak said, “But look at what is written: *who becomes impure for the soul or is on a distant journey*—which seems like two things, as implied by *or!*”⁹⁹

Rabbi Yose replied, “Here, before they defile him; there, after they defile him. And by implication, even one or the other—holiness from above does not settle upon him,

and he cannot perform the Passover offering at the time when Israel performs it.¹⁰⁰

“Now, you might ask, ‘Does he actually perform it in the second month even if he doesn’t restore himself?’ No. Rather, once he is purified and restores himself—now the second month, to perform the Passover offering. From here we learn: Every person who purifies himself is then purified above.¹⁰¹

“If you say that he occupies a higher rung on the second month—not so. For Israel, holy seed, who performed the Passover offering at its time, received the sun and moon as one. Whoever obtains the foundation first, obtains the structure. What is the foundation? Do not say, ‘Supernal Foundation of Righteous One of the World.’ Rather, a foundation of precious stone, as is said: *A stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone* (Psalms 118:22). This is the stone upon which settles what settles.”¹⁰²

Rabbi Yehudah said, “He is surely not like one who obtains the Passover offering on time—but he obtains all, even in the second month, though unlike one obtaining on time. Why? The one who obtains the Passover offering at its time obtains from below to above, for ‘one progresses in holiness, and does not regress.’ Whereas the one who obtains after its time [153a] descends from above to below. So they are equivalent in all, yet not equivalent; for one ascends and doesn’t descend, whereas the other descends without ascending. Therefore, whoever brings the Passover offering at its time is more highly to be praised.¹⁰³

“Happy are Israel, who attain all, for they attain Torah! For whoever attains Torah attains the Holy Name. Happy are Israel in this world and in the world that is coming!”¹⁰⁴ [153b]

Rabbi Ḥiyya opened, “*He disperses, gives to the needy; his righteousness stands forever; his horn shall be raised in*

On the day the Dwelling was erected (Numbers 9:15).¹⁰⁵

who disperses, yet more is added (Proverbs 11:24). You might think: any kind of dispersal; so Scripture informs us: *He disperses, gives to the needy*. Once he has given to the poor, this dispersal is worthy. What is meant by *yet more is added*? In all ways: *yet more is added* in wealth; *yet more is added* in life.¹⁰⁶

“This verse should read: *There is one who disperses, ויִסֵּף (ve-yosif), yet he adds more*. Why וְנוֹסַף (ve-nosaf), *yet more is added*? Well, that place where death abides, he caused to be increased with life from above, adding to him.”¹⁰⁷

Rabbi Yehudah said in the name of Rabbi Ḥiyya, “Scripture attests that whoever gives to the poor stimulates the Tree of Life to add to the Tree of Death. Then life and joy prevail above. As for the person who caused this, whenever he is in need, that Tree of Life stands over him and that Tree of Death protects him. Therefore, *ve-nosaf, yet more is added*, as is said: צְדָקָתוֹ (tsidqato), *his charity, [154a] stands forever*. What is meant by *stands forever*? *Stands* poised over that person, providing him with endurance and life. Just as he gives [the poor] life and stimulates life above, so it is given to him. Those two Trees provide for him, standing over him to save him and to increase his life.¹⁰⁸

“*His horn shall be raised in glory*. Come and see, about what we have said: that *horn shall be raised*. How? *By glory* above. For this person determines their union as one, causing blessings to pour forth above and below.”¹⁰⁹

Rabbi Abba said, “Whenever the Dwelling is erected by people’s deeds, that day is a day of joy for all—and anointing oil of holiness is poured into all those lamps, and they all glow. Whoever determines this, determines his

glory (Psalms 112:9). *He disperses, gives to the needy*—what is meant by *disperses*? As is said: *There is one*

destiny in that world that is coming: he is saved in this world, and he will have life in the world that is coming, as is written: צדקה (Tsedakah), *Righteousness, saves from death* (Proverbs 10:2). And it is written: *The path of the righteous is like gleaming light, shining ever brighter until full day* (Proverbs 4:18).¹¹⁰

Make yourself two trumpets of silver...(Numbers 10:2).¹¹¹

and when the living beings rose off the ground, the wheels rose too (Ezekiel 1:19). *When the living beings moved—*with supernal sanction they would move. For if you say that this is high above—no, below. But this one in front of the face, and that one behind the face.¹¹²

“A sparkling wind, one of four, in four directions, in splendors blessed by the effulgence of radiant faces. Thus, *like; as; like the appearance of the living beings—*who are four corners, banners unfurled. Lion, Eagle, Bull, *Adam—*who includes all four angels ruling and encompassing all.¹¹³

“First Banner—an armed camp, Lion, Michael inscribed on the expanse of the banner, spread to the right. East—beginning of the sun, moving on its journeys in radiance. Two chieftains under him, Yofiel and Tsadqiel—one for Torah and one for going to the marketplace.¹¹⁴

“When these move—how many armed camps from the right side! Each one moves to the left. The sun proceeds, illumining and crowning them. A thousand and tens of thousands of chieftains under them—all in awe, in fear, in trembling, and in quaking.¹¹⁵

“The Lion extends his right hand, gathering all his legions—370,000 lions surrounding that Lion, and he is in the middle. When this Lion roars, the firmaments tremble; all the legions and camps tremble from fear of him. From

Rabbi Shim'on opened,
“When the living beings moved, the wheels moved beside them;

this voice, the River of Fire is inflamed, and it descends 1,500 rungs of Hell below. Then all the wicked of Hell tremble and are inflamed by fire. Of this is written *A lion has roared, who will not fear?* (Amos 3:8).[116](#)

“He roars a second time; 370,000 lions all roar. He extends his left hand; all Masters of Judgment below are seized with fear and subdued under that hand. The hand spreads over them, all of them beneath, as is said: *your hand on your enemies’ nape* (Genesis 49:8).[117](#)

“Four wings for every single one—of white fire, all flashing. All faces, calyx and blossom, immersed in the whiteness of that fire.[118](#)

“Four faces for every single one, in four directions—all glowing from the whiteness of the sun. One toward the east shines in joy. One toward the west, whose light is gathered in. One toward the north, and dark, with no radiance, like the shadow of the sun compared to the sun: the shadow is dark, the sun shines. For sun and shadow are right and left, moving together.[119](#)

“The count of those moving with him, all those carrying a weapon, all from the right and left, with three heads. One of his heads—74,600, these constituting one head. A legion sets forth by the right hand that he raises above them, apart from all those chieftains below, below these rulers; these above those, lower rungs with upper ones, who are innumerable.[120](#)

“Second head, moving with the first head, has a count of 54,400, apart from all [154b] those chieftains below in four directions, who are innumerable.[121](#)

“Third head, moving after them—57,400. Just as the right moves, so does the left; so too in front of them, so too behind them. As soon as this first one moves, *the Dwelling is taken down* (Numbers 10:17), and all those Levites utter song, masters of praise all at his side. Of then is written *for*

the spirit of the living being was in the wheels (Ezekiel 1:20).[122](#)

“Second Banner—an armed camp, Eagle, Uriel, south; accompanied by two chieftains: Shamshi, Hasdi. This Eagle ascends, all winged beings before him, numerous camps ascending on all sides, each by the power of the sun.[123](#)

“Spirit of inner spirit emerges, and that spirit reaches this Eagle, who lifts his pinions and covers the body, as is said: *By your wisdom does the hawk soar, spreading his wings toward the south?* (Job 39:26).

“Corresponding to the pattern; according to the paradigm; like the appearance of—*Like an eagle rousing his nest...* (Deuteronomy 32:11). This Eagle is accompanied by a hawk; a dove is accompanied by a hawk; and all the winged beings chirp and rejoice. A single column is in front of him, rising from below to above; numerous birds descend and enter, chirping and rejoicing, roaming around.[124](#)

“When he moves, he extends the right wing, gathering all his legions—350,000 winged beings, in two bodies, Eagle and Lion as one. He lifts his voice, all the others ascend and descend, chirping from their side on several rungs.[125](#)

“Three heads are as one in these camps, all in one reckoning; and the reckoning of these heads is: one head, 46,500; second head, 59,300; third head, 45,650.[126](#)

“From these two sides emerge two heralds, marching before all those camps. When these two proclaim, all legions and all camps—living beings, small and large—all gather. Who has seen the journey of all those firmaments, all moving in camps before the Dwelling?[127](#)

“When one of them—the one coming from the side of the Lion—spreads the sound smoothly, so that all those legions will not tremble, then all the heads of camps assemble. When the other proclaims, he breaks the sound, not spreading it smoothly. All the camps of this Eagle

throng, gathering for their journey. Corresponding to these, *two trumpets of silver* below; in the same manner, all below.[128](#)

“Come and see: When these move, what is written? *When the living beings moved, the wheels moved beside them* (Ezekiel 1:19)—those gathering toward them. As the head gazes, so too all of them.[129](#)

“Third Banner—Bull, Gabriel, north, accompanied by two chieftains: Kaftsi and Hizki. This Bull is from the left side, his horns rising between his two eyes—furious in scrutiny, eyes flashing like flaming fire. He gores and tramples with his feet ruthlessly.[130](#)

“When this Bull bellows, numerous ravaging bands of stingers issue from the Great Abyss, all of them bellowing and roaming in front of him. An archival ledger of all sins is hanging before him, for into a book all sins of the world ascend and are recorded.[131](#)

“Seven rivers of fire flow in front of him. When he is thirsty, that River of Fire moves toward him, and he sucks it up in a single gulp. And that river is filled as originally, not failing, and all those legions draw fire consuming fire. Were it not for a river of water issuing from the side of the Lion, the world could not endure their fiery coals.[132](#)

“Darkness of the sun exists there, no radiance. Numerous wardens of judgment go roaming in the darkness, and the fire burning on this side is a dark black fire. If you say that there is no white fire, black fire, red fire, and two-colored fire—do not say this, for surely it is so. And yet high above, it exists so, whence it flows to these below.[133](#)

“We have learned: In what manner does Torah exist? White fire, and black fire upon the white fire; in two fires does Torah exist.[134](#)

“Come and see: It is one fire, and this splits into four. It is one water, [155a] and this splits into four. It is one spirit,

and this splits into four.[135](#)

“The counts of three heads are joined in these camps. One head, 62,700; second head, 41,500; the other head, 53,400—aside from all those other rungs branching off, innumerable, all rungs upon rungs; and aside from numerous wardens of judgment below, impudent as a dog, biting like donkeys. Woe to one who finds himself near them and under their judgment![136](#)

“On the fourth side, Fourth Banner—*Adam*, Raphael, west. Here, healing; on the side of *Adam*, supernal Judgment is included and healed. This one grasps the horns of the Bull when it wishes to thrust them into the Great Abyss, and he binds them, so that the world will not be burned.[137](#)

“In this place abides *a sound of sheer silence* (1 Kings 19:12); here, a word silently, no syllable heard at all.[138](#)

“On this side dwells the one who dwells, rises the one who rises. The sun is gathered in to illumine this place. Consequently, *When you blow* תרועה (*teru'ah*), *an alarm* (Numbers 10:5)—on the south side; but here, neither this nor the other. Why *teru'ah, an alarm*? To subdue the north side. Therefore the north side is at the rear.[139](#)

“Come and see: *Two trumpets* (Numbers 10:2)—because they are on the two sides that we have mentioned: on the east and on the south. They are prepared to smash judgments and subdue them; so they are made of silver. Thus, *On the day of your rejoicing and at your fixed festivals... you shall blow the trumpets and be remembered before YHVH your God and be delivered from your enemies* (Numbers 10:10, 9)—unspecified, whether above or below.[140](#)

“Happy are Israel—whom the blessed Holy One wishes to glorify, and to whom He has given the highest share above all other nations. The blessed Holy One finds glory in them by their praises, as is written: *He said to me, 'You are My servant, Israel, in whom I glory'* (Isaiah 49:3).”

As the ark journeyed...
(Numbers 10:35).¹⁴¹

Rabbi El'azar said,
“Here one should
examine: ן (*Nun*) that is
inverted, facing
backward—why in two

places here?¹⁴²

“If you say, ‘A bent ן (*nun*)’—well, it is known that a bent *nun* is female; and a straight one, totality of male and female. They have already established, regarding this place: *As the ark journeyed.*’ But why is it turned afterward like this: ך?¹⁴³

“Come and see: No ןן (*nun*) is mentioned in אֲשֶׁרִי (*Ashrei*), *Happy are, those who dwell in Your house* (Psalms 84:5), because She is in exile. This has been established by the Companions, for it is written: נִפְלְאָה (*Nafelah*), *Fallen, not to rise again, is Virgin Israel* (Amos 5:2).¹⁴⁴

“But what is written previously? *The Ark of YHVH’s Covenant journeyed before them a three days’ distance to scout out a resting place for them* (Numbers 10:33). As soon as the ark journeyed, *nun* journeyed above it—surely, *Shekhinah* rests upon the ark.¹⁴⁵

“Come and see: The love of the blessed Holy One is toward Israel; for even though they stray from the straight path, the blessed Holy One does not wish to abandon them, and He constantly turns His face toward them. Otherwise, they could not endure in the world.¹⁴⁶

“Go and see: The ark journeyed before them a distance of three days, and *nun* remained inseparable from it, accompanying it. Due to the love of Israel, it turned its face toward them, turning away from the ark—like a gazelle who, when going, turns its face back to the place it has left. So, *as the ark journeyed, nun* turned its face toward Israel and its shoulders toward the ark.¹⁴⁷

“Therefore, when it journeyed, Moses said, ‘*Arise, O YHVH!* (Numbers 10:35)—do not abandon us, turn Your face toward us!’ Then *nun* turned back toward them, like this: ך—

like someone turning his face toward his beloved. And when the ark and Israel began to rest, *nun* turned its face from Israel and turned back toward the ark, turning completely.”[148](#)

Rabbi Shim'on said, “El'azar, my son, certainly so! But here, it did not turn its face away from Israel. For if so, the *nun* would have to be the opposite of the other one, above: that one inverted, and this one straight, facing the ark. But surely, it did not turn its face away from them. What did it do? As the ark rested, Moses said, *Return, O YHVH* (Numbers 10:36). Then the ark rested, and *Shekhinah* stood on the other side, with Her face toward Israel and toward the ark. So then She encompassed [155b] both the ark and Israel. But afterward Israel ruined this, as is written: *The people were* כמתאוננים (*ke-mit'onenim*), *complaining* (Numbers 11:1).”[149](#)

Rabbi El'azar said, “What I said comes from the Book of Rav Yeisa Sava, who said that on both this side and that side it turned back.”[150](#)

He replied, “He spoke well; but what I said you will find in the Book of Rav Hamnuna Sava, and it is certainly so!”[151](#)

The manna was כזרע גד (*ke-zera gad*), *like coriander seed* (Numbers 11:7).[152](#)

be raided by raiders (Genesis 49:19).[153](#)

“Just as the seed of Gad obtained their share in another land, so the manna settled upon Israel outside the Holy Land.”[154](#)

“*Was* כזרע גד (*ke-zera gad*), *like coriander seed*—כזרעא דגידא (*ke-zar'a de-gida*), like seed of the phallus, white, and congealing as it descends through the atmosphere and then

Rabbi Yose said, “To sustain seed and cohorts on earth, as is said: גד גדוד יגודנו (*Gad gedud yegudennu*), *Gad will*

materializes in the body. This we have already established.¹⁵⁵

“And its color was like the color of הבדולה (ha-bedolah), bdellium (Numbers 11:7)—like בדולהא (bedolḥa), a crystal, which is white, resembling the right above.”¹⁵⁶

Rabbi Yitshak said, “Why did Moses, in this utterance, weaken the one above like a female—as is written: *If this is how את (at), You, treat me* (Numbers 11:15)? *At*—the verse should read אתה (attah), *You*.¹⁵⁷

“However, he was speaking to the place inhabited by death, and that place is of the Female. Therefore he said, *Kill me, please, instantly* (Numbers 11:15). This is the Tree of Death, and we have already established that the Tree of Life is not inhabited by death. So he turned to the Tree of Death and said את (at), *You*—not אתה (attah)—and so it should be.¹⁵⁸

“Immediately, YHVH said to Moses, ‘Gather for Me seventy men...’ (Numbers 11:16). The blessed Holy One said to him, ‘You’re always asking for death; here it is for you! *I will withdraw some of the spirit that is upon you and place it upon them* (ibid., 17).’¹⁵⁹

“Come and see that here Moses knew that he would die and not enter the Land, since Eldad and Medad were declaring this.¹⁶⁰

“Therefore, when a person is possessed by anger, he should not curse himself, for numerous forces are standing by, poised to receive that utterance. On other occasions when [Moses] asked for death, they did not accept it from him, since it was all for the benefit of Israel. Now, it derived only from anger and distress, so they accepted it.¹⁶¹

“So afterward, Eldad and Medad remained, and they said this—that Moses would be gathered in and Joshua would bring Israel into the Land. Consequently, Joshua came toward Moses and was jealous for his sake, though [Moses] did not care about his own honor. So he said, *My*

lord Moses, כלאם (kela'em), *restrain them* (Numbers 11:28). What is meant by *kela'em*? 'Withhold from them these words,' as is said: ויכלא העם (va-yikkale ha-am), *and the people were restrained, from bringing* (Exodus 36:6)—actual restraining. But Moses did not want to.¹⁶²

"Go and see the humility of Moses! What is written? *Are you jealous for my sake?* (Numbers 11:29). Happy is the share of Moses, who ascended above all other exalted prophets!"¹⁶³

Rabbi Yehudah said, "All other prophets are to Moses like the beauty of the moon to the sun."¹⁶⁴

Rabbi Abba was sitting one night and studying Torah, accompanied by Rabbi Yose and Rabbi Hizkiyah. Rabbi Yose said, "How hard-hearted are people, totally disregarding matters of that world!"¹⁶⁵

Rabbi Abba said, "Evil of the heart, gripping all members of the body, makes them so."¹⁶⁶

He opened, saying, "*There is an evil that I have seen under the sun...* (Ecclesiastes 6:1). *There is an evil*—an evil force in the heart, seeking dominion over matters of this world, completely disregarding matters of that world.¹⁶⁷

"Why is it *evil*? The following verse demonstrates this, as is written: *a man whom God gives wealth, possessions, and honor, and he lacks nothing for himself of all he desires; yet God does not enable him to consume it* (ibid., 2). This verse is difficult. Since it is written *and he lacks nothing for himself of all he desires*, why yet *God does not enable him to consume it*, seeing that *he lacks nothing for himself of all he desires*?¹⁶⁸

"Well, it is a mystery, and all the words of King Solomon are clothed in other words—like the words of Torah, which are clothed in stories of the world.¹⁶⁹

"Come and see: Although we should look at the garment, now this verse is explained as follows: A person proceeds through this world, and the blessed Holy One

gives him [156a] wealth, so that he may thereby become worthy of the other world—the principal remaining with him.¹⁷⁰

“What is the principal? That which endures, a place in which the soul is bundled. So one must leave this principal after him, and he will receive it after departing from this world. For that principal is the Tree of that world, and it does not exist in this world—only the fruit issuing from it. So a person who proves worthy eats its fruit, while the principal endures for him in that world, to attain supernal life above.¹⁷¹

“If one defiles himself, lured after himself, so that he lacks nothing for himself at all—and that Tree is abandoned, not placed before him in awe, so that it will welcome him above—then *God does not enable him to consume it* and to attain that wealth. *Another man consumes it*—as is said: *What he prepares, the righteous will wear* (Job 27:17).¹⁷²

“Therefore, by what the blessed Holy One gives a person, he should prove worthy of that world—so that he may eat of it in this world, while the principal remains for him in the other world, that he may be bound in the bundle of life.”

Rabbi Yose said, “It is surely written: *If this is how You treat me, kill me, please, instantly* (Numbers 11:15). Now, did Moses—who was more humble than all other inhabitants of the world—surrender himself to death just because Israel asked him for food? Why?”¹⁷³

Rabbi Abba replied, “This matter I have learned, and it is a sublime mystery. Moses was not tormented, nor did he seek to die, on account of Israel’s demand.

“Come and see: Moses attained and was linked to something to which no other prophet was linked, for he grasped צדקה (*tsedaqah*), righteousness. When the blessed Holy One told Israel, *Look, I am about to rain down for you bread from heaven* (Exodus 16:4), Moses rejoiced, saying,

‘Surely, that perfection now exists in me, since for my sake manna is being provided for Israel!’ As soon as Moses saw that they again descended to another rung and asked for meat, and said, *Our throat loathes the wretched bread* (Numbers 21:5), he said, ‘If so, my rung is defective, since for my sake Israel should eat manna in the desert. Look, I am defective; Aaron is defective; Nahshon son of Amminadab is defective!’¹⁷⁴

“He said, ‘ואם ככה את עושה לי (Ve-im kakhah at osah li), *If so, I am made to be You* (Numbers 11:15)—for I am considered a female on account of Her food. I descend from heaven to earth. *At osah li, I am made to be You*—descending to the place of Female, impairing my place and my rung. If so, *kill me, please, instantly, if I have found favor in Your eyes, so that I won’t have to see my wretchedness* (ibid.)’—my wretchedness, surely, grasping the lower rung.¹⁷⁵

“Then, YHVH said to Moses, ‘Gather for Me seventy men...’ (Numbers 11:16)—saying to him, ‘Here, they will provide [the people] with other food, so that you won’t be defective on your rung.’ Thus, *I will withdraw some of the spirit that is upon you and place it upon them* (ibid., 17). Why? Since all of them were linked to the moon, the sun had to illumine Her, so *I will place it upon them*—to be illumined by the sun. Thereby, this food did not come through Moses, so that he would not be defective.¹⁷⁶

“Happy is the share of Moses, whom the blessed Holy One wished to honor! Of him is written *Your father and your mother will rejoice; she who bore you will be glad* (Proverbs 23:25). *Your father will rejoice*—the blessed Holy One. *And your mother*—Assembly of Israel. *She who bore you will be glad*—his mother below. For the blessed Holy One loved Moses more than all prophets of the world, with no intermediary at all, as is written: *Mouth to mouth I speak with him* (Numbers 12:8), as has been established in various places.¹⁷⁷

*“Moses cried out to YHVH, saying, ‘אל נא רפא נא לה (El na refa na lah), God, please, heal her, please’ (Numbers 12:13). This has already been established, and it is the mystery of the Holy Name of eleven letters. Moses did not want to pray longer, because concerning his own he did not wish to trouble the King. [156b] All the more so, then, did the blessed Holy One insist upon honoring Moses; and everywhere the blessed Holy One seeks the honor of the righteous more than His own. In the time to come, the blessed Holy One intends to demand requital for the humiliation of Israel from the other nations, and to delight [Israel] with the joy of Zion, as is said: *They will come and shout for joy on the heights of Zion, and they will flow to the bounty of YHVH...* (Jeremiah 31:12). Then, *to Zion will come a redeemer, to those in Jacob who turn back from sin —declares YHVH (Isaiah 59:20).*”[178](#)*

REFERENCE MATTER

Abbreviations

<i>ABD</i>	David Noel Freedman, ed., <i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>
add.	addendum, addenda
Add.	Additional
<i>Addir ba-Marom</i>	Moses Ḥayyim Luzzatto, <i>Addir ba-Marom</i>
<i>Arukh</i>	Nathan ben Yeḥiel of Rome, <i>Sefer he-Arukh</i>
<i>Arukh ha-Shalem</i>	Nathan ben Yeḥiel of Rome, <i>Arukh ha-Shalem</i>
<i>Ateret Tsevi</i>	Zevi Hirsch Eichenstein, <i>Ateret Tsevi</i>
<i>Battei Midrashot</i>	Shlomo Aharon Wertheimer, ed., <i>Battei Midrashot</i>
B.C.E.	before the Common Era
<i>Beit ha-Midrash</i>	Adolph Jellinek, ed., <i>Beit ha-Midrash</i>
<i>Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot</i>	Boaz Huss, ed. <i>Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot she-be-Sefer ha-Zohar</i>
<i>Bei'urei ha-Gera</i>	Elijah ben Solomon of Vilna, "Leqet Bei'urei ha-Gera"
BT	Babylonian Talmud
C7	MS Add. 643, University Library, Cambridge
C9	MS Add. 1023, University Library, Cambridge
C.E.	Common Era
Cremona	Cremona edition of the <i>Zohar</i>

<i>Derekh Emet</i>	<i>Derekh Emet</i> , in <i>Sefer ha-Zohar</i> , ed. Reuven Margalioṭ
<i>Derekh Emet</i> (ed. Ḥamiz)	Joseph Ḥamiz, ed., <i>Derekh Emet</i>
diss.	dissertation
ed.	editor (plural, eds.); edition; edited by
Edri	Yehuda Edri, trans., <i>Sefer ha-Zohar</i>
<i>Emet le-Ya'aqov</i>	Jacob Maragi, <i>Emet le-Ya'aqov</i>
ES3	MS G-I-15, Real Biblioteca de San Lorenzo de El Escorial, San Lorenzo de El Escorial, Spain
esp.	especially
fasc.	fascicle
F11	MS Plut. II 18, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence
F12	MS Plut. II 38, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence
F13	MS Plut. II 48, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence
frag.	fragmentary
Galante	Abraham Galante, in <i>Or ha-Ḥammah</i> , ed. Abraham Azulai
<i>Hadrat Melekh</i>	Shalom Buzaglo, <i>Hadrat Melekh</i>
<i>Haggahot Maharḥu</i>	Ḥayyim Vital, <i>Haggahot Maharḥu</i>
<i>Hash</i>	<i>Hashmatot</i>
<i>Heikh</i>	<i>Heikhalot</i>
intro	introduction
<i>IR</i>	<i>Idra Rabba</i>
<i>IZ</i>	<i>Idra Zuta</i>

JT	Jerusalem Talmud
l.	line
L3	MS Add. 26929, British Library, London
M	Mishnah
M8	MS Hebr. 218, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich
<i>Ma'arikh</i>	Menahem ben Judah de Lonzano, <i>Sefer ha-Ma'arikh</i>
Mantua	Mantua edition of the <i>Zohar</i>
<i>Mat</i>	<i>Matnitin</i>
<i>Matoq mi-Devash</i>	Daniel Frisch, <i>Peirush Matoq mi-Devash</i>
<i>MhN</i>	<i>Midrash ha-Ne'lam</i>
<i>Miqdash Melekh</i>	Shalom Buzaglo, <i>Miqdash Melekh</i>
MS	manuscript
n. (plural, nn.)	note(s)
N10	MS 1660, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York
N49	MS 2203, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York
n.d.	no date
<i>Nefesh David</i>	David Luria, <i>Nefesh David</i>
<i>Nitsotsei Orot</i>	Ḥayyim Joseph David Azulai, <i>Nitsotsei Orot</i>
<i>Nitsotsei Zohar</i>	Reuven Margaliot, <i>Nitsotsei Zohar</i>
n.p.	no publisher
<i>Or Yaqar</i>	Moses Cordovero, <i>Or Yaqar</i>
P2	MS héb. 779, Bibliothèque nationale, Paris

P5	MS héb. 782, Bibliothèque nationale, Paris
P17	MS héb. 839, Bibliothèque nationale, Paris
par.	paragraph
<i>Pereq Shirah</i>	Malachi Beit-Arié, ed., <i>Pereq Shirah</i>
<i>Piq</i>	<i>Piqqudin</i>
pl.	plural
Pr13	MS 351, Biblioteca Palatina, Parma
<i>QhM</i>	<i>Qav ha-Middah</i>
<i>Qol be-Ramah</i>	Jacob ben Ḥayyim Zemaḥ, <i>Qol be-Ramah</i>
<i>RM</i>	<i>Ra'aya Meheimna</i>
<i>RR</i>	<i>Raza de-Razin</i>
<i>Ruah David</i>	David ben Moses Medina, <i>Ruah David ve-Nishmat David</i>
Scholem	Gershom Scholem, <i>Sefer ha-Zohar shel Gershom Scholem</i>
<i>SdTs</i>	<i>Sifra di-Tsni'uta</i>
<i>Sha'ar Ma'amrei Rashbi</i>	Ḥayyim Vital, <i>Sha'ar Ma'amrei Rashbi</i>
<i>Sha'arei ha-Idra</i>	Yosef Lieberman, <i>Sha'arei ha-Idra</i>
<i>ShS</i>	<i>Shir ha-Shirim</i>
<i>SO</i>	<i>Sitrei Otiyyot</i>
Soncino	Harry Sperling et al., trans., <i>The Zohar</i> (Soncino Press)
<i>ST</i>	<i>Sitrei Torah</i>
<i>Sullam</i>	Yehudah Ashlag, <i>Sefer ha-Zohar ... im ... ha-Sullam</i>
T1	MS Friedberg 5-015, University of Toronto Library

<i>Tiq</i>	<i>Tiqqunim</i> (in <i>Zohar Ḥadash</i>)
<i>Tos</i>	<i>Tosefta</i>
trans.	translator(s); translated by
<i>TZ</i>	<i>Tiqqunei ha-Zohar</i>
V1	MS ebr. 186, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V3	MS ebr. 199, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V5	MS ebr. 206, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V6	MS ebr. 207, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V7	MS ebr. 208, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V17	MS Neofiti 24, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V18	MS Neofiti 25, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V19	MS Neofiti 43, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V22	MS ebr. 186, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
Vital	Ḥayyim Vital, in <i>Or ha-Ḥammah</i> , ed. Abraham Azulai
<i>Yafah</i>	Shelomoh ben Yehudah ha-Kohen, <i>Yafah</i>
<i>Sha'ah</i>	<i>Sha'ah</i>
<i>Yahel Or</i>	Elijah ben Solomon of Vilna, <i>Yahel Or</i>
<i>Yayin ha-Reqah</i>	Yehudah Petaya, <i>Yayin ha-Reqah</i>
Zacuto	Moses Zacuto, in <i>Miqdash Melekh</i>
<i>ZḤ</i>	<i>Zohar Ḥadash</i>
<i>Zohorei Ya'bets</i>	Jacob Emden, <i>Zohorei Ya'bets</i>

Transliteration of Hebrew and Aramaic

א	<i>alef</i>	' <u>1</u>	ל	<i>lamed</i>	<i>l</i>
ב	<i>bet</i>	<i>b</i>	מ	<i>mem</i>	<i>m</i>
בּ	<i>vet</i>	<i>v</i>	נ	<i>nun</i>	<i>n</i>
ג	<i>gimel</i>	<i>g</i>	ס	<i>samekh</i>	<i>s</i>
ד	<i>dalet</i>	<i>d</i>	ע	<i>ayin</i>	' <u>2</u>
ה	<i>he</i>	<i>h</i>	פ	<i>pe</i>	<i>p</i>
ו	<i>vav</i>	<i>v</i>	פּ	<i>phe</i>	<i>f</i> <u>3</u>
ז	<i>zayin</i>	<i>z</i>	צ	<i>tsadi</i>	<i>ts</i>
ח	<i>het</i>	<i>h</i>	ק	<i>qof</i>	<i>q</i>
ט	<i>tet</i>	<i>t</i>	ר	<i>resh</i>	<i>r</i>
י	<i>yod</i>	<i>y, i</i>	שׁ	<i>shin</i>	<i>sh</i>
כ	<i>kaf</i>	<i>k</i>	שׂ	<i>sin</i>	<i>s</i>
כּ	<i>khaf</i>	<i>kh</i>	ת	<i>tav</i>	<i>t</i>

The English equivalent letter is doubled when a strong *dagesh* in Hebrew or Aramaic characterizes a verbal conjugation or indicates an assimilated letter, e.g., *dibber*, *yitten*. However, if the Hebrew letter (in which a *dagesh* appears) is represented by two English letters (such as *sh* or *ts*), then that English equivalent is not doubled, e.g., *va-yishaqehu*, *matsot*. Further, a single English equivalent letter is not doubled when preceded by a hyphenated prefix, e.g., *ha-sefer*, *la-melekh*, *mi-tokh*.

Proper names that appear in roman type do not follow the above schema. Biblical names are rendered according to the *JPS Hebrew-English Tanakh*. Rabbinic names are rendered according to common convention, e.g., Akiva,

Resh Lakish. Medieval names are Anglicized, e.g., Moses de León, Joseph Gikatilla. Authors' names in the Bibliography follow library listings or the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*.

1. *Alef* is not transliterated at the beginning or end of a word nor after a hyphenated prefix. Elsewhere it is transliterated only when accompanied by a vowel, e.g., *Shemu'el*.

2. *Ayin* is not transliterated at the beginning of a word, nor after a hyphenated prefix, nor, unless accompanied by a vowel, at the end of a word. Thus, *Shema*, but *Bava Metsi'a*.

3. Occasionally transliterated as *ph* to compare or contrast it to the letter *pe*.

[Glossary](#)

aggadah, aggadta “Tale”; the nonlegal contents of the Talmud and Midrash, often based on biblical exegesis. It includes ethical and moral teaching, theological speculation, legends, and folklore.

alef The first letter of the Hebrew alphabet; the beginning of divine and human speech.

Amidah “Standing”; the central prayer, recited three times daily.

Arikh Anpin “Slow to anger, long-suffering, forbearing, patient”; the highest sefirotic realm, characterized by pure love and compassion (corresponding to *Keter*). See above, [pp. 323–24, n. 14](#); [p. 330, n. 27](#).

Assembly of Israel Hebrew, כנסת ישראל (*Keneset Yisra’el*); in rabbinic literature, a phrase normally denoting the people of Israel. In the *Zohar*, the phrase can refer to the earthly community of Israel but also (often primarily) to *Shekhinah*, the divine feminine counterpart of the people. See above, [p. 11, n. 32](#).

Ayin “Nothingness”; the creative “no-thingness” of God, out of which all being emanates.

Binah “Understanding”; the third *sefirah*; the Divine Mother who gives birth to the seven lower *sefirot*.

blessed Holy One Common rabbinic name for God. In the *Zohar* it often designates *Tif’eret*.

Companions The close circle of disciples around Rabbi Shim’on son of Yoḥai.

Da’at “Knowledge”; the hidden *sefirah* mediating between *Hokhmah* and *Binah*.

Din “Judgment”; the fifth *sefirah*; the left arm of the divine body, balancing *Hesed*. The roots of evil lie here; also called *Gevurah*.

Dwelling Hebrew, משכן (*mishkan*). The portable sanctuary (or Tabernacle), which according to Exodus was constructed by Moses and the Israelites, and then carried from encampment to encampment as the people journeyed through the Sinai Desert. In the *Zohar*, often a symbol of *Shekhinah*.

Eikhah The book of Lamentations.

Ein Sof “There is no end”; that which is boundless; the Infinite. The ultimate reality of God beyond all specific qualities of the *sefirot*; the God beyond God.

Elohim “God, gods”; a biblical name for God. In the *Zohar* it has various sefirotic associations: *Binah*, *Gevurah*, *Shekhinah*.

Gedullah “Greatness”; the fourth *sefirah*; the outpouring of God’s great goodness; also called *Hesed*.

Geonic Pertaining to the period or literature of the Geonim (the heads of central governing councils and academies based in the Land of Israel and in Babylonia), which extended from approximately 600 to 1040 C.E.

Gevurah “Power”; the fifth *sefirah*; also called *Din*.

gimatriyya Derived from the Greek *geometria* (“measuring the earth”); a method of interpretation based on the numerical value of Hebrew letters.

halakhah “Practice, law,” from the root הלך (*hlkh*), “to walk”: the way that one should follow.

Hallel “Praise”; selection comprising Psalms 113–18, recited in the Temple and adopted into synagogue liturgy after the morning service on *Pesah*, *Shavu’ot*, *Sukkot*, and *Hanukkah*. During the intermediate and last days of *Pesah*, and on *Rosh Hodesh* (the New Moon), an abbreviated *Hallel* is recited (omitting the first parts of Psalms 115 and 116).

Hashmatot “Omissions”; additions printed at the end of the first of the three standard Aramaic volumes of the *Zohar*, drawn from the Cremona edition and *Zohar Hadash*.

ḥasid, pl. **ḥasidim** “Pious one,” devotee, saint, lover of God.

Havdalah “Differentiation”; prayer recited at the conclusion of Sabbath and festivals to indicate the distinction between the sacred day that has ended and the weekday that is beginning.

Heikhalot “Palaces”; descriptions of the heavenly and demonic palaces in *Zohar* 1:38a-45b; 2:244b-268b.

Ḥesed “Loving-kindness, love, grace”; the fourth *sefirah*; the right arm of the divine body, balancing *Din*; also called *Gedullah*.

Hod “Splendor”; the eighth *sefirah*; the left leg of the divine body; source of prophecy along with *Netsaḥ*.

Ḥokhmah “Wisdom”; the second *sefirah*; the primordial point of emanation.

Holy Ancient One The most ancient manifestation of *Ein Sof* through *Keter*, Its crown.

Hosha’na Rabbah “The Great *Hosha’na*”; the seventh day of Sukkot.

idra “Threshing place,” assembly. See above, [pp. 319-20, n. 4](#).

Idra Rabba “The Great Assembly”; a description of the gathering of Rabbi Shim’on and the Companions at the threshing house, where profound mysteries of divine being are expounded. *Zohar* 3:127b-145a. See above, [pp. 318-459](#).

Idra Zuta “The Small Assembly”; a description of the last gathering of Rabbi Shim’on and the Companions, the master’s final teachings, and his ecstatic death. *Zohar* 3:287b-296b.

Israel Often, the people of Israel.

Jubilee The year of release, occurring every fifty years at the end of the cycle of seven sabbatical years.

According to Leviticus 25, in the Jubilee all land reverts to its original owners and all indentured Israelite slaves are freed. In Kabbalah, often a symbol of *Binah*.

Kabbalah Hebrew, קבלה (*qabbalah*), “receiving, that which is received, tradition”; originally referring to tradition in general (or to post-Mosaic Scripture), but from the thirteenth century onward, specifically to the esoteric teachings of Judaism.

kavvanah “Intention, concentration”; spiritual concentration and devotion while praying or performing any *mitsvah*.

Keter “Crown”; the first *sefirah*; coeternal with *Ein Sof*; also called *Ratson* (“Will”) and *Ayin* (“Nothingness”).

Lilith A demoness who harms babies and seduces men; married to Samael.

lulav “Sprout”; rabbinic term for the palm branch used together with three other plant species on the festival of *Sukkot*.

Malkhut “Kingdom”; the tenth *sefirah*, ruling the lower worlds; also called *Shekhinah*.

Matnitin “Our Mishnah”; short pieces scattered throughout the *Zohar*, most of which appear as utterances of a heavenly voice urging the Companions to arouse themselves and open their hearts to the mysteries. Some of them contain principles of kabbalistic teaching in a condensed form, constituting a kind of mystical Mishnah, expounded in the main section of the *Zohar*.

Matronita Aramaized form of Latin *matrona*, “matron, married woman, noble lady,” often applied in the *Zohar* to *Shekhinah*, the wife of *Tif’eret*.

Metatron One of the supreme powers in the divine realm, often depicted as the chief angel. He is sometimes identified as *sar ha-panim* (Prince of the Countenance), standing face-to-face with God, or as *sar ha-olam* (Prince of the World).

midrash, pl. **midrashim** Homiletical or legal interpretation of the Bible.

Midrash ha-Ne'lam "The Concealed Midrash, the Esoteric Midrash"; an early stratum of the *Zohar*. Its language is a mixture of Hebrew and Aramaic. *Midrash ha-Ne'lam* on the Torah pertains to several portions of Genesis, the beginning of Exodus, and several other portions; it is printed partly alongside the main text of the *Zohar* and partly in *Zohar Hadash*. *Midrash ha-Ne'lam* on Song of Songs, Ruth, and Lamentations is printed in *Zohar Hadash*. The subject matter of *Midrash ha-Ne'lam* is mostly Creation, the soul, and the world to come; its style is often allegorical.

minḥah "Offering"; second of the three daily prayer services, recited in the afternoon.

minyan "Counting; quorum (of ten)"; the required number of adult Jewish males for certain communal prayers and liturgical purposes.

miqveh "Collection (of water)"; a pool of water for the purpose of immersion for ritual purification.

Mishnah Collection of oral teachings compiled near the beginning of the third century by Rabbi Yehudah ha-Nasi; the earliest codification of Jewish Oral Law; the core of the Talmud.

mitsvah, pl. **mitsvot** "Commandment"; one of the 613 commandments of the Torah or one of various rabbinic precepts; religious duty; by extension, good deed.

nefesh "Soul," life force; the basic level of the soul, animating the human being. (The other two levels are *ruah* and *neshamah*.)

neshamah "Breath, soul," soul-breath; the highest level of the soul. (The other two levels are *nefesh* and *ruah*.)

Netsah "Endurance"; the seventh *sefirah*; the right leg of the divine body; source of prophecy along with *Hod*.

Omer “Sheaf” of newly harvested barley; the seven-week period of ceremonially counting days during the harvest season between the second day of *Pesah* and the eve of *Shavu’ot*.

Oral Torah The rabbinic interpretation of the Written Torah (the Five Books of Moses); in Kabbalah, a symbol of *Shekhinah*.

Other Side Aramaic, אַחְרָא אַחְרָא (*Sitra Aħra*); the demonic realm, or the shadow of the divine, led by Samael and Lilith.

parashah “Portion”; portion of the Torah read on a particular Sabbath, named after its opening word (or phrase) or a key word (or phrase) in the opening sentences.

Pesah “Passover”; first of the three annual pilgrimage festivals, celebrated in the middle of the month of Nisan, commemorating the Exodus from Egypt.

Peshitta “Simple (translation)”; the Syriac translation of the Bible, probably completed by the third century C.E..

Piqqudin “Commandments”; kabbalistic interpretations of the commandments scattered throughout the *Zohar* (to be distinguished from *Ra’aya Meheimna*).

Qav ha-Middah “The Standard of Measure”; a detailed description of the process of divine emanation, delivered by Rabbi Shim’on. *Zohar Ḥadash* 56d–58d.

Ra’aya Meheimna “The Faithful Shepherd”; a separate composition on the kabbalistic meaning of the commandments, printed piecemeal in the *Zohar*. Here Moses, the Faithful Shepherd, appears to Rabbi Shim’on and the Companions, revealing secrets.

Raḥamim “Compassion”; the sixth *sefirah*, harmonizing the polar opposites *Ḥesed* and *Din*; also called *Tif’eret*.

Raza de-Razin “The Secret of Secrets”; a section of the *Zohar* dealing with physiognomy, metoposcopy, and chiromancy (*Zohar* 2:70a–75a [printed alongside the main

text], *Zohar Hadash* 35b-37c). A second version is incorporated into the main body of the *Zohar* (2:70a-78a).

Rosh Hashanah The Jewish New Year, celebrated on the first two days of the Hebrew month Tishrei.

ruah “Spirit, wind, breath”; the second level of soul. (The other two levels are *nefesh* and *neshamah*.)

Rut The book of Ruth.

Samael Prince of demons, married to Lilith; identical with Satan.

Sava “The Elder; old man.”

Sava de-Mishpatim “Old Man of [Torah portion] *Mishpatim*”; an account of the Companions’ encounter with a donkey-driver who turns out to be a master of wisdom. *Zohar* 2:94b-114a.

Sefer ha-Zohar “The Book of Radiance.”

sefirah, pl. **sefirot** Literally, “counting,” number, numerical entity; in Kabbalah, one of the ten aspects of divine personality, nine of which emanate from *Ein Sof* and the first *sefirah*, *Keter*. See the diagram on [page ix](#).

Shaddai An obscure divine name, which may originally have meant “[God of] the mountain.” In Kabbalah it often denotes *Shekhinah*.

Shavu’ot “Weeks”; second of the three annual pilgrimage festivals, celebrated seven weeks after the beginning of Passover.

Shekhinah “Presence,” divine immanence; the tenth and last *sefirah*; female partner of *Tif’eret*; also called *Malkhut*.

Shema Literally, “hear”; central prayer recited morning and evening, comprising Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 11:13-21; and Numbers 15:37-41. The opening verse is: *Hear O Israel! YHVH our God, YHVH is one!*

Shir ha-Shirim The book of Song of Songs.

Sifra di-Tsni’uta “The Book of Concealment”; an anonymous, highly condensed commentary on the beginning of the Torah, consisting of five short chapters

and composed in obscure sentences. Its subject is the mysterious dynamics of divine being. *Zohar* 2:176b-179a.

Sitra Ahra “The other side”; the demonic realm, or the shadow of the divine, led by Samael and Lilith.

Sitrei Otiyyot “Secrets of the Letters”; a discourse by Rabbi Shim’on focusing on the letters of the divine name *YHVH* and how they symbolize the process of emanation. *Zohar Hadash* 1b-7b.

Sitrei Torah “Secrets of Torah”; interpretations of certain verses of Genesis, printed in separate columns parallel to the main body of the *Zohar* and in *Zohar Hadash*. It includes allegorical explanations of the mysteries of the soul.

Sukkot “Booths”; festival of Booths, last of the three annual pilgrimage festivals, celebrated in the middle of the month of Tishrei at the conclusion of the summer harvest.

tallit A prayer shawl with a tzitzit on each corner.

Talmud Each of the two compilations of Jewish law, legend, ethics, and theology comprising the Mishnah and its vast commentary (the Gemara) by rabbis of the third through fifth centuries. The Jerusalem Talmud was compiled ca. 400 C.E.; the Babylonian Talmud, about one hundred years later.

tanna, pl. **tanna'im** “One who repeats, teacher”; an authority cited in the Mishnah or belonging to the Mishnaic period (first two centuries of the Common Era); an Amoraic scholar whose task was to memorize and recite tannaitic texts.

Targum “Translation”; an Aramaic translation of the Torah or the Bible.

tav The last letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

tefillin “Phylacteries”; two black leather boxes containing passages from the Torah (Exodus 13:1-10, 11-16; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 11:13-21) written on parchment. They are bound by black leather straps on the left arm and on the head, and are prescribed for men to wear during

weekday morning prayer. Each of the biblical passages indicates that the Children of Israel should place a sign upon their hand and a frontlet (or reminder) between their eyes.

teshuvah “Return, turning back to God, repentance.”

Tif’eret “Beauty, glory”; the sixth *sefirah*, harmonizing the polar opposites *Hesed* and *Din*; male partner of *Shekhinah*; the torso of the divine body; also called *Rahamim*.

Tiqqunei ha-Zohar “Embellishments on the *Zohar*”; an independent book whose setting is similar to *Ra’aya Meheimna*. It comprises a commentary on the beginning of Genesis, each *tiqqun* opening with a new interpretation of the word בראשית (*be-reshit*), “in the beginning.”

Tiqqunim “Embellishments”; additional material in the genre of *Tiqqunei ha-Zohar*, printed in *Zohar Hadash* 93c-122b.

Torah “Instruction, teaching”; the Five Books of Moses (Genesis through Deuteronomy); by extension, the entire corpus of Jewish religious literature.

Tosafot “Additions”; a collection of comments on the Talmud written between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries in France and Germany, printed in standard editions of the Talmud. Also, a set of Zoharic additions printed at the end of the second and third of the three standard Aramaic volumes of the *Zohar*, drawn from the Cremona edition and from *Zohar Hadash*.

Tosefta “Addenda”; in rabbinic literature, a collection of precepts parallel to and contemporary with the Mishnah. In the *Zohar*, a collection similar to *Matnitin*.

Tsaddiq “Righteous One”; a name for *Yesod*, the ninth *sefirah*.

tzitzit “Tassel,” one of four affixed to the hem of a garment, and later of a prayer shawl. See Numbers 15:37-41.

world that is coming Hebrew, העולם הבא (*ha-olam ha-ba*); Aramaic, עלמא דאתי (*alma de-atei*); often understood as referring to the hereafter and usually translated as “the world to come.” From another perspective, however, “the world that is coming” already exists—occupying another, timeless dimension. In Kabbalah this phrase often refers to *Binah*, the continuous source of emanation, who “is constantly coming, never ceasing.”

Written Torah The Five Books of Moses (Genesis through Deuteronomy); in Kabbalah, a symbol of *Tif’eret*.

Yah A contracted biblical form of the divine name *YHVH*.

Yesod “Foundation”; the ninth *sefirah*, who channels the flow of emanation to *Shekhinah*; the phallus of the divine body; also called *Tsaddiq*.

YHVH The ineffable name of God, apparently deriving from the root הוה (*hvh*), “to be.” In the *Zohar* it often symbolizes *Tif’eret*.

Yom Kippur The Day of Atonement, observed on the tenth of the Hebrew month Tishrei.

Ze’eir Anpin “Short-tempered, irascible, impatient”; the configuration of *sefirot* from *Hokhmah* through *Yesod*, characterized by a tension between opposites: right versus left, *Hesed* versus *Din*. See above, [pp. 323-24](#), [n. 14](#); [p. 330](#), [n. 27](#).

zohar “Radiance, splendor.”

Zohar Ḥadash “New Zohar”; a collection of Zoharic texts not included in the early editions of the *Zohar*. It was first printed in Salonika in 1597. The title is misleading since *Zohar Ḥadash* contains much of *Midrash ha-Ne’lam*, an early stratum of the *Zohar*.

Bibliography

This bibliography includes works cited and utilized by the translator for this volume, except for standard rabbinic texts and most reference works. A more complete bibliography appears in Volume 1. Readers seeking further resources on the *Zohar* can consult *The Library of Gershom Scholem on Jewish Mysticism: Catalogue*, edited by Joseph Dan, Esther Liebes, and Shmuel Reem; and Don Karr, "Notes on the *Zohar* in English."

1. MANUSCRIPTS OF THE *ZOHAR*¹

Berlin, Staatsbibliothek (Preussischer Kulturbesitz), fol. 4202

Cambridge, University Library, Heb. Add. 643, 1023.

Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. II 18, 38, 48

London, British Library, Add. 26929; Gaster 747.

Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Hebr. 218, 219.

New York, Jewish Theological Seminary, 1614, 1660, 2064, 2172, 2203.

Oxford, Merton College 77 h 22.

Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Hébr. 779, 782, 839.

Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, 351.

Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense, 2971.

San Lorenzo de El Escorial, Real Biblioteca de San Lorenzo de El Escorial, G-I-15.

Toronto, University of Toronto Library, Friedberg Collection, 5-015.

Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica, Ebr. 68, 186, 199, 200, 206, 207, 208; Neofiti 23, 24, 25, 43.

2. EDITIONS OF THE ZOHAR

Sefer ha-Zohar. Cremona: Vincenzo Conti, 1558.

Sefer ha-Zohar. 3 vols. Mantua: Meir ben Efraim and Jacob ben Naftali, 1558–60.

Sefer ha-Zohar. 3 vols. Lublin: Zevi Jaffe, 1623.

Sefer ha-Zohar. 3 vols. Sulzbach: Moses Bloch, 1684.

Sefer ha-Zohar. 3 vols. Amsterdam: Solomon Proops, 1715.

Sefer ha-Zohar. 3 vols. Constantinople: Jonah ben Jacob, 1736.

Sefer ha-Zohar. 3 vols. Vilna: Romm, 1882.

Sefer ha-Zohar. Edited by Reuven Margalioṭ. 4th ed. 3 vols. Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1964.

Tiqqunei ha-Zohar. Edited by Reuven Margalioṭ. Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1948. Reprint, 1978.

Zohar Ḥadash. Edited by Reuven Margalioṭ. Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1953. Reprint, 1978.

3. TRANSLATIONS OF THE ZOHAR

A. Hebrew

Ashlag, Yehudah, trans. and ed., completed by Yehudah Zevi Brandwein. *Sefer ha-Zohar ... im ... ha-Sullam*. 22 vols. Jerusalem: Ḥevrah Lehotsa'at Hazohar, 1945–58.

Bar-Lev, Yechiel, trans. and ed. *Sefer ha-Zohar ... im Bei'ur Yedid Nefesh*. 14 vols. Petah Tikvah: n.p., 1992–97.

Edri, Yehudah, trans. and ed. *Sefer ha-Zohar ... meturgam bi-lshon ha-qodesh*. 10 vols. Jerusalem: Yerid Hasefarim, 1998.

Frisch, Daniel, trans. and ed. *Sefer ha-Zohar ... Peirush Matoq mi-Devash*. 15 vols. Jerusalem: Mekhon Da'at Yosef, 1993–99.

Hellner-Eshed, Melila, and Avraham Leader. *Idra Rabba* (tentative title). Tel Aviv: Yedi'ot Sefarim, forthcoming.

Lachower, Fischel, and Isaiah Tishby, trans. and eds. *Mishnat ha-Zohar*. Vol. 1. 3d ed. Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1971. (An anthology.)

Tishby, Isaiah, trans. and ed. *Mishnat ha-Zohar*. Vol. 2. Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1961. (An anthology.)

B. English

Berg, Michael, ed. *The Zohar by Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai with the Sulam commentary of Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag*. 23 vols. Tel Aviv: Yeshivat Kol Yehudah, 1999–2003. (The English translation is based on the Hebrew translation by Yehudah Ashlag.)

Giller, Pinchas. *Reading the Zohar: The Sacred Text of the Kabbalah*, 159–73. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Lachower, Fischel, and Isaiah Tishby, Hebrew trans. and eds. *The Wisdom of the Zohar: An Anthology of Texts*. Translated by David Goldstein. Vols. 1 and 2. London: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1989.

Mathers, Samuel Liddell MacGregor. *Kabbala Denudata: The Kabbalah Unveiled*. London: G. Redway, 1887. Translated from *Kabbala Denudata*, by Christian Knorr von Rosenroth. (Translation of *Sifra di-Tsni'uta*, *Idra Rabba*, and *Idra Zuta*.)

Matt, Daniel Chanan, trans. and ed. *Zohar: The Book of Enlightenment*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1983. (An anthology.)

_____, trans. and ed. *Zohar: Annotated and Explained*. Woodstock, Vt.: Skylight Paths, 2002. (An anthology.)

Rosenberg, Roy A. *The Anatomy of God: The Book of Concealment, The Greater Holy Assembly and The Lesser Holy Assembly of the Zohar, with The Assembly of the Tabernacle*. New York: Ktav, 1973.

Sassoon, George, trans., and Rodney Dale, ed. *The Kabbalah Decoded: A new translation of the Ancient of*

Days' texts of the Zohar. London: Duckworth, 1978. (Translation of *Idra Rabba*, *Idra Zuta*, *Sifra di-Tsni'uta*, and *Zohar* 2:122b-123b.)

Scholem, Gershom G., ed., with the special assistance of Sherry Abel. *Zohar: The Book of Splendor—Basic Readings from the Kabbalah.* New York: Schocken, 1949. Reprint, 1971. (An anthology.)

Sperling, Harry, Maurice Simon, and Paul P. Levertoff, trans. *The Zohar.* 5 vols. London: Soncino Press, 1931-34.

Tishby, Isaiah, Hebrew trans. and ed. *The Wisdom of the Zohar: An Anthology of Texts.* Translated by David Goldstein. Vol. 3. London: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1989.

Wald, Stephen G. *The Doctrine of the Divine Name: An Introduction to Classical Kabbalistic Theology.* Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988. (Annotated translation of *Sitrei Otiyyot.*)

Wineman, Aryeh, trans. and ed. *Mystic Tales from the Zohar.* Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1997.

C. French

Mopsik, Charles, trans. and ed. *Le Zohar.* 4 vols. Lagrasse: Verdier, 1981-96.

_____. *Le Zohar: Cantique des Cantiques.* Lagrasse: Verdier, 1999.

_____. *Le Zohar: Lamentations.* Lagrasse: Verdier, 2000.

_____. *Le Zohar: Le Livre de Ruth.* Lagrasse: Verdier, 1987.

D. Latin

Knorr von Rosenroth, Christian. *Kabbala Denudata.* 4 vols. Sulzbach, 1677-84; Frankfurt am Main, 1684. (Translation of *Sifra di-Tsni'uta*, *Idra Rabba*, and *Idra Zuta.*)

4. COMMENTARIES ON THE ZOHAR

- Ashlag, Yehudah, trans. and ed., completed by Yehudah Zevi Brandwein. *Sefer ha-Zohar ... im ... ha-Sullam*. 22 vols. Jerusalem: Hevrah Lehotsa'at Hazohar, 1945-58.
- Azulai, Abraham, ed. *Or ha-Hammah*. 4 vols. Peremyshlyany: Zupnik, Knoller, and Wolf, 1896-98. Reprint, 4 vols. in 3, Bene-Berak: Yahadut, 1973.
- Azulai, Hayyim Joseph David. "Nitsotsei Orot." In *Sefer ha-Zohar*, edited by Reuven Margalioṭ. 4th ed. 3 vols. Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1964.
- Bar-Lev, Yechiel, trans. and ed. *Sefer ha-Zohar ... im Bei'ur Yedid Nefesh*. 14 vols. Petah Tikvah: n.p., 1992-97.
- Buzaglo, Shalom. *Hadrat Melekh*. Amsterdam: 1766. Reprint, Bene-Berak: Beit ha-Sofer, 1974.
- _____. *Miqdash Melekh ha-Shalem*. 5 vols. Jerusalem: Benei Yissakhar, 1995-2000.
- Cordovero, Moses. *Or Yaqar*. 21 vols. Jerusalem: Achuzat Israel, 1962-95.
- "Derekh Emet." In *Sefer ha-Zohar*, edited by Reuven Margalioṭ. 4th ed. 3 vols. Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1964.
- Eichenstein, Zevi Hirsch (of Zhidachov). *Ateret Tsevi*. 2 vols. Edited by Zevi Elimelekh Panet. Bene-Berak: Mekhon Benei Sheloshim, 2009-2012.
- Elijah ben Solomon of Vilna. "Leqet Bei'urei ha-Gera." In *Ha-Idrot im ha-Peirushim Derekh Emet ve-Nitsotsei Orot ve-im Leqet Bei'urei ha-Gera*. Jerusalem: Ha-Mesorah, 2009.
- _____. *Yahel Or*. Vilna: Romm, 1882. Reprint, Jerusalem: n.p., 1972.
- Emden, Jacob. *Zohorei Ya'bets*. Edited by Abraham Bick. Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1975.
- Frisch, Daniel, trans. and ed. *Sefer ha-Zohar ... Peirush Matoq mi-Devash*. 15 vols. Jerusalem: Mekhon Da'at Yosef, 1993-99.
- Galante, Abraham. *Zohorei Hammah*. 2 vols. Vol. 1, Munkacs: P. Bleier, 1881. Vol. 2, Peremyshlyany: Zupnik

- and Knoller, 1882. An abridgment by Abraham Azulai of Galante's unpublished *Yareah Yaqar*, incorporated into Azulai's *Or ha-Hammah*.
- Hellner-Eshed, Melila, and Avraham Leader. *Idra Rabba* (tentative title). Tel Aviv: Yedi'ot Sefarim, forthcoming.
- Horowitz, Zevi Hirsch. *Aspaqlaryah ha-Me'irah*. Fürth: Itzik ve-Yatmei Hayyim, 1776. Reprint, Jerusalem: Mekhon Sha'arei Ziv, 1983.
- Lavi, Shim'on. *Ketem Paz*. 2 vols. Leghorn: Eli'ezer Sedon, 1795. 1 vol. Djerba: Jacob Haddad, 1940. Reprint, 2 vols. Jerusalem: Ahavat Shalom, 1981. The first vol. of the Jerusalem edition is a reprint of the Djerba edition; the second vol. is a reprint of the second vol. of the Leghorn edition.
- Lieberman, Yosef. *Sha'arei ha-Idra*. In *Idra Rabba Qaddisha*, edited by Yosef Lieberman. Jerusalem: Yeshivat Sha'ar ha-Shamayim, 1976.
- Loanz, Elijah ben Moses. *Adderet Eliyyahu*. 2 vols. Jerusalem: Mekhon Sha'arei Ziv, 1998.
- Luria, David. "Nefesh David." Addendum to *Yahel Or*, by Elijah ben Solomon of Vilna. Vilna: Romm, 1882. Reprint, addendum to *Sefer Kitvei ha-Ga'on R. David Luria (Pirquei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer)*. Jerusalem: n.p., 1990.
- Luzzatto, Moses Hayyim. *Addir ba-Marom*. Jerusalem: Yosef Spiner, 1995.
- Maragi, Jacob. *Emet le-Ya'aqov*. Jerusalem: Mekhon Benei Yissachar, 2008.
- Margaliot, Reuven. "Nitsotsei Zohar." In *Sefer ha-Zohar*, edited by Reuven Margaliot. 4th ed. 3 vols. Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1964.
- Medina, David ben Moses. *Ruah David ve-Nishmat David*. Salonika, 1747. Reprint, Jerusalem (?), n.p., 1982.
- Petaya, Yehudah. *Yayin ha-Reqah*. Jerusalem: Mekhon Yehudah Petaya, 2002.
- Scholem, Gershom. *Sefer ha-Zohar shel Gershom Shalom [Gershom Scholem's Annotated Zohar]*. 6 vols. Jerusalem:

- Magnes Press, 1992.
- Shelomoh ben Yehudah ha-Kohen. *Yafah Sha'ah*. In *Idra Rabba Qaddisha*, edited by Yosef Lieberman. Jerusalem: Yeshivat Sha'ar ha-Shamayim, 1976.
- Vital, Hayyim. "Haggahot Maharḥu." In *Sefer ha-Zohar*, edited by Reuven Margaliot. 4th ed. 3 vols. Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1964.
- Zacuto, Moses ben Mordecai. *Peirush ha-Remez la-Zohar ha-Qadosh*. Moshav Bitḥah: Kol Bitḥah, 1998.
- Zemaḥ, Jacob ben Hayyim. *Qol be-Ramah*. Jerusalem: Mekhon Benei Yissachar, 2001.

5. LEXICONS OF THE ZOHAR

- Baer, Issachar. *Imrei Binah*. Prague: Moshe Katz, 1611.
- Huss, Boaz, ed. "Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot she-be-Sefer ha-Zohar." *Kabbalah* 1 (1996): 167-204.
- Isaiah ben Eli'ezer Hayyim. *Yesha Yah*. Venice: Giovanni Vendramin, 1637.
- Liebes, Yehuda. *Peraqim be-Millon Sefer ha-Zohar*. Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1982.
- Lonzano, Menahem ben Judah de. *Sefer ha-Ma'arikh*. Printed with *Sefer he-Arukh* by Nathan ben Yehiel of Rome, edited by Shemuel Schlesinger. Tel Aviv: Yetsu Sifrei Kodesh, n.d.
- Luria, David. "Va-Ye'esof David." Addendum to *Ma'amar Qadmut Sefer ha-Zohar* by David Luria, 73-82. Warsaw: Meir Yehiel Halter, 1887.
- Neuhausen, Simon A. *Nirdefei Zohar*. Baltimore: Neuhausen, 1923.

6. OTHER PRIMARY SOURCES

- Abraham ben Isaac of Narbonne. *Sefer ha-Eshkol*. Edited by Shalom Albeck and Hanokh Albeck. 2 vols. Jerusalem: Reuben Mass, 1935-38.

- Abraham ben Nathan ha-Yarhi. *Sefer ha-Manhig*. Edited by Yitzhak Raphael. 2 vols. Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1978.
- Abudarham, David ben Joseph. *Abudarham ha-Shalem*. Edited by Abraham J. Wertheimer. 2d ed. Jerusalem: Hatehiyah, 1963.
- Abulafia, Meir ben Todros ha-Levi. *Masoret Seyag la-Torah*. Florence: Isaac di Pas, 1750.
- Abulafia, Todros ben Joseph. *Otsar ha-Kavod ha-Shalem*. Warsaw, 1879. Reprint: Jerusalem: Makor, 1970.
- _____. *Sha'ar ha-Razim*. Edited by Michal Kushnir-Oron. Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1989.
- Aldabi, Meir ben Isaac. *Shevilei Emunah*. Warsaw: Nathanel Zisberg, 1874.
- Alfa Beita de-Ven Sira*. Edited by Moritz Steinschneider. Berlin: A. Friedlaender, 1858.
- Al-Nakawa, Israel ben Joseph. *Menorat ha-Ma'or*. Edited by Hyman G. Enelow. 4 vols. New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1929-32.
- Alter, Robert, trans. and ed. *The Book of Psalms: A Translation with Commentary*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2007.
- _____, trans. and ed. *The David Story: A Translation with Commentary of 1 and 2 Samuel*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1999.
- _____, trans. and ed. *The Five Books of Moses: A Translation with Commentary*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2004.
- Anav, Zedekiah ben Abraham. *Shibbolei ha-Leqet ha-Shalem*. Edited by Solomon Buber. Vilna: Romm, 1886.
- _____. *Shibbolei ha-Leqet ha-Shalem*. Edited by Samuel K. Mirsky. Jerusalem: Sura, 1966.
- Asher ben David. *R. Asher ben David: Kol Ketavav ve-Iyyunim be-Qabbalato*, edited by Daniel Abrams. Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 1996.
- _____. "Peirush Shelosh Esreh Middot." In *R. Asher ben David: Kol Ketavav ve-Iyyunim be-Qabbalato*, edited by

- Daniel Abrams, 51–82. Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 1996.
- _____. “Peirush Shem ha-Meforash.” In *R. Asher ben David: Kol Ketavav ve-Iyyunim be-Qabbalato*, edited by Daniel Abrams, 101–17. Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 1996.
- _____. “Sefer ha-Yihud.” In *R. Asher ben David: Kol Ketavav ve-Iyyunim be-Qabbalato*, edited by Daniel Abrams, 47–145. Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 1996.
- Augustine, Saint, Bishop of Hippo. *The City of God against the Pagans*. Edited and translated by R. W. Dyson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Azriel ben Menaḥem of Gerona. *Peirush ha-Aggadot le-Rabbi Azri’el*. Edited by Isaiah Tishby. 2d ed. Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1982.
- _____. [attributed to Naḥmanides]. “Peirush le-Sefer Yetsirah.” In *Sefer Yetsirah*. Jerusalem: Lewin-Epstein, 1965.
- Azulai, Ḥayyim Joseph David. *Birkei Yosef*. Vienna: Adelbert della Torre, 1859.
- _____. *Midbar Qedemot*. Warsaw: Joseph Levensohn, 1890.
- Babad, Joseph ben Moses. *Minḥat Ḥinnukh*. 2 vols. New York: Abraham Isaac Friedman, 1966.
- Baḥya ben Asher. *Bei’ur al ha-Torah*. Edited by Chaim D. Chavel. 3 vols. Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1971–72.
- _____. “Kad ha-Qemaḥ.” In *Kitvei Rabbeinu Baḥya*, edited by Chaim D. Chavel, 9–451. Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1970.
- Bamberger, Bernard J. *Fallen Angels*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1952.
- Beit-Arié, Malachi, ed. “Pereq Shirah: Mevo’ot u-Mahadurah Biqqortit.” 2 vols. Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, 1966.
- Bloch, Ariel, and Chana Bloch, trans. and ed. *The Song of Songs: A New Translation with an Introduction and Commentary*. New York: Random House, 1995.
- La Chanson de Roland: Student Edition, Oxford Text and English Translation*. Translated and edited by Gerard J.

- Brault. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2013.
- Charlesworth, James H., ed. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. 2 vols. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983-85.
- Clark, E. G. *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan of the Pentateuch: Text and Concordance*. Hoboken, N.J.: Ktav, 1984.
- Cordovero, Moses. *Or Ne'erav*. Jerusalem: n.p., 1999.
- _____. *Pardes Rimmonim*. Munkacs: Kahana and Fried, 1906. Reprint, Jerusalem: Mordechai Etyah, 1962.
- David ben Abraham Maimuni. *Midrash David*. Translated and edited by Ben-Zion Krynfiess. Jerusalem: n.p., 1944.
- David ben Judah he-Ḥasid. *The Book of Mirrors: Sefer Mar'ot ha-Zove'ot*. Edited by Daniel Chanan Matt. Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1982.
- _____. *Or Zaru'a*. Edited by Bentsion Ben Levi Hacoheh. Jerusalem: Urim Publications, 2009.
- Delmedigo, Joseph Solomon. *Matsref la-Ḥokhmah*. Odessa: M. A. Belinson, 1864.
- Donnolo, Shabbetai. *Sefer Ḥakhmoni*. In *Sefer Yetsirah*, 61a-74d. Jerusalem: Lewin-Epstein, 1965.
- Duran, Z̄emah ben Solomon, and Simeon ben Solomon Duran. *Yakhin u-Vo'az*. Livorno: Castilo and Sadun, 1782.
- Eisenstein, Judah. D., ed. *Otsar Midrashim*. 2 vols. New York: Eisenstein, 1915.
- Eleazar ben Judah of Worms. *Ḥokhmat ha-Nefesh*. Safed: Hagalil, 1913.
- _____. *Peirushei Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeah*. Edited by Moshe Hershler and Yehudah Alter Hershler. 2 vols. Jerusalem: Mekhon Harav Hershler, 1994.
- _____. *Yoreh Ḥatta'im*. In *Sefer Roqeah: Hilkhhot Teshuvah ha-Shalem*, edited by Yeruḥam Eliyahu Rozenfeld, 123-64. Brooklyn, Y. E. Rozenfeld, 2000.
- Elijah ben Solomon of Vilna. *Ma'aseh Rav*. Vilna: Romm, 1888.

- Evans, Llewelyn Ioan. *Preaching Christ: Sermons*. New York: The Christian Literature Co., 1893.
- Ezra ben Solomon of Gerona [attributed to Nahmanides]. "Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim." In *Kitvei Ramban*, edited by Chaim D. Chavel, 2:471-548. Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1964.
- Feinstein, Moshe. *Iggerot Moshe*. 9 vols. New York: Moshe Feinstein, 1974-2011.
- Fishbane, Michael. *The JPS Bible Commentary: Haftarat*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2002.
- Fox, Everett, trans. and ed. *The Five Books of Moses ... A New Translation with Introductions, Commentary, and Notes*. New York: Schocken, 1995.
- Fox, Michael V. *Proverbs: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible, vols. 18A-B. New York: Doubleday, 2000; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009.
- Friedlander, Gerald, trans. and ed. *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer*. London, 1916. Reprint, New York: Sepher-Hermon Press, 1981.
- Friedman, Richard Elliott. *Commentary on the Torah with a New English Translation*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001.
- Gershon ben Solomon of Arles. *Sha'ar ha-Shamayim*. Warsaw: Yitzhak Goldman, 1876.
- Gikatilla, Joseph. *Peirush ha-Merkavah*. Edited by Asi-Farber Ginat. Edited for publication by Daniel Abrams. Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 1998.
- _____. *Sha'arei Orah*. Warsaw: Orgelbrand, 1883. Reprint, Jerusalem: Mordechai Etyah, 1960.
- _____. "Sod Shelosh-Esreh Middot." In *Kitvei Yad ba-Qabbalah*, edited by Gershom Scholem, 219-25. Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1930.
- Ginzberg, Louis. *Ginzei Schechter*. 2 vols. New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1928-29.

- Gordis, Robert. *The Book of Job: Commentary, New Translation, and Special Studies*. New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1978.
- Greenberg, Moshe. *Ezekiel 1-20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible, vol. 22. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983.
- Ḥayyat, Judah. "Minḥat Yehudah." Mantua: Meir ben Efraim, 1558. Reprint, Jerusalem: Makor, 1963. Commentary on *Ma'arekhet ha-Elohut*.
- "Ḥibbut ha-Qever." In *Massekhet Semaḥot*, edited by Michael Higger, 253-61. New York: Bloch, 1931. Reprint. Jerusalem: Makor, 1970.
- Horowitz, Isaiah. *Shenei Luḥot ha-Berit*. 2 vols. Jerusalem: n.p., 1975.
- Ibn Ezra, Abraham. *Yesod Mora*. Hamburg: Benjamin Moshe ben Ḥayyim, 1860.
- Ibn Ḥasdai, Abraham ben Samuel ha-Levi. *Ben ha-Melekh ve-ha-Nazir*. Edited by A. M. Habermann. Tel Aviv: Maḥbarot le-Sifrut, 1950.
- Ibn Ḥayyim, Aaron. *Qorban Aharon*. 2 vols. Venice: Di Gara, 1609.
- Ibn Shuaib, Joshua. *Sefer Derashot al ha-Torah*. Cracow: Yitshak ben Aharon, 1573. Reprint, Jerusalem: Makor, 1969.
- Isaac ben Jacob ha-Kohen. "Ma'amar al ha-Atsilut ha-Semalit." In "Qabbalot R. Ya'aqov ve-R. Yitshaq benei R. Ya'aqov ha-Kohen," edited by Gershom Scholem. *Madda'ei ha-Yahadut* 2 (1927): 244-64.
- Isaac the Blind. "Peirush Sefer Yetsirah." Appendix to Gershom Scholem, *Ha-Qabbalah be-Provans*, edited by Rivka Schatz. Jerusalem: Academon, 1970.
- Jacob ben Sheshet. "Ha-Emunah ve-ha-Bittaḥon." In *Kitvei Ramban*, edited by Chaim D. Chavel, 2:339-448. Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1964.
- _____. *Sefer Meshiv Devarim Nekhoḥim*. Edited by Georges Vajda. Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and

- Humanities, 1968.
- Jellinek, Adolph, ed. *Beit ha-Midrash*. 3d ed. 6 vols, in 2. Jerusalem: Wahrman Books, 1967.
- Jonah ben Abraham Gerondi. *Sha'arei Teshuvah*. Bene-Berak: Sifsei Chachamim, 1990.
- Joseph ben Shalom Ashkenazi. *Peirush Qabbali li-Vreshit Rabbah*. Edited by Moshe Hallamish. Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1984.
- _____. [attributed to Abraham ben David of Posquières]. "Peirush Sefer Yetsirah." In *Sefer Yetsirah*. Jerusalem: Lewin-Epstein, 1965.
- JPS Hebrew-English Tanakh*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1999.
- Judah ben Samuel he-Hasid. *Sefer Ḥasidim*. Edited by Reuven Margalioṯ. Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1957.
- _____. *Sefer Ḥasidim*. Edited by Jehuda Wistinetzki. Berlin: Itzkowski, 1891. Reprint, Jerusalem: Vagshel, 1998.
- Judah Loew ben Bezalel. *Gur Aryeh*. Lemberg, 1858.
- Kaplan, Aryeh, trans. and ed. *Sefer Yetzirah: The Book of Creation*. York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, 1990.
- Kasher, Menahem M. *Ḥumash Torah Shelemah*. 2d ed. 12 vols. Jerusalem: Beth Torah Shelemah, 1992.
- Landau, Ezekiel ben Judah. *Noda Bi-Yhudah ... Mahadura Qamma*. Warsaw: Frenkel and Kahlenberg, 1891.
- Levine, Baruch A. *The JPS Torah Commentary: Leviticus*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989.
- Lublin, Meir ben Gedaliah. *She'elot u-Tshuvot ... Manhira Einei Ḥakhamim*. Venice: Bragadini and Cajon, 1619.
- Luria, David. *Ma'amar Qadmut Sefer ha-Zohar*. Warsaw: Meir Yehiel Halter, 1887.
- Luria, Solomon ben Yehiel. *She'elot u-Tshuvot Maharshal*. Lemberg: Shrentsil, 1859.
- Ma'arekhet ha-Elohut*. Mantua: Meir ben Efraim, 1558. Reprint, Jerusalem: Makor, 1963.
- Maimonides, Moses. *The Guide of the Perplexed*. Translated by Shlomo Pines. Chicago: University of

- Chicago Press, 1963.
- _____. *Mishnah im Peirush Rabbeinu Mosheh ben Maimon*. Translated and edited by Joseph Kafah. 3 vols. Jerusalem: Mosad ha-Rav Kook, 1989.
- Mann, Jacob, ed. "Qit'ei Midrashim mi-Kitvei Yad ha-Genizah." In Mann, Jacob, and Isaiah Sonne. *The Bible as Read and Preached in the Old Synagogue*, 2:167-239. 2 vols. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1966.
- "Massekhet Atsilut." In *Ginzei Hokhmat ha-Qabbalah*, edited by Adolph Jellinek, 1-8. Leipzig, 1853. Reprint, Jerusalem: Makor, 1969.
- Matt, Daniel C., trans. and ed. *The Essential Kabbalah: The Heart of Jewish Mysticism*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1995.
- Milgrom, Jacob. *The JPS Torah Commentary: Numbers*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1990.
- _____. *Leviticus: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible, vols. 3-3B. New York: Doubleday, 1991-2000.
- Moses ben Shem Tov de León. *The Book of the Pomegranate: Moses de León's Sefer ha-Rimmon*. Edited by Elliot R. Wolfson. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988.
- _____. Commentary on the Ten *Sefirot* (untitled fragment). MS Hebr. 47, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich.
- _____. *Mishkan ha-Edut*. MS Or. Quat. 833, Staatsbibliothek, Berlin.
- _____. *Ha-Nefesh ha-Hakhamah*. Basle: Konrad Waldkirch, 1608.
- _____. "Or Zaru'a." Edited by Alexander Altmann. *Kovez al Yad*, n.s., 9 (1980): 219-93.
- [____?]. *Orhot Hayyim (Tsavva'at Rabbi Eli'ezer)*. Edited by Gershon Henikh. Warsaw: Meir Halter, 1891. Reprint, Bene-Berak: Agudat Hasidei Radzyn, 1990.
- _____. *Peirush ha-Merkavah*. Edited by Asi-Farber Ginat. Edited for publication by Daniel Abrams. Los Angeles:

- Cherub Press, 1998.
- [___?]. "Seder Gan Eden." In *Beit ha-Midrash*, edited by Adolph Jellinek, 3:131-40, 194-98. Jerusalem: Wahrman Books, 1967.
- _____. "Sefer ha-Mishqal: Text and Study." Edited by Jochanan H. A. Wijnhoven. PhD diss., Brandeis University, 1964. Largely supersedes an earlier edition: *Ha-Nefesh ha-Hakhamah*. Basle: Konrad Waldkirch, 1608.
- _____. "Sefer Maskiyyot Kesef." Edited by Jochanan H. A. Wijnhoven. Master's thesis, Brandeis University, 1961.
- _____. "She'elot u-Tshuvot be-Inyenei Qabbalah." In *Hiqrei Qabbalah u-Shluḥoteha*, edited by Isaiah Tishby, 1:36-75. Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1982.
- _____. *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*. Edited by A. W. Greenup. London, 1911. Reprint, Jerusalem: n.p., 1969.
- _____. *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*. Edited by Charles Mopsik. Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 1996. Cited in the Commentary according to both this edition and, in parentheses, Greenup's edition.
- _____. "Shushan Edut." Edited by Gershom Scholem. *Koveḥ al Yad*, n.s., 8 (1976): 325-70.
- _____. "Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah." Edited by Gershom Scholem. *Koveḥ al Yad*, n.s., 8 (1976): 371-84.
- _____. "Sod Ḥag ha-Shavu'ot." In *Qovets Sifrei Qabbalah*. Jerusalem, Schocken Library, MS Schocken 14.
- _____. "Sod Yetsi'at Mitsrayim." Jerusalem, Schocken Library, MS Schocken 14.
- Moses ben Solomon of Burgos. "Ammud ha-Semali." In *Le-Heqer Qabbalat R. Yitshaq ben Ya'aqov ha-Kohen*, edited by Gershom Scholem, 146-64. Jerusalem: Tarbiz, 1934.
- Naḥmanides, Moses. *Kitvei Ramban*. Edited by Chaim D. Chavel. 2 vols. Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1964.
- _____. "Peirush Sefer Yetsirah." Edited by Gershom Scholem. *Kiryat Sefer* 6 (1929-30): 385-419.
- Natronai bar Hilai, Gaon. *Teshuvot Rav Natronai bar Hilai Ga'on*. Edited by Yerahmiel Brody. Jerusalem: Mekhon

- Ofek, 1994.
- Nimoy, Leonard. *I Am Not Spock*. Millbrae, CA: Celestial Arts, 1975.
- _____. *I Am Spock*. New York, NY: Hyperion, 1995.
- Ovid. *Metamorphoses*. Translated by Stanley Lombardo. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2010.
- “Pirquei Rabbi Eli’ezer.” Edited by Michael Higger. *Horeb* 8 (1944): 82-119; 9 (1946): 94-166; 10 (1948): 185-294.
- Pirquei Rabbi Eli’ezer*. Commentary by David Luria; edited by Samuel ben Eli’ezer Luria. Warsaw: Bomberg, 1852. Reprint, New York: Om, 1946.
- Pope, Marvin H. *Song of Songs: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible, vol. 7c. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977.
- Posek, Elijah. *Divrei Hakhamim ve-Hidotam*. Bilgoraj: Natan Netta Kronenberg, 1912.
- Recanati, Menahem. *Peirush al ha-Torah (Levushei Or Yeqarot)*. Lemberg: Karl Budweiser, 1880-81. Reprint, Jerusalem: Mordechai Etyah, 1961.
- Robinson, James M., ed. *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*. 3d ed. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988.
- Romanelli, Samuel Aaron. *Massa ba-rav*. In *Ketavim Nivharim ... Shemu’el Romanelli*, edited by Hayyim Schirmann, 17-149. Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1968.
- Rumi, Jalal ad-Din. *The Mathnawi of Jalalu’ddin Rumi*. Translated and edited by Reynold A. Nicholson. 6 vols. London: E. J. W. Gibb Memorial Trust, 1926.
- Saadia Gaon, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*. Edited by Jeroham Fischel ben Aryeh Zevi Perla. 3 vols. Warsaw, 1914-1917.
- Sahula, Isaac ben Solomon Abi. *Meshal ha-Qadmoni*. Tel Aviv: Maḥbarot Lesifrut, 1953.
- Sarna, Nahum M. *The JPS Torah Commentary: Exodus*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1991.
- _____. *The JPS Torah Commentary: Genesis*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989.

- Schäfer, Peter, ed. *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1981.
- Scholem, Gerhard, trans. and ed. *Das Buch Bahir*. Leipzig: W. Drugulin, 1923. Reprint, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1970.
- Sefer ha-Bahir*. Edited by Daniel Abrams. Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 1994. Cited in the Commentary according to both this edition and, in parentheses, Margalio's edition.
- Sefer ha-Bahir*. Edited by Reuven Margalio. Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1951. Reprint, 1978.
- Sefer ha-Hinnukh*. Edited by Chaim D. Chavel. Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1966.
- Sefer ha-Peli'ah*. Peremyshlyany: Zupnik, Knoller, and Hammerschmidt, 1883. Reprint, Israel: Books Export Enterprises, n.d.
- Sefer Razi'el ha-Mal'akh*. Amsterdam: Moses M. Coutinho, 1701.
- Sefer Yetsirah*. Jerusalem: Lewin-Epstein, 1965.
- Sha'arei Teshuvah (Teshuvot ha-Ge'onim)*. Edited by Wolf Leiter. Pittsburgh: Maimonides Institute, 1946. Reprint, Jerusalem: H. Vagshel, n.d.
- Shapira, Hayyim Eleazar. *Nimmucei Oraḥ Hayyim*. Jerusalem: Beit Tsaddiqim, 1984.
- Simḥah ben Samuel of Vitry. *Maḥazor Vitri*. Edited by Shim'on Hurwitz. Nüremberg: J. Bulka, 1923.
- Steele, Robert, ed. *Opera hactenus inedita Rogeri Baconi*, Fasc. 5, *Secretum Secretorum*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1920.
- Steinsaltz, Adin, ed. and trans. *Talmud Bavli: Massekhet Rosh ha-Shanah*. Jerusalem: Ha-Makhon ha-Yisre'eli le-Firsumim Talmudiyim, 1982.
- Terentianus Maurus. *De litteris, de syllabis, de metris*. Edited by Chiara Cignolo. Hildesheim: G. Olms, 2002.
- Teshuvot ha-Ge'onim*. In *Zikhron la-Rishonim ve-gam la-Aḥaronim*, edited by Abraham Harkavy, 1:4. Berlin:

- Itskovski, 1887.
- Teshuvot ha-Ge'onim ha-Hadashot*. Edited by Simcha Emanuel. Jerusalem: Mekhon Ofek, 1995.
- Tigay, Jeffrey H. *The JPS Torah Commentary: Deuteronomy*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1996.
- Vital, Hayyim. *Sha'ar ha-Kavvanot*. 2 vols. Jerusalem: n.p., 1988.
- _____. *Sha'ar ha-Mitsvot*. Jerusalem: n.p., 1988.
- _____. *Sha'ar Ma'amrei Rashbi*. Jerusalem: n.p., 1988.
- Waldenberg, Eliezer. *Tsits Eli'ezer*. 2d ed. 9 vols. Jerusalem: Waldenberg, 1998.
- Wertheimer, Shlomo Aharon, ed. *Battei Midrashot*. 2d ed., revised by Abraham J. Wertheimer. 2 vols. Jerusalem: Ketav Vasepher, 1980.
- Yassif, Eli. *Sefer ha-Zikhronot, hu Divrei ha-Yamim li-Yrahme'el*. Ramat Gan: Tel Aviv University, 2001.
- _____. *Sippurei Ben Sira bi-Ymei ha-Beinayim*. Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1984.
- Yosef, Ovadiah. *Yeḥavveh Da'at*. 2d ed. 6 vols. Jerusalem: n.p., 1987.
- Zaddik, Joseph ben Jacob ibn. *Sefer ha-Olam ha-Qatan*. Edited by Saul Horovitz. Breslau: Th. Schatzky, 1903.

7. OTHER SECONDARY SOURCES

- Abrams, Daniel. *Kabbalistic Manuscripts and Textual Theory: Methodologies of Textual Scholarship and Editorial Practice in the Study of Jewish Mysticism*. Jerusalem: Magnes Press; Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 2010.
- _____. "The Virgin Mary as the Moon that Lacks the Sun: A Zoharic Polemic Against the Veneration of Mary." *Kabbalah* 21 (2010): 7–56.
- Assis, Yom Tov. "Sexual Behaviour in Mediaeval Hispano-Jewish Society." In *Jewish History: Essays in Honour of Chimen Abramsky*, edited by Ada Rapoport-Albert and

- Steven J. Zipperstein, 25–60. London: Peter Halban, 1988.
- Asulin, Shifra. “Ha-Pegam ve-Tiqquno: Niddah, Levanah u-Shekhinah.” *Kabbalah* 22 (2010): 193–251.
- _____. “Qomatah shel ha-Shekhinah: Meqomo shel ha-Partsuf ha-Elohi ha-Neqevi bein ha-Idra Rabba la-Idra Zuta.” In *Samkhut Ruḥanit: Ma’avaqim al Koah Tarbuti ba-Hagut ha-Yehudit*, edited by Howard Kreisel, Boaz Huss, and Uri Ehrlich, 103–82. Beer-Sheva: Ben-Gurion University of the Negev Press, 2010.
- Baer, Yitzḥak. *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*. 2 vols. Translated by Louis Schoffman. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1978.
- _____. *Toledot ha-Yehudim bi-Sfarad ha-Notsrit*. 2 vols. Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1945.
- Berliner, Abraham. *Ranbemerkingen zum täglichen Gebetbuch (Siddur)*. 2 vols. Berlin: M. Poppelauer, 1909–12.
- Blau, Ludwig (Lajos). *Das altjüdische Zauberwesen*. Budapest, 1898.
- Bronsnick, Naḥum M. “Le-Hora’ato shel ha-Shoresh ‘Bsm.’” *Sinai* 63 (1968): 81–85.
- Chaze, Micheline. “De l’identification des patriarches au char divin: Recherche du sens d’un enseignement rabbinique dans le Midrash et dans la Kabbale prézoarique et ses sources.” *Revue des études juives* 149 (1990): 5–75.
- Constable, Giles. “Introduction [on beards in the Middle Ages].” In *Apologiae Duae: Gozechini, Epistola ad Walcherum; Buchardi, ut Videtur, Abbatis Bellevalis, Apologia de Barbis*, edited by R.B.C. Huygens, 46–130. Turnholti, Belgium: Brepols, 1985.
- Corominas, Joan, with the collaboration of José A. Pascual. *Diccionario Crítico Etimológico Castellano e Hispánico*. 6 vols. Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1980–91.

- Dan, Joseph, ed. *Sefer ha-Zohar ve-Doro (Meḥqerei Yerushalayim be-Maḥashevet Yisra'el 8 [1989])*. Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1989.
- _____, Esther Liebes, and Shmuel Reem, eds. *The Library of Gershom Scholem on Jewish Mysticism: Catalogue*. 2 vols., especially 1:174-232. Jerusalem: Jewish National and University Library, 1999.
- Eliade, Mircea, ed. *The Encyclopedia of Religion*. 16 vols. New York: Macmillan, 1987.
- Emden, Jacob. *Mitpaḥit Sefarim*. Edited by Reuben Rappaport. Lemberg: Michal Wolf, 1870. Reprint: Jerusalem: Sifriyat Mekorot, 1970.
- Encyclopaedia Judaica*. 2d rev. ed. 22 volumes. Edited by Fred Skolnik and Michael Berenbaum. Detroit, Mich.: Thomson Gale, 2007.
- Farber-Ginat, Asi. "Qelippah Qodemet li-Fri." In *Ha-Mitos ba-Yahadut. Eshel Beer-Sheva*, vol. 4, edited by Haviva Pedaya, 118-42. Beer-Sheva: Ben-Gurion University of the Negev Press, 1996.
- Feldman, David M. *Birth Control in Jewish Law: Marital Relations, Contraception, and Abortion as set forth in the classic texts of Jewish Law*. New York: New York University Press, 1968.
- Finkelstein, Louis. *Jewish Self-Government in the Middle Ages*. New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1924.
- Franck, Adolphe. *The Kabbalah: or, The Religious Philosophy of the Hebrews*. Translated by Isaac Sossnitz. New York: Kabbalah Publishing Company, 1926.
- Gartner, Jacob. "Se'udah Shelishit: Hebbetim Hilkhatiyyim ve-Historiyyim." *Sidra 6* (1990): 5-23.
- Gesenius, Heinrich F. W. *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar, as edited and enlarged by the late E. Kautzsch*. 2d English ed., revised in accordance with the twenty-eighth German edition (1909) by A. E. Cowley. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910.

- Giller, Pinchas. *Reading the Zohar: The Sacred Text of the Kabbalah*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Ginsburg, Elliot K. *The Sabbath in the Classical Kabbalah*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989.
- Ginzberg, Louis. *Legends of the Jews*. 7 vols. Translated by Henrietta Szold and Paul Radin. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1909–38.
- Goldreich, Amos. "Sefer ha-Gevul le-R. David ben Yehudah he-Ḥasid: Darkhei Ibbud shel Tekst Zohari Dor Eḥad Aḥarei Hofa'at ha-Zohar." M.A. diss., Tel Aviv University, 1972.
- Goldstein, Naftali. "Meḥqarim be-Hagutam shel Ḥazal al ha-Avodah be-Veit ha-Miqdash ve-Hashpa'atam al Itsuvah." PhD diss., Hebrew University, 1977.
- Green, Arthur. *Keter: The Crown of God in Early Jewish Mysticism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997.
- _____. "Shekhinah, the Virgin Mary, and the Song of Songs: Reflections on a Kabbalistic Symbol in Its Historical Context." *AJS Review* 26 (2002): 1–52.
- Greenstein, David. *Roads to Utopia: The Walking Stories of the Zohar*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2014.
- Gross, Charles G. *Brain, Vision, Memory: Tales in the History of Neuroscience*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1998.
- Gruenwald, Ithamar. *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1980.
- Guttmann, Julius. *Philosophies of Judaism*. Translated by David W. Silverman. New York: Schocken, 1973.
- Hallamish, Moshe. *Ha-Qabbalah bi-Tfillah ba-Halakhah u-ve-Minhag*. Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University, 2000.
- Ḥamiz, Joseph ben Judah, ed. *Derekh Emet*. Venice, 1658.
- Har Shefi, Avishar. "Malkin Qadma'in: Mitoš Malkhei Edom be-Sifrut ha-Zoharit." Ph.D. dissertation. Bar-Ilan University, 2011.

- Hayes, Christine Elizabeth. *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities: Intermarriage and Conversion from the Bible to the Talmud*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Hecker, Joel. *Mystical Bodies, Mystical Meals: Eating and Embodiment in Medieval Kabbalah*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2005.
- Hellner-Eshed, Melila. "Refu'at ha-Panim." In *Ve-Zot Li-Yhudah: Qovets Ma'amarim ha-Muqdash la-Haverenu Prof. Yehuda Liebes le-Regel Yom Hulladto ha-Shishim va-Hamishah*, edited by Maren R. Niehoff, Ronit Meroz, and Jonathan Garb, 164–80. Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 2012.
- _____. *A River Flows from Eden: The Language of Mystical Experience in the Zohar*. Translated by Nathan Wolski. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2009.
- _____. "Temunah mi-Ma'amaqim." *Erets Aḥeret* 47 (2008): 77–79.
- _____. *Qeri'ah ba-Idra Rabba* (tentative title). Tel Aviv: Yedi'ot Sefarim, forthcoming.
- Horowitz, Elimelekh. "Al Mashma'uyyot ha-Zaqan bi-Qhillot Yisra'el." *Pe'amim* 59 (1994): 124–48.
- Huss, Boaz. *Ke-Zohar ha-Raqi'a: Peraqim be-Hitqabbelut ha-Zohar uv-Havnayat Erko ha-Simli*. Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute, 2007.
- Hutter, Manfred. "Lilith." In *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, edited by Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, 520–21. 2nd rev. ed. Leiden: Brill, 1999.
- Idel, Moshe. *Absorbing Perfections: Kabbalah and Interpretation*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002.
- _____. *Ben: Sonship and Jewish Mysticism*. New York: Continuum, 2007.
- _____. *Golem: Jewish Magical and Mystical Traditions on the Artificial Anthropoid*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990.
- _____. "Homer Qabbali mi-Beit Midrasho shel R. David ben Yehudah he-Ḥasid." *Mehqerei Yerushalayim be-*

- Maḥashevet Yisra'el* 2 (1983): 169–207.
- _____. *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988.
- _____. *Kabbalah and Eros*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005.
- _____. “Ha-Maḥashavah ha-Ra’ah shel ha-El.” *Tarbiz* 49 (1980): 356–64.
- _____. “Peirushim le-Sod ha-Arayot be-Reshit ha-Qabbalah.” *Kabbalah* 12 (2004): 89–199.
- _____. “Tefisat ha-Torah be-Sifrut ha-Heikhalot ve-Gilguleha ba-Qabbalah.” *Meḥqerei Yerushalayim be-Maḥashevet Yisra'el* 1 (1981): 23–84.
- Jastrow, Marcus. *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature*. 2 vols. New York: Pardes Publishing House, 1943.
- Kaddari, Menahem Z. *Diqduq ha-Lashon ha-Aramit shel ha-Zohar*. Jerusalem: Kiryath Sepher, 1971.
- Karr, Don. “Notes on the *Zohar* in English.” Online: www.digital-brilliance.com/kab/karr.
- Katz, Jacob. *Halakhah ve-Qabbalah*. Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1984.
- Kiener, Ronald C. “The Image of Islam in the *Zohar*.” In *Sefer ha-Zohar ve-Doro (Meḥqerei Yerushalayim be-Maḥashevet Yisra'el* 8 [1989]), edited by Joseph Dan, 43–65 (English section). Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1989.
- Koren, Sharon Faye. *Forsaken: The Menstruant in Medieval Jewish Mysticism*. Waltham, Mass.: Brandeis University Press, 2011.
- Kunitz, Moses. *Sefer Ben Yoḥai*. Vienna: Georg Holzinger, 1815.
- Lauterbach, Jacob Z. “Talmudic-Rabbinic View on Birth Control.” In *Studies in Jewish Law, Custom and Folklore*, edited by Bernard J. Bamberger, 209–24. New York: Ktav, 1970.
- Lieberman, Saul. *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine: Studies in the Literary Transmission, Beliefs and Manners of*

Palestine in the I Century B.C.E.-IV Century C.E. 2d ed. New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1962.

_____. "Mishnat Shir ha-Shirim." In Gershom G. Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism, and Talmudic Tradition*, 118-26. New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1965.

_____. *Tosefet Rishonim*. 4 vols. Jerusalem: Bamberger et Vahrman, 1937-39.

_____. *Tosefta ki-Fshutah: A Comprehensive Commentary on the Tosefta*. 10 vols. New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1955-88.

Liebes, Yehuda. *Alilot Elohim: Ha-Mitos ha-Yehudi; Massot u-Meḥqarim*. Jerusalem: Carmel, 2008.

_____. "Ha-Omnam Betulah Hi ha-Shekhinah?" *Pe'amim* 101-2 (2005): 303-13.

_____. "Koah ha-Millah ki-Ysod Mashma'utah be-Sifrut ha-Qabbalah."

<http://pluto.huji.ac.il/~liebes.zohar/research.html>

_____. "Lehaḥazir la-El et Panav: Al Sifro shel Ya'ir Lorberbaum, *Tselem Elohim: Halakhah ve-Aggadah* (Schocken, Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, 2004)." *Dimui* 25 (2005): 50-53.

_____. "Mar'ish ha-Arets: Yehiduto shel Rashbi." In *Yahadut: Sugyot, Qeta'im, Panim, Zehuyyot. Sefer Rivqah*, edited by Haviva Pedaya and Ephraim Meir, 337-57. Beer-Sheva: Ben-Gurion University of the Negev Press, 2007.

_____. "Ha-Mashiah shel ha-Zohar: Li-Dmuto ha-Meshiḥit shel R. Shim'on bar Yoḥai." In *Ha-Ra'yon ha-Meshiḥi be-Yisra'el*, edited by Shemuel Re'em, 87-236. Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1982.

_____. *Pulḥan ha-Shaḥar: Yaḥas ha-Zohar la-Avodah Zarah*. Jerusalem: Carmel, 2011.

_____. *Studies in Jewish Myth and Jewish Messianism*. Translated by Batya Stein. Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1993.

- _____. *Studies in the Zohar*. Translated by Arnold Schwartz, Stephanie Nakache, and Penina Peli. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993.
- _____. *Torat ha-Yetsirah shel Sefer Yetsirah*. Tel Aviv: Schocken, 2000.
- _____. "Zohar ve-Eros." *Alpayim* 9 (1994): 67-119.
- Mann, Vivian B., ed. *Uneasy Communion: Jews, Christians, and the Altarpieces of Medieval Spain*. New York: Museum of Biblical Art, 2010.
- Margaliot, Reuven. *Mal'akhei Elyon*. Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1964.
- _____. *Sha'arei Zohar*. Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1978.
- Matt, Daniel C. "Ayin: The Concept of Nothingness in Jewish Mysticism." In *Essential Papers on Kabbalah*, edited by Lawrence Fine, 67-108. New York: New York University Press, 1995.
- _____. "Matnita di-Lan: Tekhniqah shel Hiddush be-Sefer ha-Zohar." In *Sefer ha-Zohar ve-Doro (Meḥqerei Yerushalayim be-Maḥashevet Yisra'el* 8 [1989]), edited by Joseph Dan, 123-45. Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1989.
- _____. "The Mystic and the *Mizwot*." In *Jewish Spirituality: From the Bible through the Middle Ages*, edited by Arthur Green, 367-404. New York: Crossroad, 1986.
- _____. "'New-Ancient Words': The Aura of Secrecy in the *Zohar*." In *Gershom Scholem's "Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism": 50 Years After*, edited by Peter Schäfer and Joseph Dan, 181-207. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1994.
- Meroz, Ronit. "Reqimato shel Mitos: Diyyun bi-Shnei Sippurim ba-Zohar." In *Study and Knowledge in Jewish Thought*, edited by Howard Kreisel, 167-205. Beer-Sheva: Ben-Gurion University of the Negev Press, 2006.
- Nathan ben Yehiel of Rome. *Arukh ha-Shalem*. 9 vols. Edited by Alexander Kohut, with *Tosefot he-Arukh ha-Shalem*, by Samuel Krauss. Vienna, 1878-92, 1937. Reprint, New York: Pardes, 1955.

- _____. *Sefer he-Arukh*. Edited by Shemuel Schlesinger. Tel Aviv: Yetsu Sifrei Kodesh, n.d.
- Naveh, Joseph. "Hebrew Graffiti from the First Temple Period." *Israel Exploration Journal* 51 (2001): 194-207.
- _____. "Lamp Inscriptions and Inverted Writing." *Israel Exploration Journal* 38 (1988): 36-43.
- Neuhausen, Simon A. *Sifriyyah shel Ma'lah*. Berehovo: Samuel Klein, 1937.
- Niehoff, Maren R., Ronit Meroz, and Jonathan Garb, eds. *Ve-Zot Li-Yhudah: Qovets Ma'amarim ha-Muqdash la-Ḥaverenu Prof. Yehuda Liebes le-Regel Yom Hulladto ha-Shishim va-Ḥamishah*. Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 2012.
- Patai, Raphael. *The Hebrew Goddess*. 3d ed. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990.
- Pedaya, Haviva. *Ha-Ramban—Hit'allut: Zeman Maḥazori ve-Teqst Qadosh*. Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 2003.
- Peretz, Eliyahu. *Ma'alot ha-Zohar: Mafteah Shemot ha-Sefirot*. Jerusalem: Academon, 1987.
- Rapoport, Solomon Judah. *Naḥalat Yehudah*. Lemberg: n.p., 1873.
- Rosenthal, "Al Derekh Tippulam shel Ḥazal be-Ḥillufei Nussaḥ ba-Miqra." In *Sefer Yitshaq Aryeh Zeligman: Ma'amarim ba-Miqra u-va-Olam ha-Attiq*, edited by Yair Zakovitch and Alexander Rofé, 395-417. Jerusalem: Elhanan Rubenstein, 1983.
- Rubin, Zvia. "Mif'al ha-Zohar: Mattarot ve-Hessegim." In *Asuppat Kiryat Sefer (Musaf le-Kherekh 68)*, edited by Yehoshua Rosenberg, 167-74. Jerusalem: Jewish National and University Library, 1998.
- Schäfer, Peter, ed. *Konkordanz zur Hekhalot-Literatur*. 2 vols. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1986-88.
- _____. *Mirror of His Beauty: Feminine Images of God from the Bible to the Early Kabbalah*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002.
- _____, and Joseph Dan, eds. *Gershom Scholem's "Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism": 50 Years After*. Tübingen: J.

- C. B. Mohr, 1994.
- Scholem, Gershom G. *Alchemy and Kabbalah*. Translated by Klaus Ottmann. Putnam, Connecticut: Spring Publications, 2006.
- _____. "Ha-Im Hibber R. Mosheh de León et Sefer ha-Zohar?" *Madda'ei ha-Yahadut* 1 (1926): 16-29.
- _____. *Kabbalah*. Jerusalem: Keter, 1974.
- _____. *Le-Heqer Qabbalat R. Yitshaq ben Ya'aqov ha-Kohen*. Jerusalem: Tarbiz, 1934.
- _____. *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*. 3d. ed. New York: Schocken, 1967.
- _____. *On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism*. Translated by Ralph Manheim. New York: Schocken, 1969.
- _____. *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead: Basic Concepts in the Kabbalah*. Translated by Joachim Neugroschel, edited by Jonathan Chipman. New York: Schocken, 1991.
- _____. *Origins of the Kabbalah*. Edited by R. J. Zwi Werblowsky, translated by Allan Arkush. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987.
- _____. "Qabbalot R. Ya'aqov ve-R. Yitshaq benei R. Ya'aqov ha-Kohen." *Madda'ei ha-Yahadut* 2 (1927): 163-293.
- _____. *Shedim, Ruhot u-Nshamot: Meḥqarim be-Demonologyah me'et Gershom Shalom*. Edited by Esther Liebes. Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute, 2004.
- _____. "Ha-Tsitat ha-Rishon min ha-Midrash ha-Ne'lam." *Tarbiz* 3 (1932): 181-83.
- _____. *Über einige Grundbegriffe des Judentums*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1970.
- Siegel, Rudolph E. *Galen's System of Physiology and Medicine*. Basel: S. Karger, 1968.
- Sobol, Neta. "Ein Mal'akh Eḥad Oseh Shetei Sheliḥuyyot': Al Rega Deramati ba-Idra Rabba." *Kabbalah* 22 (2010): 283-303.
- _____. "Ḥativat ha-Idrot be-Sifrut ha-Zohar." Ph.D. diss., Bar-Ilan University, 2011.

- Sokoloff, Michael. *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic of the Talmudic and Geonic Periods*. Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University Press; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002.
- _____. *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic of the Byzantine Period*. Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 1990.
- Sperling, Avraham Yitshak. *Ta'amei ha-Minhagim u-Mqorei ha-Dinim*. Jerusalem: Eshkol, 1957.
- Steinschneider, Moritz. *Polemische und apologetische Literatur in arabischer Sprache*. Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1877.
- Stroumsa, Gedaliahu A. G. *Another Seed: Studies in Gnostic Mythology*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1984.
- Talmage, Frank. "Apples of Gold: The Inner Meaning of Sacred Texts in Medieval Judaism." In *Jewish Spirituality: From the Bible through the Middle Ages*, edited by Arthur Green, 313–55. New York: Crossroad, 1986.
- Tamar, David. "Hosha'na-Rabbah ke-Yom Hittum ha-Din." *Turei Yeshurun* 24 (1971): 29–30, 33.
- Ta-Shma, Israel M. *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*. 2d ed. Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2001.
- Tishby, Isaiah. *Hiqrei Qabbalah u-Shluhoteha: Mehqarim u-Mqorot*. 3 vols. Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1982–93.
- Trachtenberg, Joshua. *The Devil and the Jews: The Medieval Conception of the Jews and Its Relation to Modern Antisemitism*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943.
- _____. *Jewish Magic and Superstition: A Study in Folk Religion*. New York: Atheneum, 1974.
- Twersky, Isadore. *Introduction to the Code of Maimonides (Mishneh Torah)*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980.
- Ullmann, Manfred. *Islamic Medicine*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1978.

- Urbach, Ephraim E. *The Sages: Their Concepts and Beliefs*. 2d ed. 2 vols. Translated by Israel Abrahams. Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1979.
- Vajda, Georges. *Recherches sur la philosophie et la kabbale dans la pensée juive du Moyen Age*. Paris: Mouton, 1962.
- Weinstock, Israel. "Ha-Adam ve-Tsillo." *Shanah be-Shanah* 2 (1961–62): 252–74.
- Wiener, Moshe. *Hadrat Panim—Zagan (Hadrās Ponim—Zoqon)*. New York: Wiener, 1977.
- Wilhelm, Ya'akov D. "Sidrei Tiqqunim." In *Alei Ayin: Minḥat Devarim li-Shlomo Zalman Schocken*, 125–46. Tel Aviv: Ha'aretz, 1952.
- Wolfson, Elliot R. *Along the Path: Studies in Kabbalistic Myth, Symbolism, and Hermeneutics*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995.
- _____. *Circle in the Square: Studies in the Use of Gender in Kabbalistic Symbolism*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995.
- _____. "Circumcision and the Divine Name: A Study in the Transmission of Esoteric Doctrine." *Jewish Quarterly Review* 78 (1987): 77–112.
- _____. "Eunuchs Who Keep the Sabbath: Becoming Male and the Ascetic Ideal in Thirteenth-Century Jewish Mysticism." In *Becoming Male in the Middle Ages*, edited by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen and Bonnie Wheeler, 151–85. New York: Garland Publishing, 1997.
- _____. "Forms of Visionary Ascent as Ecstatic Experience in Zoharic Literature." In *Gershom Scholem's 'Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism': 50 Years After*, edited by Peter Schäfer and Joseph Dan, 209–35. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1994.
- _____. *Language, Eros, Being: Kabbalistic Hermeneutics and Poetic Imagination*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2005.
- _____. "Left Contained in the Right: A Study in Zoharic Hermeneutics." *AJS Review* 11 (1986): 27–52.

- _____. *Through a Speculum That Shines: Vision and Imagination in Medieval Jewish Mysticism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.
- _____. *Venturing Beyond: Law and Morality in Kabbalistic Mysticism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- _____. "Woman—The Feminine as Other in Theosophic Kabbalah: Some Philosophical Observations on the Divine Androgyne." In *The Other in Jewish Thought and History: Constructions of Jewish Culture and Identity*, edited by Laurence. J. Silberstein and Robert. L. Cohn, 166-204. New York: New York University Press, 1994.
- Wolfson, Harry A. *Philo: Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*. 2 vols. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1947.
- Wolski, Nathan. *A Journey into the "Zohar": An Introduction to "The Book of Radiance"*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010.
- Yisraeli, Oded. "Dilemmot Hilkhatiyot be-Sefer ha-Zohar." In *Ve-Zot Li-Yhudah: Qovets Ma'amarim ha-Muqdash la-Haverenu Prof. Yehuda Liebes le-Regel Yom Hulladto ha-Shishim va-Hamishah*, edited by Maren R. Niehoff, Ronit Meroz, and Jonathan Garb, 202-21. Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 2012.
- _____. *Pithei Heikhal: Iyyunei Aggadah u-Midrash be-Sefer ha-Zohar*. Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2013.
- Zivotofsky, Ari Z. "What's the Truth About ... the Kohen Gadol's Rope?" *Jewish Action: The Magazine of the Orthodox Union*. August 12, 2009. www.ou.org/jewish_action/08/2009/whats_the_truth_about_the_kohen_gadols_rope/

1. For a list of eighty-four *Zohar* manuscripts, see Rubin, "Mif'al ha-Zohar," 172-73.

Index of Sources

This index includes sources that are quoted (rather than merely cited or alluded to) either in the *Zohar* or in the translator's notes. Biblical passages appear mostly in the text of the *Zohar* itself; other listed works appear almost exclusively in the notes.

BIBLICAL LITERATURE

TANAKH (HEBREW BIBLE)

Genesis

1:2	253
1:3	91
1:5	91-92
1:26	169
1:27	169-70 , 250-51
1:28	487
1:31	200
2:3	57 , 440 , 459
2:4	14
2:7	343 , 412 , 427-28
2:8	406
2:9	116 , 203-5 , 334
2:10	74 , 331 , 385-86
2:12	329 , 539
2:17	41 , 44 , 204-5 , 233
2:18	19
2:21	18 , 438-39
2:22	18-19 , 429 , 439
2:23	463-64
3:3	221
3:6	203
3:12	18-19
3:16	469-70
3:19	298
3:24	205 , 398
4:1	20 , 441
4:3-4	43
4:8	441-42
4:25	20
5:2	12-13 , 19-20 , 463 , 486
5:3	252 , 446

6:1-4	449
6:2	449
6:4	449-50
6:6	450
6:7	450
6:8	451
8:4	496-97 , 499
8:21	242 , 403
9:22	162
9:25	161-62
11:30	93
12:3	479
13:10	397-98
14:18	74-75
15:5-6	483-84
15:9	48
15:13	147
15:13-14	148
15:19	287
16:2	94
17:1-2	431
17:12	78
17:17-21	94
17:18	94
17:20	94
18:19	231-32
19:13	398
19:24	397-99
20:2-3	227
20:11	139
20:12	139-40
22:11	400
22:16	341-42
23:16	328
24:1	179 , 484-85
24:31	162

25:7 [62](#)
25:16 [488](#)
25:27 [62-63](#)
26:4 [86](#)
26:8 [227](#)
26:33 [243](#)
27:17 [23](#)
27:29 [479](#)
28:13 [24](#)
28:14 [86](#)
29:31 [121](#)
30:13 [125](#)
30:14 [498](#)
31:7 [332](#)
31:24 [227](#)
31:47 [331](#)
33:20 [38](#)
35:2-3 [27](#)
35:11 [273](#)
36:22 [498](#)
36:31 [325-26](#), [380](#), [432](#)
36:32 [380-81](#)
36:33-39 [382](#), [432](#)
36:37 [433](#)
36:39 [382](#), [433-34](#)
37:11 [16](#)
38:7 [69](#)
38:9 [69](#)
42:1-2 [88-89](#)
46:2 [400-401](#)
48:10 [273](#)
48:13-14 [274](#)
48:14 [273](#)
48:20 [273-74](#), [341-42](#)
49:8 [529](#)
49:9 [528](#)

49:13 [503](#)
49:19 [538](#)
49:22 [340](#)
49:33 [282-83](#)

Exodus

2:2 [401](#)
2:4 [158-59](#)
2:11-12 [193](#)
2:11-14 [195](#)
2:12 [192-93](#)
2:14 [195](#)
2:23 [382](#)
3:4 [400-401](#)
3:5 [198, 486](#)
3:7 [393](#)
3:14 [472](#)
4:22 [492](#)
6:5 [109](#)
6:5-6 [109-10](#)
6:6-7 [114](#)
6:10 [362](#)
7:16 [465](#)
7:17 [465-66](#)
7:23 [465](#)
12:3 [156, 543](#)
12:7 [111](#)
12:12 [492](#)
12:14 [517](#)
12:15 [497](#)
12:19 [114](#)
12:23 [364, 493-94](#)
12:24-25 [517](#)
12:29 [494](#)
12:42 [112-13](#)
13:16 [437](#)

14:15 [147-48](#)
14:19 [506-8](#)
14:19-21 [506-13](#)
14:20 [115](#), [493](#), [508-9](#), [512](#)
14:21 [510](#)
15:1 [275](#)
15:3 [354](#), [411](#)
15:6 [434](#), [435](#), [436-38](#)
15:11 [102](#), [322](#)
15:23-25 [296-97](#)
15:25 [297-98](#)
16:4 [111](#), [118](#), [158](#), [543](#)
16:14 [329](#)
16:23 [456](#)
16:29 [216-17](#)
17:7 [334](#)
19:2 [26](#)
19:3 [256](#)
19:5 [272](#)
19:6 [8](#)
19:11 [25-26](#)
19:12-13 [198](#)
19:15 [371](#)
20:1 [362](#)
20:3-4 [25](#)
20:5 [21](#)
20:8 [14](#), [108](#), [229](#), [246](#), [455](#)
20:10 [456](#)
20:11 [102](#), [164](#)
20:12 [13-14](#), [248](#)
20:13 [26](#)
20:17 [25](#)
20:21 [258](#)
21:2 [208-9](#), [211](#)
21:5-6 [212](#)
21:6 [90-91](#), [209](#), [212](#)

21:33-34 [290](#)
22:3 [403](#)
22:27 [169](#)
22:30 [99-101](#)
23:10 [213](#)
23:10-11 [214](#)
24:7 [213](#)
25:1-3 [489](#)
25:8 [304](#)
28:36 [335](#)
28:38 [335](#)
30:7-8 [501](#)
30:12 [256](#)
30:28 [226](#)
31:14 [14, 101](#)
31:16-17 [246](#)
31:17 [108](#)
32:32 [539-40](#)
33:7 [238](#)
33:11 [239](#)
33:20 [56, 477, 310-11](#)
34:6 [323, 359, 400, 402, 420-21](#)
34:6-7 [350, 353, 418, 474](#)
34:7 [421-22](#)
34:8 [359](#)
34:14 [21](#)
34:28 [453](#)
34:29 [360](#)
34:29-30 [360, 455](#)
36:6 [540](#)
38:24-25 [489](#)
38:26 [330, 385](#)
40:35 [485](#)

Leviticus

1:5 [294](#)

3:3	102
3:15	125
6:2	206-8
6:3	46
7:37	6
8:33	63-65
9:22	89 , 469
10:1	403
10:9	311
11:43	3 , 6 , 44 , 306 , 523
11:44	3 , 8-9 , 44 , 71 , 306 , 523
13:46	445
15:28	126
16:2	219-20
16:3	211 , 463-64
16:6	256 , 463-64
16:8	145
16:10	145-46
16:13	158
16:14-16	151
16:15	150
16:22	150
16:30	155
19:1	9
19:2	4 , 7-8 , 10 , 12-13 , 25-26 , 43-44
19:3	13-16 , 26 , 194
19:4	17 , 21-22 , 24-25
19:11	25-26
19:13	25 , 28-29
19:14	31-32 , 34
19:15	35-36
19:16	26
19:16-18	37
19:18	25
19:19	37 , 39-43 , 229
19:23-24	47-48

19:24	49
19:25	48
19:26	50
19:27	423
19:29	26
19:30	15-16
19:32	50-51 , 179
19:36	528
20:7	44 , 71
20:10	26
20:13	26
20:26	44 , 71
20:26-27	54-55
21:1	54-55 , 58-60 , 61
21:1-4	54 , 61
21:3	61-62
21:5	63 , 65 , 367
21:10	65
21:10-11	60
21:10-12	65
21:12	59 , 65
21:13	67
21:14-15	70-71
21:17	72 , 75
21:18	73 , 75-76
21:22	481-82
22:15	69
22:20	75
22:27	77 , 81 , 84-85
22:28	86-87
23:2	101
23:2	91-92
23:3	93 , 101 , 104-5 , 107
23:4	91-92 , 97 , 99-100 , 160
23:5	109 , 111-2
23:15	120 , 126

23:17 [124](#)
23:24 [131-32](#), [137](#), [140](#)
23:27 [138](#), [141](#), [156](#)
23:34 [156-57](#)
23:37 [188](#)
23:39 [118](#)
23:40 [34](#), [169](#), [176-80](#)
23:42 [162](#), [164](#)
23:42-43 [160](#)
23:43 [163](#)
24:1-2 [183](#)
24:10 [189](#), [192-93](#)
24:11 [189](#), [191](#), [195-96](#), [231](#)
24:12 [196](#)
24:14 [194](#)
24:15 [194](#), [196-97](#), [199](#)
24:16 [197](#), [199](#)
24:43 [163](#)
25:2 [208-9](#), [213](#)
25:3-4 [213-14](#)
25:6 [208](#)
25:9 [90](#)
25:10 [90](#), [209](#)
25:20-21 [214](#), [216](#)
25:55 [213](#)
26:3 [214](#), [223](#), [229-30](#), [288](#), [522](#)
26:3-4 [231](#)
26:4 [231](#), [234-36](#), [247](#)
26:6 [234-36](#)
26:11 [236-41](#)
26:12 [238](#)
26:14 [245](#)
26:15 [241-44](#)
26:18 [242](#)
26:28 [243-44](#), [247](#)
26:44 [224](#), [247-48](#)

Numbers

1:1	250-57
1:2	250
1:3	528
2:2	258-66
2:10	276
2:17	262 , 272-79
2:17-18	273
2:18	272 , 276
2:25	276 , 532
4:19	479
5:6	286 , 288-89 , 293
5:6-7	290
5:12	293-303
5:15	119-20 , 294
5:17	298-99
5:18	297 , 299-300
5:21-22	296
5:22	300
5:27	119 , 301
5:28	295
5:29	118-19
6:2	304-17
6:3	311-12
6:5	312-13 , 316
6:5-6	316
6:7	59
6:11	314-15
6:22-27	460
6:23	460-78 , 485
6:24	476 , 478
6:24-25	473-74
6:25	369 , 423 , 477-78
6:26	423 , 477-78
6:27	465 , 479-85
7:1	485-89

7:11 [488](#)
7:14 [489](#)
7:88 [488](#)
8:2 [491](#), [495](#), [500-502](#)
8:6 [471](#), [515](#)
8:6-7 [516](#)
8:7 [313](#), [316](#), [515](#)
8:11 [516](#)
9:1 [517-18](#)
9:1-2 [517](#)
9:2 [522](#)
9:10 [522-24](#)
9:11 [523](#)
9:15 [525](#)
10:2 [527-35](#)
10:5 [534](#)
10:9-10 [534-35](#)
10:17 [530](#)
10:33 [536-37](#)
10:34 [162-63](#)
10:35 [535-38](#)
10:35-36 [535](#), [537](#)
11:1 [402-5](#), [537](#)
11:5 [210-11](#), [365](#)
11:7 [329](#), [538-45](#)
11:9 [127](#)
11:12 [321-22](#)
11:14-15 [365](#), [539](#), [543-44](#)
11:16 [544](#)
11:16-17 [539-40](#)
11:17 [544](#)
11:28 [540](#)
11:29 [540-41](#)
11:33 [465](#)
12:8 [545](#)
12:9 [363](#)

12:13	545
13:29	161
14:14	158 , 162-63 , 340 , 395
14:18	418 , 421-22 , 474
14:20	363
15:30	498
15:38	42
16:26	166
18:2	470
18:20	66-67
18:26	54
19:2	516
19:14	172
20:1	157-59
20:1-2	159
20:2	158-59
20:29	158 , 160-61
21:1	157-58 , 160-62
21:5	543-44
21:18	505-6
22:7	225
22:8	227-28
22:9	228
22:20	228
23:4	228
23:8	225 , 229 , 269-71
23:21	226
23:23	225-26
24:1	228-29
24:3	480
24:16	225 , 270
25:1	226
25:2	226
25:12-13	120
25:13	119
26:7	260-61

26:14 [261](#)
26:56 [145-46](#)
28:26 [117](#), [120-21](#)
29:35 [123](#), [182-83](#)

Deuteronomy

1:10 [254-55](#)
1:10-11 [255](#)
4:4 [4](#), [15](#), [86](#), [90](#), [100](#), [284](#), [407-8](#), [454](#)
4:30-31 [291](#)
4:39 [442](#)
4:44 [80](#)
5:12 [14](#), [229](#), [246](#), [455](#)
6:4 [210](#), [275](#)
6:5 [34](#), [255](#), [323](#)
6:15 [403](#)
9:19 [397](#)
9:27 [17-18](#)
9:29 [436](#)
11:12 [396](#)
11:13 [210](#), [275](#)
11:17 [403](#)
12:12 [108](#)
14:1 [10](#)
15:1 [243](#)
16:8 [497](#)
16:16-17 [167](#)
18:2 [66-67](#)
21:23 [57-58](#), [448](#)
22:10 [44](#)
22:11 [38](#)
22:16-19 [67](#)
23:6 [481](#)
23:15 [238](#)
24:15 [28-31](#)
26:5 [121-480](#)

27:7 [108](#)
27:14-15 [322](#)
27:15 [322](#)
28:10 [415-16](#)
28:15 [245](#)
28:67 [175](#)
28:69 [245-46](#)
29:17 [301](#)
30:3 [71-72, 244-45](#)
30:19 [38](#)
30:20 [2](#)
32:1 [325](#)
32:6 [304](#)
32:7 [67](#)
32:9 [100, 164, 201](#)
32:11 [531](#)
32:19 [17](#)
33:2 [97, 257, 416](#)
33:8 [464, 468](#)
33:18 [503, 505](#)
33:19 [504, 506](#)
33:29 [90, 322, 408](#)

Joshua

5:13-15 [487](#)
6:26 [453](#)
24:2 [131-32](#)
24:3 [131-32](#)
24:4 [131](#)

Judges

1:16 [287](#)
4:11 [286-88](#)
5:4 [78-79](#)
5:10 [346](#)
5:28 [227](#)
13:5 [313, 315](#)

16:30 [315-16](#)

1 Samuel

1:26 [19](#)

2:2 [427](#)

2:12 [6](#)

2:22 [6](#)

3:10 [400-401](#)

3:14 [6](#)

5:6 [287](#)

15:6 [286-87](#)

15:29 [391](#)

16:7 [451](#)

16:12 [23](#)

17:51 [413](#)

25:29 [73](#)

25:38 [166](#)

2 Samuel

3:12 [437](#)

7:23 [11, 78, 92-93](#)

8:13 [230-31](#)

9:13 [104](#)

12:13 [17-18](#)

22:9 [345, 397](#)

22:24 [431](#)

1 Kings

6:1 [254](#)

7:21 [74](#)

8:13 [503](#)

8:52 [337-38](#)

8:53 [514](#)

8:65 [84-85](#)

10:19 [344](#)

19:11-12 [534](#)

2 Kings

1:8 [456](#)
8:1 [88](#)
12:10 [191](#), [193](#)
19:4 [364-65](#)
19:16 [388](#), [403](#), [405](#)

Isaiah

1:12 [282](#)
1:15 [282](#)
1:18 [152-53](#)
1:21 [208](#), [395-96](#), [448-49](#)
2:3 [482](#)
2:5 [341](#)
2:11 [386](#)
2:19 [373](#)
3:10 [215](#)
6:3 [115](#), [371](#), [446-47](#)
7:19 [373](#)
8:16 [73-74](#), [80](#)
8:19-20 [73](#)
9:5 [355](#)
11:2 [343-44](#)
18:1 [4-5](#)
22:14 [283](#)
23:18 [190](#), [317](#)
24:21 [111](#), [476](#)
25:8 [205](#), [289-90](#)
26:4 [197](#)
26:9 [5](#)
26:19 [328-29](#), [384](#)
27:5 [258-59](#)
28:8 [166](#)
30:29 [117](#)
32:15 [225](#), [288](#)
33:9 [202](#)
33:20 [395-96](#)

34:6 [61](#), [96](#)
34:10 [391](#)
35:7 [202](#)
37:17 [396](#)
40:7 [363](#)
41:2 [298-99](#)
41:4 [342](#)
41:8 [38](#)
41:18 [202](#)
42:8 [377](#)
43:7 [169](#), [175-76](#)
43:10 [38-39](#)
44:13 [429](#)
46:12 [220](#)
48:9 [345-46](#), [402](#)
49:3 [38](#), [183](#), [279](#), [341-42](#), [515](#), [535](#)
50:1 [155](#), [244](#)
50:2 [304-5](#)
51:9 [436](#)
52:8 [340](#), [395](#)
52:12 [260](#)
54:7 [396](#)
54:8 [367](#)
54:10 [367](#)
54:13 [80](#)
54:14 [233-34](#)
54:17 [167-68](#)
55:2 [260](#)
55:12 [120](#), [260](#)
56:4 [16](#)
56:4-5 [16](#)
56:11 [3-4](#)
57:1 [506](#)
57:15 [75](#)
58:8 [168](#)
58:11 [168](#)

58:13 [104-5](#), [185-86](#), [189](#), [459](#)
58:13-14 [104](#), [167](#), [185](#), [459](#)
58:14 [104](#), [167](#)
59:20 [545](#)
59:21 [128](#)
60:1 [62-63](#), [260](#)
60:2 [265](#)
60:21 [68-69](#), [168](#), [284](#)
61:9 [249](#)
61:10 [364](#)
62:8 [415-16](#)
63:1 [61-62](#)
63:3 [61-62](#)
63:8 [189](#)
63:9 [375-76](#), [449](#), [462](#)
63:12 [437](#)
64:3 [221-22](#)
65:10 [202](#)
65:22 [205](#)
66:10 [258-59](#)
66:18 [284](#)
66:23 [458-59](#)

Jeremiah

1:6 [361-62](#)
2:2 [163](#)
2:3 [78](#), [100-101](#), [139-40](#)
2:22 [18](#)
2:27 [333](#)
3:3 [336](#), [389-90](#)
3:22 [306](#)
10:2 [371](#)
17:8 [125](#)
23:24 [17](#)
29:10 [63-64](#)
31:12 [545](#)

31:20 [429](#)
31:34 [344](#)
33:25 [253](#)
37:18 [41](#)
44:17 [502](#)
46:22 [271](#)
48:11 [331](#)

Ezekiel

1:5, 13 [528](#)
1:10 [44](#), [261](#), [516](#), [527-30](#), [534](#)
1:18 [445](#)
1:19 [532](#)
1:19-21 [527](#)
1:20 [530](#)
1:26 [379](#), [426](#), [451-52](#)
1:28 [25](#)
9:6 [15](#)
10:14 [324](#)
10:21 [529](#)
11:16 [304](#)
16:6 [81-82](#)
34:31 [172](#), [448](#), [475](#)
36:25 [155](#)
36:26 [439](#)
37:9 [344-45](#)
41:22 [166](#)

Hosea

2:23 [476](#)
6:3 [482](#)
6:7 [289](#)
11:9 [482](#)
12:8 [162](#)
12:12 [226](#)
13:4 [27-28](#)
14:10 [452](#), [517](#)

Amos

2:6 [143](#)
3:8 [529](#)
4:13 [307](#)
5:2 [271](#), [536](#)

Obadiah

1:4 [86](#)

Jonah

2:3 [292-93](#)

Micah

6:3 [223](#)
6:5 [223](#), [225-27](#), [229](#), [270](#)
7:5 [286](#)
7:18 [355](#), [359](#), [362-66](#), [368](#), [420](#), [422](#)
7:18-20 [350](#), [352-53](#)
7:19 [144](#), [150](#), [363](#), [369-70](#), [373](#)
7:20 [373](#), [375-76](#), [407](#)

Habakkuk

3:2 [323-24](#), [406-7](#)

Zephaniah

3:13 [365](#)

Zechariah

3:9 [393](#)
4:10 [338](#), [340](#), [393](#), [455](#)
14:4 [444](#)
14:7 [122](#), [376](#)
14:9 [11](#), [76](#), [92](#)

Malachi

1:2 [47](#), [241](#), [323](#)
1:3 [241](#)
1:6 [248-49](#)
1:8 [75-76](#)
2:3 [165](#)

2:6 [35](#), [498](#)
2:7 [461](#), [472](#)
2:11 [315](#), [431](#)
3:4 [407](#)
3:6 [399](#)
3:10 [216](#)
3:20 [56](#), [359](#)

Psalms

1:6 [52](#)
2:11 [211](#), [259-60](#)
3:9 [71](#)
4:5 [234](#)
5:5 [69](#), [188-89](#)
7:10 [405](#)
7:12 [225](#), [270-71](#)
8:6 [90](#), [157](#), [209](#), [386](#)
9:8 [36](#)
12:6 [37](#)
14:2 [268-69](#)
15:1-2 [130](#)
17:14 [278](#)
19:6 [490-91](#)
19:7 [491](#)
19:8-11 [498](#)
19:10 [6-7](#)
20:3 [438](#)
25:1 [279-84](#)
25:10 [335](#), [389](#)
25:14 [82-83](#), [321](#), [426](#), [438](#)
25:15 [427](#)
26:2 [334](#)
27:1 [265](#)
27:3 [467](#)
27:8 [97-98](#)
27:11 [35](#)

27:13	55
29:10	336
29:11	416
31:6	30 , 266
31:20	55
32:1	141-44
32:2	285-90
32:9	1 , 3
32:11	184
33:5	62
33:6	424
33:18	338 , 340
36:6	120
36:7	77-78 , 475-76
36:8	500-501
36:10	141
37:3	214-15 , 218
37:35	38
39:2	197
39:7	170-71
42:9	162-63 , 508
42:10	1-2
44:24	341 , 392-93 , 438-39
45:6	62
47:6	133 , 495
47:10	505
49:13	448
50:2	257
57:6	37
60:7	97
67:2	369
68:19	159 , 486-87
69:14	335 , 390
69:34	404
74:2	224
76:3	74

76:9	80
77:6	462
78:5	80
78:25	329
78:36	284
78:36-37	283
81:4	131-33 , 137-39
81:5	39-40 , 230
81:9-10	196
82:1	37
84:5	276 , 536
86:11	35
89:3	367-68 , 463
89:15	36-37
86:16	22-23 , 135 , 138 , 492 , 499-500
89:50	421
89:53	117
91:10-11	201
91:10-13	201
91:14-15	130
92:3	215
92:6	366
92:13	178
94:17	308
95:6	204-5
97:11	56 , 91
98:1	120
100:2	259
100:3	377
101:7	149 , 284
102:1	232
102:18	489
103:1	306 , 311
103:17	454 , 460-63
103:19	120
104:1	422

104:4 [309-10](#), [519](#)
104:24 [21](#)
105:4 [97](#)
106:2 [397-98](#)
106:3 [219](#), [232](#)
106:4 [224](#)
106:20 [238](#)
106:48 [462](#)
110:1 [435-36](#)
111:5 [68](#)
111:10 [7](#), [211](#)
112:1 [52](#), [293](#)
112:2-3 [168](#)
112:9 [525-26](#)
113:9 [85](#)
115:12 [256](#)
115:12-13 [254](#)
115:13 [256](#)
116:1 [141](#)
118:5 [292-93](#), [411-13](#)
118:5-9 [411-12](#), [414](#)
118:6 [413](#)
118:7 [413](#)
118:10 [411](#), [412](#)
118:16 [434-35](#)
118:19-20 [110](#)
118:22 [435-36](#), [524](#)
118:24 [184](#), [241](#)
119:18 [520](#)
119:126 [318](#), [322](#)
121:4 [337-38](#)
121:5 [97](#)
122:4 [260-61](#)
122:7 [257](#)
126:1 [63-64](#)
126:2-3 [259](#)

128:3 [301-3](#)
128:4-6 [303](#)
130:1 [202](#)
130:3 [242](#)
130:4 [141](#)
133:1 [358](#)
133:2 [59-60](#), [357-58](#)
133:3 [257](#)
134:3 [257](#)
135:4 [272](#)
135:21 [485](#)
137:7 [61](#), [223-24](#)
139:5 [18](#), [20](#), [251](#), [429](#), [439](#)
139:14 [377](#)
140:14 [80](#), [284](#)
144:15 [101](#), [182](#), [276](#), [365-66](#), [536](#)
145:1 [274-75](#)
145:4 [398](#)
145:9-10 [201](#)
145:10 [464-65](#), [468-69](#), [471](#)
147:5 [420](#)
150:1 [275](#)

Proverbs

1:20 [351](#), [415](#)
1:20-22 [306](#)
2:17 [301-2](#)
3:6 [520](#)
3:8 [6-7](#), [490](#)
3:11 [241](#)
3:12 [241](#)
3:18 [116-17](#), [125](#), [298](#), [490](#)
3:19 [451](#)
4:18 [50](#), [53](#), [335](#), [526](#)
4:22 [490](#)
5:5 [204](#)

5:15	293
5:19	34
7:26	32
8:12	450-51
8:21	328
8:30	327 , 519
9:4-5	1
9:16-17	1-2
10:2	29 , 219-20 , 233 , 526-27
10:25	69 , 443
11:4	29 , 219 , 526-27
11:13	324
11:24	216 , 525-26
12:4	119
13:25	166
14:17	323
14:28	305
15:15	502
16:15	348 , 368-69 , 495
16:20	141
19:11	422-23
19:23	188-89
19:26	155
20:11	52
20:29	423 , 425
22:4	460-61
22:9	255 , 339-41 , 480-81
23:24	266
23:25	265-66 , 544-45
23:6	165-66 , 481
23:8	166
24:3-4	387
24:4	386
24:17	115 , 493
25:2	190
25:4	144-45

25:9 [193](#)
25:21-22 [149](#)
25:22 [149](#)
27:9 [183-85](#), [495](#), [501](#), [514](#)
28:13 [142](#)
28:24 [266](#), [545](#)
30:15 [4](#), [381](#)
30:20 [193](#)
30:21-23 [94](#)
31:10 [40](#), [42](#), [68](#), [119](#)
31:13 [42-43](#)
31:14-15 [68](#)
31:15 [39-40](#)

Job

1:6-12 [146-47](#)
1:7 [146](#), [149](#)
1:8 [147-48](#)
1:9 [147](#)
1:12 [148](#)
2:6 [147-48](#)
12:22 [417](#)
14:11 [506](#)
20:27 [142](#)
22:28 [215-16](#)
23:13 [12](#)
27:17 [144](#), [542](#)
28:23 [337](#), [419](#)
29:25 [361](#)
33:23-24 [307](#)
33:29 [362](#)
34:3 [405](#)
34:8 [53](#)
34:21 [17](#), [393](#)
36:4 [331](#)
37:7 [393](#)

37:21 [364](#)
38:12-13 [97](#)
38:13 [96](#)
38:14 [76](#)
38:15 [56](#), [91](#)
38:33 [39-40](#)
39:26 [531](#)

Song of Songs

1:2 [98-99](#), [109](#), [502](#)
1:4 [184](#)
1:6 [271-72](#)
1:10 [447](#)
1:11 [447](#)
2:1 [201-3](#)
2:3 [160](#), [368](#)
2:4 [34](#)
2:6 [264](#), [274](#), [281](#), [491](#)
2:8 [240](#)
2:9 [239-40](#), [537](#)
2:17 [172](#)
3:7-8 [274](#), [488](#)
3:11 [108](#), [129](#), [157](#), [491](#)
4:1 [302](#)
4:2 [394](#)
4:4 [424-25](#)
5:2 [109-10](#), [328-29](#), [384](#)
5:11 [316](#), [332](#), [353-54](#), [388](#), [416-17](#)
5:12 [392](#)
5:13 [203](#), [347](#), [367](#), [408-9](#), [421-22](#)
5:15 [74](#), [387-88](#), [409](#), [425](#), [443](#)
6:5 [22-23](#), [302](#)
7:6 [388](#), [416](#), [429](#)
7:10 [117-18](#), [378-79](#)
7:11 [358](#)
8:6 [281](#)

8:14 [455](#)

Lamentations

1:18 [235](#)

4:20 [235](#)

5:1 [223](#)

Ecclesiastes

1:7 [127](#), [506](#)

3:20 [298](#)

5:5 [190-91](#), [197](#), [324](#)

5:8 [200](#)

6:1-2 [541](#)

6:2 [541-43](#)

7:19 [451](#)

7:26 [204](#)

7:29 [204](#)

9:17 [352](#)

10:20 [404](#)

12:1 [52](#)

12:1-2 [29](#)

12:2 [28](#)

12:14 [17](#)

Esther

7:10 [365](#)

Daniel

1:6 [468](#)

2:22 [5](#)

3:21 [180](#)

4:13 [311](#)

4:14 [424](#)

5:6 [323](#)

6:11 [240](#)

7:9 [51](#), [137](#), [190](#), [312-13](#), [316](#), [322](#), [327](#), [332](#), [342](#),

[346-47](#), [352](#), [354](#), [377](#), [419](#)

7:9-10 [354](#)

7:10 [336](#), [355](#)
7:13 [451](#)
9:7 [65-66](#)
9:18 [341](#), [395](#), [481](#)
9:21 [445](#)
10:6 [445](#)
10:7 [309](#), [467](#)
12:2 [384](#)
12:13 [435-36](#)

Ezra

6:2 [173](#)

1 Chronicles

16:33 [117](#)
17:1 [78](#)
17:21 [93](#), [116](#), [416](#)
29:11 [66](#), [85](#), [397-98](#), [484](#)
29:23 [344](#)

2 Chronicles

35:23 [235](#)

New Testament

Luke

10:2 [319](#)

Matthew

9:37 [319](#)

Targum

Targum

on Ecclesiastes 9:2 [370](#)

Targum Onqebis

on Genesis 8:4 [496](#)
on Genesis 10:9 [411](#)
on Genesis 27:44 [390](#)
on Genesis 29:20 [390](#)

RABBINIC LITERATURE

Mishnah

Avot

1:1	315
1:12	55
2:5	352
2:10	175
2:20	318
3:3	166
3:7	2
3:16	318-19
4:1	35 , 293
4:11	17 , 258 , 307
4:20	521
5:6	440
6:2	1 , 306-7 , 319

Bava Metsi'a

9:13	267
------	---------------------

Berakhot

2:2	210-11 , 275
5:5	154

Hagigah

1:8	520
2:1	25 , 308

Ketubbot

5:6	9 , 440
7:10	248

Oholot

6:7	343
-----	---------------------

Pe'ah

1:1	542
-----	---------------------

Qinnim

3:6	331
<i>Rosh ha-Shanah</i>	
1:2	124
<i>Sanhedrin</i>	
4:3	319
9:6	119
<i>Shabbat</i>	
19:6	82
<i>Sotah</i>	
9:12	259
9:15	7 , 460
<i>Ta'anit</i>	
3:5	235
<i>Yevamot</i>	
16:3	343 , 391 , 397
<i>Yoma</i>	
1:1	256 , 463
5:3-4	150
8:1	140 , 155
<i>Zevahim</i>	
5:3	262 , 264 , 277
<i>Tosefta</i>	
<i>Bava Qamma</i>	
7:5	213
<i>Kareitot</i>	
4:15	519
<i>Sotah</i>	
23	295
Babylonian Talmud	
<i>Avodah Zarah</i>	
2a, 4b	258

6a-b [32](#)
19a [52](#), [293](#)
20a [21](#)
54b [40](#)

Bava Batra

16a [242](#)
25b [263](#), [272](#), [529](#)
58a [20](#)
75a [239](#)
89b [320](#)
116a [447](#)

Bava Metsi'a

58b [31](#)
61b [492](#)
85a [128](#)

Bava Qamma

65b [81](#)

Beitsah

16a [108](#)

Berakhot

3a [206-7](#), [227](#)
3b [10](#), [207](#), [231](#), [493](#)
4b [274](#), [536](#)
5a [234](#), [266](#)
5b [263](#)
6a [12](#), [170](#), [415-16](#)
6b [305](#)
7a [225](#), [270](#)
10a [427](#)
10b [50](#)
14a [189](#)
14b-15a [281](#)
17a [190](#), [458](#)
17b [220-21](#)

24a [302](#), [430](#)
26b [285-86](#), [336](#)
31a [259](#)
31b [64](#), [187](#)
34b [98-99](#), [222](#), [240](#)
35b [106-7](#), [266](#), [545](#)
43b [496](#)
47b [304](#)
51a [71](#)
55a [88](#)
55b [446](#), [478-79](#)
57b [267](#), [286](#)
59a [356](#), [396](#), [404-5](#)
61a [19](#), [439](#)
63a [520](#)

Eruvin

21b [332](#), [388](#), [417](#)
53b [207](#)
54b [34](#), [346](#)

Hagigah

12a [20](#), [251](#), [271](#)
12b [503](#)
14a [354](#)
14b [456](#)
15a [144](#), [425](#)
15b [198](#)
16a [24-25](#), [286](#)

Hullin

5b [77-78](#)
60b [497](#), [520](#)
91b [24](#)

Ketubbot

62b [9-10](#), [440](#)

Makkot

10b [3](#), [306](#), [523](#)

Megillah

3a [467](#)

10b [115](#), [493](#)

12b [331](#)

18a [38-39](#)

29a [71](#), [244-45](#), [304](#)

31b [245](#)

Menahot

28b [349](#)

Mo'ed Qatan

16b [216](#)

17a [32](#)

28a [309](#), [370](#), [372](#)

Nedarim

20a [21](#)

38a [90](#), [157](#), [209](#), [386](#)

64b [233](#)

Niddah

31b [295](#)

Pesahim

8a [360](#)

22b [32](#)

49b [2](#)

50a [443](#)

50b [35](#)

66b [352](#)

68b [253](#), [520](#)

107a [109](#)

107b [106](#)

112b [235](#)

117a [141](#)

119a [190](#), [317](#)

120a [497](#)

Qiddushin

31b	249
33b	51
70a	70
71a	466 , 473
82b	248

Rosh ha-Shanah

16a-b	133
16b	137 , 499
21b	90 , 157 , 209 , 386

Sanhedrin

7a	37
18a	327
19a	327
89b	95
90b	118
97a	386
99b	258-59
106a	112 , 440
106b	255
108a	17
111a	359

Shabbat

11a	87 , 186-87
11b	542
31a	318
32b	216
35b	454-55
63a	258
88a	253
88b	455
105b	196
113a-b	105-6 , 185-86
145b-146a	45 , 441
151b	165

152a [60](#), [235](#), [247](#), [347](#), [408](#), [413](#)
156a [371](#), [484](#)
156b [220](#)

Sotah

11b [434](#)
17a [465](#)
22a [32](#)
38b [255](#), [339](#), [471](#), [480](#)
39a [480](#)

Sukkah

45b [323](#)
52b [145](#)

Ta'anit

8b [255](#)
9a [157-59](#)
22a-b [235](#)
23a [64](#), [216](#)
29a [343](#)
29b [23](#)

Tamid

32b [11](#)

Yevamot

49b [541](#)
60b-61a [171-72](#), [448](#), [475-76](#)
62b [276](#)
62b-63a [12-13](#), [463](#)
103b [127](#), [300](#)
105a [6](#)

Yoma

20a [148](#)
21b [76](#), [403](#), [533](#)
38b-39a [3](#), [44](#), [306](#), [523](#)
39a [8-9](#)
67a [153](#)

80b [142-43](#)
86b [142](#)

Minor Tractates

Avot de-Rabbi Natan A

15 [175](#)
25 [139](#)

Jerusalem Talmud

Berakhot

4:2, 7d [124](#)

Eruvin

5:1, 22b [483](#)

Kil'ayim

1:7, 27b [301](#)

Ma'aserot

3:8, 50d [27](#)

Pe'ah

1:1, 16b [292](#)

RABBINIC LITERATURE: MIDRASH

Bemidbar Rabbah

13:17 [503-4](#)
14:12 [252, 446](#)

Bereshit Rabbah

1:1 [326, 519](#)
3:2 [91-92](#)
3:7 [325, 380-81](#)
4:7 [399](#)
10:6 [175](#)
11:5 [103, 187, 458](#)
12:10 [197-98](#)
13:3 [412](#)
14:9 [286](#)
17:5 [8, 439](#)
18:1 [439](#)
20:6 [39](#)
22:6 [332](#)
33:3 [290, 398](#)
42:3 [299](#)
44:10 [484](#)
47:6 [49, 132, 436, 459, 511](#)
50:2 [361](#)
51:2 [494](#)
65:22 [23](#)
91:9 [529](#)

Eikhah Rabbah

5:19 [244](#)

Mekhilta

Pisha 7, 13 [492](#)
Vayassa 2 [127](#)
Bahodesh 2 [256, 438](#)
Bahodesh 8 [13, 194](#)

Midrash Tehillim

12:4 [387](#)
86:8 [153](#)
139:5 [429](#), [439](#)

Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana

5:6 [110](#)
22:2 [184](#)
26:10 [302](#)

Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer

3 [323](#), [387](#)
21 [45](#), [252](#), [441](#)
34 [328](#), [384](#)
46 [146](#)

Shemot Rabbah

2:6 [401](#)
10:1 [200](#)
13:1 [298](#)
15:26 [236](#)
17:5 [82](#)
21:7 [147-48](#)
31:10 [236-37](#)

Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah

on 2:4 [34-35](#)
on 4:11 [129](#)
on 5:2 [110](#)
on 5:11 [319](#)
on 7:3 [319](#)
on 7:10 [117](#), [378-79](#)

Sifra

Nedavah

2:12, 4a [56](#), [310-11](#), [477](#)

Millu'im (Shemini)

1:35, 45d [153](#)

Qedoshim

2:14, 88d [32](#)

Sifrei

Numbers

1 [536](#)
112 [498](#)
115 [504](#)
140 [239](#), [541](#)

Deuteronomy

279 [29](#), [30](#)

Tanḥuma

Vayiqra 8 [33](#)
Tazri'a 6 [333](#)
Naso 22 [237](#)
Pinḥas 6 [146](#)

Tanḥuma (Buber)

Bereshit 17 [57](#), [440](#)

Vayiqra Rabbah

4:6 [289](#)
7:3 [47](#)
11:7 [56](#), [91](#), [250](#)
14:1 [18](#), [250-51](#), [439](#)
20:2 [20](#)
24:5 [9](#), [25](#)
24:6 [9](#)
29:1 [140](#)
29:3 [133](#), [495](#)
30:10 [179](#)
32:4 [192](#)
35:7 [215](#), [230](#), [522](#)

EARLY JEWISH MYSTICAL LITERATURE

Pereq Shirah

2:57 [207](#)

Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*

§952 [346](#)

Sefer Yetsirah

2:6 [383](#)

5:1 [375](#)

MEDIEVAL JEWISH SOURCES

Abraham ben Isaac of Narbonne

Sefer ha-Eshkol

47 [58](#)

Asher ben Yehiel

on M Oholot 6:7 [343](#)

Bahir

17 (25) [92](#)

18 (26) [462](#)

96 (141) [377](#)

135 (195) [462](#)

David ben Judah he-Hasid

Mar'ot ha-Tsove'ot

116 [319](#)

Ibn Gabirol, Solomon, *Keter Malkhut*

4:47 [521](#)

Maimonides, Moses

Guide of the Perplexed

1:57 [327](#)

Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Teshuvah

3:14 [292](#)

Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yom Tov

6:18 [165](#)

POSTBIBLICAL CHRISTIAN SOURCES

Gospel of Truth

22:17-29 [337](#)

Origen, De Principiis

3:5:3 [325-26](#)

4:2:4 [521](#)

OTHER

Emden, Jacob ben Tzvi

Mitpaḥat Sefarim

29 [360](#)

Josephus Flavius, *Antiquities of the Jews*

5:1:22 [504](#)

Philo of Alexandria, *De vita contemplativa*

10:78 [521](#)

Rumi, Jalal al-Din Muhammad

Mathnawi

3:4247-48 [521](#)

1. humiliation of Torah... See *Avot* 6:2, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi, "Every single day an echo resounds from Mount Horeb [Sinai], proclaiming: 'Woe to creatures for the humiliation of Torah!'"

In the verse from Proverbs, Lady Wisdom is speaking. The context (9:4-5) reads: "*Whoever is a fool, let him turn aside here; he who lacks sense [literally: heart]*"—she says to him: "*Come, partake of my bread, and drink of the wine I have mixed!*" See *Zohar* 1:165a, 193a, 227a; 2:99a; 3:58a. Cf. 3:126a.

2. ḥasar lev, he who lacks heart... Rabbi El'azar focuses on the literal meaning of לֵב (*lev*), *heart*. See the preceding note.

3. ואמרה (Ve-amerah), And she says, to him... The verse actually reads אמרה (*amerah*), *she says, to him*. The wording ואמרה (*ve-amerah*), *and she says, to him* appears later in the same chapter of Proverbs, in a verse spoken not by Lady Wisdom but by Lady Folly: "*Whoever is a fool, let him turn aside here; he who lacks sense*"—*ve-amerah, she says* [literally: *and she says*], to him: "*Stolen water is sweet, and secret bread is delicious*" (Proverbs 9:16-17). See *Minḥat Shai* on Proverbs 9:4.

Here Rabbi El'azar assumes, or pretends, that the verse spoken by Lady Wisdom reads *ve-amerah*. He suggests that the syntax of the verse would be smoother if it read אומר (omerah), *I will say*, which would yield the following: "*Whoever is a fool, let him turn aside here; he who lacks sense, I will say to him: 'Come, partake of my bread, and drink of the wine I have mixed!'*" This, in fact, matches the reading in the Peshitta. See Fox, *Proverbs*, 1:298.

However, probing more deeply, Rabbi El'azar explains (based on rabbinic hermeneutics) that here *ve, and*, adds an element, namely "Torah above," symbolizing *Tif'eret*, who is known as Written Torah (in contrast to *Shekhinah*, who is pictured as Oral Torah and who is supposedly the primary speaker here in Proverbs). *Tif'eret* is also symbolized by the

letter ך (vav) itself, whose numerical value of six alludes to the sixfold constellation of *sefirot* from *Hesed* through *Yesod*, whose core is *Tif'eret*.

For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Haggahot Maharḥu*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Nefesh David*; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. The verse in Psalms reads: *I will say to God, my Rock, "Why have You forgotten me?"*

4. all the more so to travel with him... See BT *Pesaḥim* 49b, in the name of Rabbi El'azar (son of Pedat): "One must not accompany an עַם הָאָרֶץ (*am ha-arets*), ignoramus, on the road, as is said: *for that* [namely Torah] *is your life and the length of your days* (Deuteronomy 30:20)—of his own life he is careless [since he neglects Torah], how much more so of his companion's life!"

On the mortal danger of walking unaccompanied by Torah, see M *Avot* 3:7, in the name of Rabbi Ya'akov (according to the Kaufmann manuscript): "One who is walking on the way and studying, and interrupts his study and says, 'How beautiful is this tree! How beautiful is this ploughed field!'—Scripture considers him as if he forfeits his soul [that is, liable to the death penalty]."

Here Rabbi El'azar describes one who neglects Torah as valuing "neither the honor of his Lord nor his own" and (based on the passage in BT *Pesaḥim*) as being "careless of his soul (or life)."

The term (*am ha-arets*) means literally "people of the land, rural population"; by extension, it designates one who is coarse, unrefined, illiterate, ignorant of the Torah, and unobservant of certain ritual practices. On the passage in *Pesaḥim*, see *Zohar* 2:49b. On the verse in Deuteronomy, see Vol. 6, p. 105, n. 131.

On the passage in M *Avot*, see *Zohar* 1:242b. Cf. *Zohar* 1:69b; Vol. 5, pp. 191–92, n. 19. On the importance of engaging in Torah while walking or traveling, see also Deuteronomy 6:7; BT *Eruvin* 54a, *Ta'anit* 10b, *Sotah* 49a;

Zohar 1:7a, 58b-59a, 69b-70a, 76a, 87a, 115b, 157a, 164a, 230a-b; 2:13a, 32a, 95a, 138b, 155b, 188b, 215a, 232b; 3:25b, 52a, 87b; Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows from Eden*, 111-20.

5. How can one who is careless of his soul... If he neglects Torah and thereby his own spiritual growth, how can he draw a holy soul from above for the embryo of his child?

6. Be not like a horse... Rushing lustfully into sexual union. Rather, this act should become an opportunity to imitate and stimulate the union of *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, thereby drawing a holy soul generated by the divine couple.

7. sanctify themselves with holiness of the King... Specifically during sexual union.

On the importance and consequences of holy sexual union, see BT *Nedarim* 20a-b, *Shevu'ot* 18b, *Niddah* 70b-71a; *Kallah* 1:8-10; *Kallah Rabbati* 1:11, 13, 15; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 9:7; *Zohar* 1:54a, 90b, 112a (*MhN*), 130b, 155a (*ST*), 222b; 2:11b, 95b; 3:49b, 56a, 77a, 80a-82a, 83b-84a; *ZH* 11a-b (*MhN*); *Iggeret ha-Qodesh* (in *Kitvei Ramban* 2:321-37); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1363-64.

8. from the side of impurity... From the demonic Other Side.

See BT *Yoma* 38b-39a: "Resh Lakish said: '... If one comes to defile himself, they open the door for him; if one comes to purify himself, they assist him.' ... Our rabbis taught: 'Do not become impure with them, becoming impure through them' (Leviticus 11:43). If one defiles himself slightly, he is defiled greatly; [if one defiles himself] below, he is defiled from above; in this world, he is defiled in the world that is coming.' Our rabbis taught: 'You shall hallow yourselves and become holy' (ibid., 44). If one sanctifies himself slightly, he is sanctified greatly; below, he is sanctified from above; in this world, he is sanctified in the world that is coming.'"

See BT *Shabbat* 104a, *Avodah Zarah* 55a, *Menaḥot* 29b. Cf. BT *Makkot* 10b: “Rabbah son of Bar Ḥana said in the name of Rabbi Huna (some say, Rabbi Huna said in the name of Rabbi El’azar), ‘From the Torah, the Prophets, and the Writings it can be demonstrated that one is led on the path one wishes to take.’” Leviticus 11:43 reads in full: *Do not make yourselves detestable through any swarming thing that swarms and do not become impure with them, becoming impure through them.*

9. more lustful than all See BT *Pesaḥim* 113b; *Pesiḳta de-Rav Kahana* 3:3; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tetse* 6; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tetse* 6; Rashi on BT *Sotah* 47a, s.v. *lo efqod*.

10. without הַבִּין (*havin*), **sense...** The same word appears in the verse from Isaiah, describing Judea’s corrupt leaders or false prophets: *The dogs are* עֲזֵי נֶפֶשׁ (*azzei nefesh*), *greedy* [or: *of fierce appetite*]; *they never know satiety. They are shepherds incapable* הַבִּין (*havin*), *of understanding. Each of them has turned his own way, every last one for his own gain.*

Rabbi El’azar understands the phrase *azzei nefesh, greedy* (or *of fierce appetite*), as “greedy for souls,” referring to demonic forces eager to devour those souls who *are incapable* הַבִּין (*havin*), *of understanding* how to sanctify themselves during sexual activity. On the impudent and demonic nature of the dog, see Vol. 5, p. 142, n. 9.

11. They are shepherds... These demonic forces, aroused by impure sexuality, conduct the offender to Hell.

12. The leech has two daughters... In Proverbs this saying refers to a greedy person or to someone constantly leeching off others. It may also be a warning that a greedy parent engenders greedy children. Anatomically, the leech has two suckers, one at each end, pictured in this verse as *two daughters*.

Here (based on rabbinic sources), the *leech* represents Hell, whose forces (*daughters*) crave more and more wicked victims. See *Midrash Mishlei* 17:1; 30:15. Cf. BT

Avodah Zarah 17a; *Shemot Rabbah* 7:4; *Midrash Tehillim* 31:9.

13. they did not sanctify themselves in coupling... See above, [notes 6-7](#). The verse in Leviticus reads: *You shall be holy, for I, YHVH your God, am holy.*

14. Alas for the land of whirring wings... Rabbi Yitshak wonders how the exclamation *alas* (expressing reproach) is connected with the description *the land of whirring wings*.

The verse reads: ארץ צלצל כנפים (Hoi), *Ah* [or: *Alas for*], *erets tsiltsal kenafayim*, *land of whirring wings* [or: *land in the deep shadow of wings, most sheltered land, land of winged boats, land of sailing ships*], *beyond the rivers of Nubia!*

15. When the blessed Holy One unveiled the world... At Creation. All opposites are interdependent, deriving ultimately from Oneness. Evil issues from good, since it is the residue of the refining process of emanation.

See Vital; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:458-61. On the interdependence of light and darkness, see Abraham Ibn Ḥasdai, *Ben ha-Melekh ve-ha-Nazir*, ch. 18, pp. 136-37; *Zohar* 1:32a; 2:115b (RM), 184a, 187a; 3:47b. Cf. *Massekhet Atsilut* 1-2.

Some of the wording here draws on Daniel 2:22: *He reveals the deep and the hidden; He knows what is in darkness, and light dwells with Him.* On this verse, see *Tanḥuma*, *Tetsavveh* 6; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Tetsavveh* 6; *Zohar* 2:100b-101a, 187a-b; *ZH* 27a (MhN).

16. as a single clustered garland interlaced... Combining all opposites.

If the world were judged strictly, it could never endure. Fortunately, though, Judgment is mingled with Compassion. According to Rabbi Yitshak (and Rabbi Yehudah), the verse in Isaiah implies that when *Tif'eret*—also called *Raḥamim* (Compassion) and known as מִשְׁפַּט (*mishpat*), “Justice” (or “Judgment”)—joins *Shekhinah* (symbolized by *the earth*), the

inhabitants of the world can bear the Judgment of *Shekhinah* (who is known as *righteousness*).

See *Zohar* 1:241b; 3:67b, 198b. The full verse in Isaiah reads: *With my soul I desire You in the night, with my spirit within me I seek You at dawn. For when Your judgments reach the earth, inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.*

The phrase “clustered garland interlaced” renders עטירא דקוטיפא בקוטרוי (*atira de-qutifa be-qutroi*). *Qutifa* is based on קטופא (*qetufa*), “cluster.” *Qutroi* derives from the root קטר (*qtr*), “to tie, bind.”

17. When Judgment looms over the world... Then *Shekhinah* (known as Righteousness) is crowned with Her judgments, and many angelic powers are aroused, who absorb harsh Judgment and threaten the world. The verse in Isaiah refers to their menacing wings, so the exclamation *Alas* is appropriate. See above, [note 14](#).

18. all transpires like this... According to the dismal scenario described above, or according to the rabbinic principle paraphrased here: “If one comes to defile himself, they open the door for him; if one comes to purify himself, they assist him.” ... Our rabbis taught: ‘*Do not become impure with them, becoming impure through them.*” See above, [note 8](#).

19. Therefore I have sworn against the house of Eli... According to the biblical account, the sons of Eli the priest *were worthless fellows* who *scorned YHVH’s offering* by snatching it gluttonously, demanding raw meat from the worshipers before the fat could be offered up to God (1 Samuel 2:12-18). Furthermore, *they lay with the women who ministered at the Tent of Meeting* (*ibid.*, 22). Because of their contemptuous behavior and because their father, Eli, did not restrain them, God doomed the house of Eli.

According to BT *Yevamot* 105a (in the name of Rabbah), the divine oath *that the sin of the house of Eli will not be purged by sacrifice and offering* implies that “by

sacrifice and offering it cannot be purged, but by words of Torah it can.” See BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 18a.

On Torah being equivalent to (or outweighing) sacrifices, see BT *Menaḥot* 110a, in the name of Resh Lakish: “What is the meaning of the verse *This is the Torah for the ascent offering, for the grain offering, for the purification offering, and for the guilt offering* (Leviticus 7:37)? Whoever engages in Torah is considered to have offered an ascent offering, a grain offering, a purification offering, and a guilt offering.”

See *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 57; *Zohar* 1:100a (*MhN*), 191a-b; 3:32a, 35a, 159a, 164a. Cf. *Ta’anit* 27b; BT *Megillah* 31b. The verse in Leviticus begins: *This is התורה (ha-torah), the teaching, for [or: of] the ascent offering, for the grain offering...*

20. words of Torah are not susceptible to impurity... Meaning that even one who is impure is allowed to engage in Torah or read it publicly.

See JT *Berakhot* 3:4, 6c; BT *Berakhot* 22a, *Hullin* 136b. The full verse in Proverbs reads: *There will be [or: It will be, Let it be] healing for your navel [or: your flesh] and moistening for your bones.*

21. It is written the awe of YHVH... Rabbi Ḥiyya wonders how this verse demonstrates that Torah is pure, since the subject is not Torah but *the awe of YHVH*.

22. Torah derives from the side of Gevurah... Which is associated with *awe*, so Torah and *awe* are linked. The verse in Psalm 111 apparently indicates that Torah (identified with *wisdom*) is equivalent to *awe of YHVH*.

According to rabbinic tradition, the revelation to Moses at Sinai (and the revelation of at least the first two of the Ten Commandments to all of Israel) was conveyed מפי הגבורה (*mi-pi ha-gevurah*), “from the mouth of [Divine] Power.” In Kabbalah, Torah is pictured as being given “from the side of *Gevurah*” on the left, implying that *Tif’eret* (symbolized by Torah) derives from *Gevurah* (which it balances with *Ḥesed*).

See *Mekhilta, Bahodesh* 9; *Sifrei*, Numbers 112; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 33:2; BT *Shabbat* 88b, *Makkot* 24a; *Tanḥuma, Yitro* 11, *Vayelekh* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'ethannan* 6; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 22, 111a; *Shemot Rabbah* 33:7; *Midrash Tehillim* 68:6; *Zohar* 1:48b, 198a, 243a; 2:81a, 84a, 122a; 3:32a, 39a.

23. It is called holiness... Torah is also holy—because God is holy, and Torah is pictured as God's Name.

The verse in Leviticus reads: *You shall* [or: *will*] *be holy, for I, YHVH your God, am holy*. The future tense *You will be holy* (rather than the imperative *Be holy*) implies that after a person purifies himself by engaging in Torah, he then surely *will be holy*.

On Torah as God's Name, see Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 548; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 37; *Zohar* 1:160a; 2:55b, 60a-b, 87a, 90b, 124a, 161b; 3:13b, 19a, 21a, 35b-36a, 61a, 71a-73a, 76a, 89b, 91b, 98b, 118a, 159a, 176a, 265b, 298b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 341-42; Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 37-44; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1085-86; Idel, "Tefisat ha-Torah." Cf. Naḥmanides, introduction to Commentary on the Torah, 6-7; idem, *Kitvei Ramban*, 1:167-68.

On the progression from purity to holiness, see M *Sotah* 9:15, in the name of Rabbi Pinḥas son of Ya'ir: "Zeal leads to cleanliness, cleanliness to purity, purity to holiness [per Kaufmann MS], holiness to humility, humility to fear of sin, fear of sin to devotion, devotion to the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit to the revival of the dead, and the revival of the dead comes through Elijah, remembered for good."

The standard editions of the Mishnah read: "purity leads to restraint, restraint leads to holiness." However, the reading "purity to holiness" is supported by numerous sources, including *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 23:15; JT *Shabbat* 1:3, 3c; BT *Avodah Zarah* 20b (per Munich MS); *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 10, p. 191; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah*

1:9 (on 1:1); *Midrash Mishlei* 15:31. Cf. Leviticus 16:19: *He shall purify it and sanctify it.*

24. So it is—and from here... Rabbi Ḥiyya confirms that purification precedes holiness, as demonstrated by the verse in Exodus, where God tells Israel that they will first become *a kingdom of priests* (who are purified) and then *a holy nation*. The continuation of the verse—*These are the words*—alludes to Torah, which both purifies and sanctifies.

The full verse in Exodus reads: “*As for you, you will become for Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.*” *These are the words that you shall speak to the Children of Israel.*

25. Holiness of Torah... The Written Torah symbolizes *Tif’eret*, which is surpassed by *Ḥokhmah* (Wisdom).

26. There is no Torah without Wisdom... Torah emanates from *Ḥokhmah* (which is known as Primordial Torah) and conveys it below.

On the relation between Torah and Wisdom, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 17:5, in the name of Rabbi Avin: “Torah is an unripe fruit of supernal Wisdom.” See *Bereshit Rabbah* 44:17; *Zohar* 1:47b; 2:62a, 85a, 121a; 3:182a, 192b; *ZḤ* 15b (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 106–8, 326–30.

27. they found a man in a remote village dump... Who apparently wiped his hand on the branch of a tree to remove some filth he may have touched.

The phrase “in a remote village dump” is a conjectural rendering of בלקיוטא דקוסטא (*be-laqyuta de-qusta*). *Laqyuta* is likely based on the root לקט (*lqt*), “to gather, collect.” *Qusta* means “district,” as in BT *Ta’anit* 24a: “I live בקוסטא דחיקא (*be-qusta reḥiqa*), in a remote district.” A variant version, with a change of one consonant, reads: “I live בקוסטא דחיקא (*be-qusta deḥiqa*).” Rashi, ad loc., explains *be-qusta deḥiqa* as “in a poverty-stricken village.” See *Zohar* 1:85a.

For various interpretations of this phrase and the man’s behavior, see *Or Yaqar*; *Haggahot Maharḥu*; *Derekh Emet*;

Miqdash Melekh; Nitsotsei Orot; Nefesh David; Nitsotsei Zohar; Soncino; Sullam; Matoq mi-Devash.

28. This accords with what is written... Rabbi Yose apparently praises the man's behavior, since by cleaning and sanctifying himself he invites sanctification from above.

See BT *Yoma* 39a: "*You shall hallow yourselves and become holy. If one sanctifies himself slightly, he is sanctified greatly; below, he is sanctified from above; in this world, he is sanctified in the world that is coming.*"

On this Talmudic passage, see above, [note 8](#). Leviticus 11:44 reads in full: *For I am YHVH your God, and you shall hallow yourselves and become holy, for I am holy; you shall not make yourselves impure through any swarming thing that crawls on the earth.*

29. This portion is the entirety of Torah... This Torah portion, *Qedoshim*, begins: *YHVH spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to all the community of the Children of Israel, and say to them: 'You shall be holy, for I, YHVH your God, am holy.'"* See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 24:5: "Rabbi Hiyya taught, 'This teaches that this portion was spoken in full assembly. And why was it spoken so? Because most of the essentials of Torah hinge upon it.' Rabbi Levi said, 'Because the Ten Commandments are included in it [as he proceeds to illustrate].'" Here, Rabbi Abba refers to the Ten Commandments as "the Ten Utterances."

See *Sifra, Qedoshim* 1:1, 86c; *Tanḥuma, Qedoshim* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Qedoshim* 3; Rashi and Ibn Ezra on Leviticus 19:2; Naḥmanides on 19:2, 4; *Zohar* 3:81b, 84b-85b; below, [note 72](#).

The phrase "the signet ring's seal of truth" derives from the rabbinic saying "The seal of the blessed Holy One is truth." See JT *Sanhedrin* 1:1, 18a; *Bereshit Rabbah* 81:2; BT *Shabbat* 55a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:9; *Devarim Rabbah* 1:10; *Shemot Rabbah* 4:13.

30. the portion of sexual licentiousness... "Sexual licentiousness" renders עריות (*arayot*), the plural of ערוה

(*ervah*), “nakedness, genitals.” The term *arayot* refers to various forbidden sexual relations, including incest, as listed in Leviticus 18 and 20. In rabbinic literature, Leviticus 18 is called פרשת ערויות (*Parashat Arayot*), “The Portion of Sexual Licentiousness.”

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 24:6: “Why was the Portion of Sexual Licentiousness (Leviticus 18) placed adjacent to the Portion of *Qedoshim* (Leviticus 19–20)? ... Rabbi Yehudah son of Pazzi said, ‘Whoever fences himself against sexual licentiousness is called holy.’”

Here Rabbi Abba develops this idea further, indicating that a person who guards himself against sexual immorality demonstrates that he was conceived by his parents in holiness. Such a person shows this more clearly if he too engages in sexual relations in a holy manner and at an auspicious time, thereby sanctifying “himself with the holiness of his Lord.”

The Mishnah (*Ketubbot* 5:6) discusses how often husbands of various professions are required to fulfill the commandment of עונה (*onah*), “conjugal rights,” i.e., to satisfy their wives sexually. According to Rabbi Eli’ezer, “The *onah* mentioned in the Torah [applies as follows]: Those who are unoccupied, every day; laborers, twice a week; donkey-drivers, once a week; camel-drivers, once every thirty days; sailors, once every six months.”

The Talmud (BT *Ketubbot* 62b) adds: “When is the *onah* of the disciples of the wise? [i.e., What is the proper interval between two successive times of fulfilling this *mitsvah*?] Rav Yehudah said in the name of Shemu’el, ‘From one Sabbath eve to the next.’”

See *Zohar* 1:14a–b, 50a, 112a (*MhN*); 2:63b, 89a–b, 136a–b, 204b–205a; 3:49b, 78a, 82a, 143a (*IR*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 120; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1232–33, 1357; Wolfson, “Eunuchs Who Keep the Sabbath.”

On the importance and consequences of holy sexual union, see above, [note 7](#). On *arayot* in Kabbalah and the *Zohar*, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1367-70; Idel, "Peirushim le-Sod ha-Arayot." On the passage in *Vayiqra Rabbah*, see JT *Yevamot* 2:4, 3d.

[31.](#) only from midnight on... On midnight as the appropriate time for conjugal union, see BT *Nedarim* 20a-b; *Zohar* 2:136a, 205a. On God entering the Garden of Eden at midnight, see the following note.

[32.](#) This is for other people... For the masses. However, devotees of Torah normally rise at midnight to engage in study, thereby joining with *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel) to praise King *Tif'eret* (who forms the core of the blessed Holy One). Once a week, on Sabbath eve, they unite with their wives, imitating and stimulating the Sabbath union of the divine couple. Thereby, they draw forth "the fervor of" *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, namely a holy soul generated by the divine couple's passionate union. Such a soul then enters the fetus originated by the human couple's sacred act.

On studying Torah at midnight, see BT *Berakhot* 3b, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on the Ḥasid: "There was a harp suspended above [King] David's bed. As soon as midnight arrived, a north wind came and blew upon it, and it played by itself. He immediately arose and engaged in Torah until the break of dawn." See Psalms 119:62.

In the *Zohar* this legendary custom is expanded into a ritual. At midnight, God delights in the souls of the righteous in the Garden of Eden, and those who study Torah here below partake of this joy. Kabbalists are expected to rise at midnight and adorn *Shekhinah* with words of Torah in preparation for Her union with *Tif'eret*. Thereby they join with Her in singing to Him. This parallels the midnight vigil common among Christian monks from early medieval times. In *Zohar* 3:119a, Rabbi Yehudah may be

alluding to the Christian practice: "... the nations of the world, whom I have seen in the same manner."

See JT *Berakhot* 1:1, 2d; *Sifra, Beḥuqqotai* 3:3, 111b; *Aggadat Bereshit* 23:5; BT *Sanhedrin* 102a; 2 Enoch 8:3; *Zohar* 1:10b, 72a, 77a-b, 82b, 92a-b, 136a-b, 178a-b, 194b, 206b-207b, 231a-232a, 242b; 2:26b-27a, 30a, 36b, 46a, 56b-57a, 67b, 130a-b, 136a, 173b, 195b-196a, 209a; 3:11a, 12b-13a, 21b-22b, 23b, 44a-b, 49b, 52b, 65a, 67b-68a, 90a, 107b-108a, 119a, 156b, 193a, 213a-b, 260a; *ZḤ* 13b-c (*MhN*), 86c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 54; idem, *Seder Gan Eden*, 3:138; Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 146-50; Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows from Eden*, 121-45. Cf. BT *Tamid* 32b, in the name of Rabbi Hiyya: "Whoever engages in Torah at night—*Shekhinah* faces him."

In rabbinic literature the phrase כנסת ישראל (*Keneset Yisra'el*), "Assembly of Israel," nearly always denotes the people of Israel. The Midrash on the Song of Songs describes an allegorical love affair between the maiden (the earthly community of Israel) and her lover (the Holy One, blessed be He). In the *Zohar*, *Keneset Yisra'el* can refer to the earthly community but also (often primarily) to *Shekhinah*, the divine feminine counterpart of the people, the aspect of God most intimately connected with them. The lovers in the Song of Songs are pictured as a divine couple, *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*. See BT *Berakhot* 35b; below, [pp. 265-66](#), [n. 57](#).

33. one nation on earth... The verse reads: *Who is like Your people Israel, גוי אחד (goi eḥad), a unique nation* [literally: *one nation*], *on earth?* According to Rabbi Abba, the description of Israel as *one nation* alludes to God's name *Eḥad*, "One." See Zechariah 14:9: *On that day YHVH will be one and His name one* [or: *and His name One*]. See the Sabbath afternoon liturgy: "You are one, and Your name is One, and *who is like Your people Israel, one nation on earth?*"

The numerous *mitsvot* are pictured as crowns adorning Israel, and one who fulfills them resembles the sefirotic structure of *Adam Qadmon*, “Primordial Adam,” since each *mitsvah* is linked with a particular sefirotic limb. Just as the human body comprises 248 members and 365 sinews, so Torah comprises 248 positive commandments and 365 negative commandments, totaling 613. A person who fulfills all the *mitsvot* becomes complete.

On the 613 commandments and their bodily significance, see BT *Makkot* 23b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:1; Eleazar of Worms, *Peirushei Siddur ha-Tefillah*, 2:679. On the 248 members of the human body (joints or bones covered with flesh and sinews), see M *Oholot* 1:8. On the correspondence between *mitsvot* and *sefirot*, see Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 2:538; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 38-39; *Zohar* 2:85b, 162b, 165b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1157-58; Matt, “The Mystic and the *Mizvot*,” 377-93.

34. whoever is defective... Because he ignores or violates the *mitsvot*.

Tif'eret (the core of the Blessed Holy One) balances and includes the polar opposites *Hesed* and *Gevurah*. This sefirotic triad is symbolized by the three patriarchs: Abraham (corresponding to *Hesed*), Isaac (corresponding to *Gevurah*), and Jacob (corresponding to *Tif'eret*). So the blessed Holy One represents “perfection of the Patriarchs.” By uniting with *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel), He perfects Her, or is completed and perfected by Her.

By putting on tefillin and wrapping oneself in a tallit, a person is adorned with sefirotic crowns and resembles the divine pattern. According to a rabbinic tradition, God Himself wears tefillin, in which is inscribed the verse *Who is like Your people Israel, one nation on earth?* See BT *Berakhot* 6a; Vol. 4, p. 489, n. 442.

Traditionally, a person first wraps himself in the tallit and then puts on tefillin, although the sequence here could

imply the reverse. See *Zohar* 3:120b, 175b, 265a; *ZH* 41d; *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Haggahot Maharḥu*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; Ḥayyim Yosef David Azulai, *Birkei Yosef*, *Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 25:4; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 45–46.

35. let the One come and engage with one... If a person is fittingly adorned and unified, the Divine One will accompany him.

The verse in Job reads *He is באחד* (*ve-eḥad*), *in one*, meaning “He is one, unchangeable, or He wants but one thing.” Here, Rabbi Abba reads this as: *He is with one*—that is, with a person who has become whole by being arrayed in the holiness of *mitsvot*. On this verse, cf. *Zohar* 1:241a; 2:177b (*SdT*s); Moses de León, *Or Zaru’a*, 250–51; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 98.

36. When a person appears in a single coupling... Unless a person is married, he is incomplete and, in a sense, only half a body. If a man and a woman unite, completing one another, then the Divine One dwells with that human *one* and conveys a holy soul to the fetus that they originate.

See BT *Yevamot* 62b–63a: “Rabbi Tanḥum said in the name of Rabbi Ḥanilai, ‘Any man who has no wife is without joy, without blessing, without goodness.’ ... Rabbi El’azar said, ‘Any אדם (*adam*), man, who has no wife is not an *adam*, as is said: *Male and female He created them ... and He named them adam* (Genesis 5:2).’”

See Genesis 1:26–27; *Bereshit Rabbah* 17:2; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 9:9; *Midrash Tehillim* 59:2; *Zohar* 1:34b, 47a, 55b, 150a–b, 165a, 182a, 233a–b, 239a, 248a; 2:144b; 3:5a–b, 7a, 17a, 33b–34a, 46b, 74b, 141b (*IR*), 143b (*IR*), 145b, 148a, 296a (*IZ*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1355–79. On the androgynous nature of Adam, see below, [note 54](#). On being “half a body,” see *Zohar* 3:7b, 57b, 109b (*RM*), 296a (*IZ*); *ZH* 43d, 59a (*MhN*); Liebes, *Peraqim*, 277–79. See above, [note 7](#).

On how a husband should approach his wife, see *Iggeret ha-Qodesh* (in *Kitvei Ramban* 2:335–36): “You should first welcome her with words that draw her heart, calm her mind, and bring her joy, so that her mind will be linked with yours, and your intention with hers. Speak with her in words that arouse desire, loving union, and passion—and in words that draw her to the awe of Heaven, devotion, and modesty.”

37. in His very being... God based the command to *be holy* on His own essential holiness.

38. Every man shall revere... On this weekly portion’s being “the entirety of Torah,” see above, [note 29](#). According to Rabbi Yose, the adjacency of the two clauses in this verse implies that a person who reveres his parents (and follows their guidance) will keep the Sabbath.

On the linkage between the two biblical clauses, see *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 8; *Sifra, Qedoshim* 1:10, 87a; BT *Yevamot* 5b–6a, *Bava Metsi’a* 32a; Mann, ed., *Qit’ei Midrashim mi-Kitvei Yad ha-Genizah*, 2:210; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:6.

39. Scripture placed his mother before his father... See *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 8, in the name of Rabbi Yehudah the Prince: “It is revealed and known to Him by whose word the world came into being that a person honors his mother more than his father, because she sways him by words. Therefore in regard to honoring He mentioned the father before the mother [*Honor your father and your mother* (Exodus 20:12)]. And it is revealed and known to Him by whose word the world came into being that a person reveres his father more than his mother, because he teaches him Torah. Therefore in regard to reverence He mentioned the mother before the father [*Every man shall revere his mother and his father*]. Wherever there is a lack, He made it complete.” See BT *Qiddushin* 30b–31a.

40. You shall be holy... Alluding specifically to sanctifying oneself during sexual relations. See above, [note](#)

7.

According to Rabbi Yitshak, Scripture mentions revering one's mother first because she deserves greater praise for sanctification during sexual union, apparently due to the fact that the father has been schooled in the requirements of Torah whereas the mother has not.

41. on the day that YHVH Elohim made earth and heaven... In this verse, *earth* precedes *heaven*, whereas elsewhere *heaven* precedes *earth*—as in the opening verse of Genesis (*In the beginning God created heaven and earth*), as well as in the first half of the same verse quoted here, Genesis 2:4: *These are the generations of heaven and earth when they were created*. The fact that Scripture alternates between *earth and heaven* and *heaven and earth* demonstrates that “both of them were formed as one.”

Similarly, the alternation between (*Every man shall revere*) *his mother and his father* and (*Honor*) *your father and your mother* (Exodus 20:12) demonstrates that both of one's parents participated equally in forming him. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:15; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 36:1; *Tosefta Kareitot* 4:15.

42. And My Sabbaths you shall keep... The plural *Sabbaths* alludes to the Sabbath eve and the Sabbath day, which symbolize respectively Mother *Shekhinah* and Father *Tif'eret*. The command זכור (*Zakhor*), *Remember, the Sabbath day* (Exodus 20:8) suggests זכר (*zakhar*), “male,” signifying the male divine potency (centered in *Tif'eret*), identified with *the Sabbath day*; whereas the wording ושמרתם (*u-shmartem*), *You shall keep, the Sabbath, for היא* (*hi*), *she* [or: *it*], *is holy to you* alludes to Mother *Shekhinah* and Sabbath eve.

The verse in Exodus 20—*Remember the Sabbath day*—appears, of course, in the Ten Commandments. Normally, the comparison between “remembering” and “keeping” the Sabbath is based on this version of the Ten Commandments and the alternative wording in Deuteronomy 5:12: שמור (*Shamor*), *Keep, the Sabbath day to hallow it*. Here, though,

instead of the verse in Deuteronomy, Rabbi Yehudah selects another verse, from Exodus 31:14: *U-shmartem, You shall keep, the Sabbath, for ה'י (hi), she [or: it], is holy to you*, probably because of the pronoun *hi*, literally *she*, which contrasts with the masculine suffix in Exodus 20:8: זכור (*Zakhor*), *Remember, the Sabbath day לקדשו (le-qaddesho), to hallow him [or: it]*, alluding to the Divine Male, who is identified with *the Sabbath day*.

See BT *Berakhot* 20b; *Bahir* 124 (182); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 496–97; Nahmanides on Exodus 20:8; Jacob ben Sheshet, *Sefer ha-Emunah ve-ha-Bittahon*, 420; *Zohar* 1:5b, 47b, 48b, 164b, 199b, 248a; 2:70b, 91a, 92a–b, 92a–b (*Piq*), 138a, 165b, 182b; 3:92b (*Piq*), 115b, 224a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 118; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 110; Wolfson, introduction to *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 63–71. See below, [p. 246](#), [n. 67](#).

43. Alternatively, מקדשי (*miqdashi*), My sanctuary... The verse reads: *My Sabbaths you shall keep, ומקדשי (u-miqdashi), and My sanctuary, you shall revere*. Rabbi Yehudah suggests reading מקדשי (*miqdashi*), *My sanctuary*, as מקדשי (*meqaddeshei*), “[those who] sanctify,” namely scholars and their wives who sanctify themselves in sexual union every Sabbath eve, as implied by the preceding clause: *My Sabbaths you shall keep*. Such parents, “who sanctify themselves,” a person *shall revere*. See above, [note 30](#).

The context in Ezekiel is the slaughter of the residents of Jerusalem, which God says will begin ממקדשי (*mi-miqdashi*), *from [or: with] My sanctuary*. According to a rabbinic interpretation, *mi-miqdashi* implies ממקודשי (*mi-mequddashai*), *with My sanctified ones*, indicating that the righteous residents will be killed first, their silence in the face of the wicked having implicated them. See BT *Shabbat* 55a; *Zohar* 1:2b, 68a, 205b.

44. all cleave to one another This may imply that by their devotion, the people of Israel stimulate sefirotic

union, so Israel cleaves to God, *Tif'eret* cleaves to *Shekhinah*, and God cleaves to Israel.

45. When a man is sanctified below with his wife...

By engaging in sexual relations in holiness. On sexual union each Sabbath eve, see above, [note 30](#).

“The soul of Sabbath” could imply the additional soul received by those who observe the Sabbath, but here it probably refers to the holy soul generated by the union of *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah* on Sabbath eve and conveyed to the fetus originated by the human couple at that time. This fetus is “the body prepared on Sabbath.” On the additional Sabbath soul, see below, [p. 108](#), [n. 162](#).

46. who form one coupling for the body... One should *revere his mother and father*, who originally united in holiness on Sabbath eve to produce the body of the fetus. The continuation of the verse—*and My Sabbaths you shall keep*—alludes to the divine couple, *Shekhinah* and *Tif'eret*, who are identified respectively with Sabbath eve and Sabbath day, and who generate a holy soul, conveying and “inviting” it into the new body. See above, [note 42](#).

47. an admonition to those who wait for their coupling... The scholars (or kabbalists) *keep* the Sabbath by “keeping it in mind” throughout the week and waiting until then to unite with their wives. By abstaining from sexual relations during the weekdays, they act as eunuchs. See above, [notes 30](#), [32](#).

The context in Isaiah (56:4-5) reads: *Thus says YHVH: As for the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, who have chosen what I desire and grasp My covenant—I will give them, in My house and within My walls, a monument and a name better than sons and daughters. An everlasting name I will give them, that will not be cut off.* In this biblical passage the term *eunuchs* refers to certain officials at the Babylonian court (including some exiled Judeans) who were castrated. Judeans subject to this fate (and also perhaps foreigners attracted to monotheism) felt cut off from the

Jewish people in the sense that they would have no descendants and that the nation in the future would not include their seed. Isaiah reassures such eunuchs that they nonetheless have an enduring future in the sacred community.

On this passage in Isaiah, see BT *Sanhedrin* 93b; *Pirquei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 52; *Zohar* 1:187b; 2:89a-b; ZH 89c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 250-51; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 141-42; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 21b; Baḥya ben Asher on Leviticus 19:2; Wolfson, "Eunuchs Who Keep the Sabbath." Cf. Matthew 19:12.

The verse in Genesis demonstrates that the verb שמר (*shmr*), "to keep," can mean "to keep in mind," implying "to wait and see." Jacob waited to see whether Joseph's dream would be fulfilled. See Rashi and Ibn Ezra on Genesis 37:11; *Zohar* 2:89a; Baḥya ben Asher on Leviticus 19:2.

48. his mother and his father—the body... His physical parents who engendered his body. The continuation of the verse—*and My Sabbaths you shall keep*—alludes to the two divine aspects of Sabbath, *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, who generate the soul. See above, [notes 42, 46](#).

49. Do not turn to the stiffness... How could Moses dare to tell God to disregard Israel's stiff-necked or sinful ways, when God sees everything? In the Masoretic text, the verse in Job actually reads: *For His eyes are on a man's ways*.

50. If a person performs a single *mitsvah*... See *Zohar* 3:118a. Cf. BT *Avodah Zarah* 2a, 4b (referring to the testimony of *mitsvot* in the afterlife); and M *Avot* 4:11, in the name of Rabbi Eli'ezer son of Ya'akov: "A person who performs a single *mitsvah* acquires one defender; a person who commits a single transgression acquires one accuser."

In the concluding phrase, "to benefit him" means "to benefit the person who performed the *mitsvah*."

51. that transgression ascends... Cf. BT *Sanhedrin* 108a, where Rabbi El'azar teaches that the violence of the

wicked generation of the Flood “erected itself like a staff, stood before the blessed Holy One,” and testified against those who perpetrated it.

According to Rabbi Ḥiyya, the wording in Deuteronomy —*YHVH saw and He spurned*—means that God saw Israel’s sin standing before Him.

52. If he turns back in *teshuvah*... If a person repents his sin, then God removes it from His presence so that He will no longer see it. This is what Moses was asking God to do when he said *Do not turn to the stiffness of this people nor to its wickedness and its sin*.

The verse in Samuel is spoken by the prophet Nathan to King David after the latter’s sin with Bathsheba and Uriah. It reads: *YHVH has also removed your sin [or: let your sin pass away, remitted your sin]; you will not die*.

53. This is also implied from here... Rabbi Yose offers another proof-text for the idea that one’s sin presents itself before God. The full verse in Jeremiah reads: *Though you wash yourself with natron [a cleansing agent] and use much soap, your iniquity is stained before Me—declares the Lord God*.

54. Rabbi Yeisa the Younger... He finds Rabbi Shim’on interpreting the verse in Genesis as alluding to the androgynous nature of Adam: *the woman whom You gave with me* now implies that Eve was created along *with* Adam in a single body.

Usually, the androgynous nature of Adam is based on other verses. See *Midrash Tehillim* 139:5: “*Behind and in front You formed me* (Psalms 139:5). What is *behind and in front*? They were created [as a single creature] with two faces. So it was with Adam: behind him was the form of Eve—as is said: *YHVH Elohim built the side [He had taken from the human into a woman]* (Genesis 2:22).”

The verse in Psalms reads: *Behind and in front* צרתני (*tsartani*)—apparently meaning *You besieged* [or: *encompassed*] *me*. However, rabbinic sources understand

the root צור (*tsur*) as a by-form of יצר (*ytsr*), “to form.” See Vol. 4, p. 285, n. 306.

The context in Genesis 2:21-22 reads: *YHVH Elohim cast a deep slumber on the human, and he slept, and He took one מצלעותיו (mi-tsal’otav), of his ribs [or: of his sides], and closed the flesh in its place. YHVH Elohim built the rib [or: the side] He had taken from the human into a woman and He brought her to the human.* According to this midrashic tradition, God divided the original androgynous human into two halves: male and female.

On צלע (*tsela*) as “side,” see Exodus 25:12; 26:20 (quoted in *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:1; 17:6; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 14:1; *Bahir* 116 [172]; Rashi and Ibn Ezra on Genesis 2:21); 2 Samuel 16:13; *Zohar* 1:34b; 2:55a, 211a; 3:19a, 44b, 78a, 142a (*IR*).

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 14:1: “Rabbi Yishma’el son of Naḥman said, ‘When the blessed Holy One created Adam, He created him androgynous; and He sawed him and gave him two backs, one on this side and one on that.’ Rabbi Shim’on son of Lakish said, ‘When the blessed Holy One created Adam, He created him דו פרצופין (*du partsufin*), with two faces; and He sawed him and gave him two backs, a back for the male and a back for the female.’”

On the androgynous nature of the original human being (and of the soul), see also Plato, *Symposium* 189d-191d; *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:1; BT *Berakhot* 61a, *Eruvin* 18a; *Tanḥuma, Tazri’a* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Tazri’a* 2; *Midrash Tehillim* 139:5; *Bahir* 116-17 (172); *Zohar* 1:2b, 13b, 34b-35a, 37b, 47a, 55b, 70b, 85b, 91b, 165a; 2:55a, 70b, 144b, 167b, 176b (*SdT*s), 178b (*SdT*s), 211a, 231a-b, 246a (*Heikh*); 3:5a, 10b, 19a, 44b, 78a, 117a, 142b (*IR*), 283b, 292b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 16c (*MhN*), 55c-d, 66c (*ShS*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1355-56; Matt, *Zohar: The Book of Enlightenment*, 217.

On Rabbi Yeisa the Younger, see *Zohar* 1:162a; 2:79b, 152b-153a; *ZḤ* 31a, 85c (*MhN, Rut*). The full verse in

Genesis 3 reads: *The human said, “The woman whom נתתה (natattah), You gave [or: placed, put], עמדי (immadi), by me [or: with me, alongside me, to accompany me], she gave me from the tree, and I ate.”*

55. I am the woman who was standing with you here... These words are spoken by Hannah to Eli the priest.

Rabbi Yeisa challenges Rabbi Shim'on: If the phrase in Genesis (*with me*) implies that Eve was created along *with* Adam in a single body, then according to the same principle, the similar phrase in Samuel (*with you*) would imply that Hannah and Eli shared a single body!

56. If it were written with you... Rabbi Shim'on explains that if the verse from Samuel read simply *I am the woman who was with you*, then this could mean “joined *with you*”—just as *with me* in Genesis implies “joined *with me*.” However, the former verse reads *who was standing with you*—alongside Eli, but clearly separate from him.

57. But look at what is written... This verse indicates that Eve was made after Adam came into existence, contradicting the notion that she was originally joined with him a single body.

The full verse reads: *YHVH Elohim said, “It is not good for the human to be alone, I will make him a helper alongside [or: corresponding to, as a counterpart to, opposite, facing] him.”*

58. Certainly so! For Adam was alone... Rabbi Shim'on explains that Adam was *alone* in the sense that he had no one to help him or relate to, since “his female” was joined to him as one of his sides. As for God saying *I will make him a helper*, this means “I will prepare and enhance his female half.” See above, [note 54](#); Vol. 7, p. 272, n. 50.

On God adorning Eve, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 18:1: “*YHVH Elohim built הצלע (ha-tsela), the side (Genesis 2:22)... It was taught in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: ‘He adorned her like a bride and brought her to him.’” Cf. BT*

Berakhot 61a: “Rabbi Shim’on son of Menasia expounded, ‘Why is it written: *YHVH Elohim built the side?* This teaches that the blessed Holy One braided Eve’s hair and brought her to Adam.’”

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:13; BT *Shabbat* 95a, *Eruvin* 18a, *Niddah* 45b; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 4; B, 8; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 7:2; *Tanḥuma, Vayera* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayera* 1, 4; *Ḥayyei Sarah* 2; *Midrash Tehillim* 25:11; *Kallah Rabbati* 1:2; *Leqaḥ Tov*, Genesis 2:22; *Zohar* 1:34b, 48b; 2:55a; 3:19a, 44b. The full verse in Genesis 5 reads: *Male and female He created them, and He blessed them and named them אָדָם (adam), humankind, on the day they were created.*

59. The stunning beauty of Adam... His amazing beauty derived from divine splendor. Eve’s beauty was so dazzling that no creature could look upon her, even Adam. Only after the first couple sinned and their beauty dimmed, could Adam finally see Eve and know her completely.

On Adam’s beauty, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 20:2, in the name of Rabbi Shim’on son of Menasia, “The apple [round fleshy part] of Adam’s heel outshone the globe of the sun. How much more so the brightness of his face!”

On Eve’s beauty, see BT *Bava Batra* 58a, in the name of Rabbi Bana’ah: “Compared with Sarah, all others are like an ape compared with a human. Compared with Eve, Sarah was like an ape compared with a human. Compared with Adam, Eve was like an ape compared with a human. Compared with *Shekhinah*, Adam was like an ape compared with a human.”

On the diminishment of Adam, cf. BT *Ḥagigah* 12a: “Rabbi El’azar said, ‘Adam extended from earth to heaven.... As soon as he sinned, the blessed Holy One placed His hand upon him and diminished him, as is said: *Behind and in front You formed me, and You set Your palm upon me* (Psalms 139:5).’ Rabbi Yehudah said in the name of Rav, ‘Adam extended from one end of the world to the

other.... As soon as he sinned, the blessed Holy One placed His hand upon him and diminished him, as is said: *You set Your palm upon me.*”

The phrase “a raiment of the supernal cluster” renders קרטידא דקיטרא עלאה (*qartida de-qitra ila’ah*). *Qitra* means literally “knot,” based on the root קטר (*qtr*), “to tie, bind.” *Qartida* apparently derives from כרדוט (*kardut*), based on Greek *cheiridotos*, “a sleeved tunic.” See *Targum Yonatan*, 1 Samuel 2:18; 2 Samuel 6:14; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 6; *Arukh ha-Shalem*, s.v. *krdt*; *Bei’ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 190, s.v. *qurdita*; Vol. 4, p. 447, n. 295; Vol. 5, pp. 514–15, n. 923; *Zohar* 3:144b (*IR*). Several commentators explain *qartida*—or rather its variant קתידרא (*qadteira*)—as based on קתידרא (*qateidra*), “throne.” See *Derekh Emet*; Luria, *Va-Ye’esof David*, s.v. *qadteira*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

On the passage in *Vayiqra Rabbah*, see BT *Bava Batra* 58a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 4:4; 12:1; 26:3; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 14, 62a; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 8:1; *Tanḥuma, Aḥarei Mot* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Aḥarei Mot* 3; *Huqqat* 17; *Midrash Mishlei* 31:30; *Zohar* 1:121b (*MhN*), 142b. On the passage in *Ḥagigah*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:6; *Zohar* 1:53b, 142b (Vol. 2, p. 293, n. 258); 2:178b–179a (*SdT*s); 3:117a.

The verse from Genesis is quoted here as וידע אדם (*Va-yeda Adam*), *Adam knew, Eve his wife*. This is actually a conflation of two different wordings. Genesis 4:1 reads: ידע אדם ויהא אדם (*Ve-ha-adam yada*), *The human knew, Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain*. Genesis 4:25 reads: אדם עוד וידע (*Va-yeda adam od*), *Adam again knew, his wife, and she bore him a son and called his name Seth*.

60. A man is forbidden to gaze... See BT *Avodah Zarah* 20a: “A man should not gaze at a beautiful woman even if she is unmarried, nor at a married woman even if she is ugly.”

See BT *Nedarim* 20a, in the name of Rabbi Aḥa son of Rabbi Yoshi’ah: “Whoever gazes at women eventually

comes to sin.” Cf. BT *Berakhot* 24a, *Eruvin* 18b, *Yevamot* 63b; *Hullin* 37b.

The phrase “be uprooted to something else” likely alludes to seminal emission, or perhaps to sexual relations. See the following note.

61. This is how Rabbi Shim’on acted... He lowered his eyes to avoid seeing such beautiful women, because being captivated by them is tantamount to idolatry. If one is overwhelmed by erotic fantasies, he empowers demonic forces, who are called *molten gods*. Or, he might fashion demons, who are created from seminal emission. And if he has intercourse with his wife while fantasizing about another woman, the child they engender will be tainted by impurity.

See Baḥya ben Asher on Leviticus 19:2; idem, *Kad ha-Qemah*, 166. The sexual interpretation of *Do not turn to idols* recalls the *Zohar*’s unique reading of the commands such as *You shall not bow down to another god* (Exodus 34:14) and *You shall not bow down to them* (ibid. 20:5), which are understood to mean “You shall not lie down with a foreign (or forbidden) woman,” since this constitutes a betrayal of holiness. See *Zohar* 1:131b, 189b; 2:3b, 61a, 87b, 243a; 3:13b; *ZḤ* 21a (*MhN*), 78c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 212–13, 230–31; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 51 (63). Cf. *Pesiqta Rabbati* 21; *Zohar* 2:90a; Vol. 4, p. 513, n. 536.

In *Zohar* 1:112a (*MhN*), Rav Yehudah (in the name of Rav) offers the same strategy of lowering one’s eyes when encountering beautiful women. A strikingly different response appears in BT *Avodah Zarah* 20a: “It happened once that Rabbi Shim’on son of Gamliel was standing on a step on the Temple mount and saw a very beautiful Gentile woman. He exclaimed, ‘How great are Your works, O YHVH! (Psalms 104:24).’”

See JT *Berakhot* 9:1, 13a; *Avodah Zarah* 1:8, 40a. On demons being created by seminal emission, see *Tanḥuma*

(Buber), *Bereshit* 17; *Zohar* 1:19b, 55a, 102a-b; 3:19a; Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 51-54; Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 154-57; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1366-67. On the dire consequences of thinking of another partner during sexual intercourse, see BT *Nedarim* 20b; *Zohar* 1:155a (ST), 176b, 222b; 3:77a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1364. Cf. above, [note 7](#).

62. A person is forbidden to look at idols... Rabbi Abba interprets *Do not turn to idols* literally. (See BT *Shabbat* 149a.) Deriving benefit from idols includes healing, as taught in BT *Pesahim* 25a. See *Zohar* 3:51b; ZH 10d-11a. The phrase “a place that should not be seen” has a sexual connotation, as in *Zohar* 2:57b, 267b (*Heikh*).

63. Turn to me... Rabbi Abba wonders how David could dare to ask God to *turn* especially to him, as if he was the most beautiful and worthy person in the world. He explains that David was actually alluding to “another David”—namely *Shekhinah*, who is known as *Malkhut* (Kingdom) and is intimately linked with the ideal human king, David.

Shekhinah is in charge of all the heavenly forces and angelic camps. When the blessed Holy One feels compassion for the world, He gazes upon *Shekhinah*, whose beauty conveys illumination and grace to all existence.

Matching the description of *Shekhinah* as “another David,” She is also “supernal David.” See below (at [note 65](#)) and *Zohar* 3:86a. On this interpretation of the verse in Psalms, see *Zohar* 1:84a.

64. His head is a skull of gold... Describing the head of *Shekhinah* (the divine David). The blessed Holy One first asks *Shekhinah* to turn Her eyes toward Him, but then, overwhelmed by Her passionate gaze and pierced by Her arrows of love, He pleads, *Turn your eyes away from me!*

Although gold often symbolizes *Gevurah* (which influences *Shekhinah*), the highest type of gold symbolizes *Binah*. Here, the “seven variegated golden arrangements”

may allude to the flow of emanation from *Binah* and Her six emanations (*Hesed* through *Yesod*).

See *Zohar* 2:148a. Seven types of gold are mentioned in rabbinic sources. See JT *Yoma* 4:4, 41d; BT *Yoma* 44b; *Shemot Rabbah* 35:1. On David's head and seven types of gold, see *Zohar* 2:73a-b (RR); TZ 70, 123b-124a. Cf. *Zohar* 2:147a, 148a, 277a (Vol. 5, pp. 344-46); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 39 (46-47). On the alchemical symbolism of gold, see Scholem, *Alchemy and Kabbalah*, 20-40. On the divine head of gold, see the midrashic interpretation of Song of Songs 5:11. Cf. Daniel 2:32, 38.

The verse in Song of Songs 6 reads: *Turn your eyes away from me, for they frighten [or: confuse, overwhelm] me!* On this verse and arrows of love shooting from *Shekhinah* to Her Beloved, see *Zohar* 1:247a. On *Shekhinah's* catapults, cf. *Zohar* 2:51a, 56a.

"Arrows" renders קסטין (*qistin*), which may be a playful variation on קשתין (*qashtin*), "bows," implying here "arrows." See *Nitsotsei Orot*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. Cf. *Zohar* 3:125a, which similarly links *qistin* with catapults. See below, [p. 299](#), [n. 34](#), and the reference there to *Tanḥuma*, *Shofetim* 14.

Alternatively, as elsewhere in the *Zohar*, *qistin* derives from Greek *xestes*, a measure about the size of a pint. If so, this could allude here to the "measures" or "qualities, attributes" within *Shekhinah*, which She launches at Her Beloved. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 4:5; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 12:1; *Zohar* 1:33a, 83a, 121b, 162a, 164a, 211a, 243a; 3:74a; *Derekh Emet*; Scholem; Edri.

[65.](#) So David said, Turn to me and grant me grace Alluding to *Shekhinah*, "supernal David," to whom the blessed Holy One turns. See above, [note 63](#).

[66.](#) See, the fragrance of my son... Rabbi Abba begins quoting other verses that allude to *Shekhinah*. This verse describes Isaac the patriarch smelling the fragrance of the garments worn by his son Jacob (which were actually

Esau's garments) when Jacob sought Isaac's blessing: *He smelled the fragrance of his garments and blessed him and said, "See, the fragrance of my son is like the fragrance of a field blessed by YHVH."*

According to *Bereshit Rabbah* 65:22, "When Jacob entered the presence of his father, the Garden of Eden entered with him, as is written: [*See, the fragrance of my son is*] *like the fragrance of a field blessed by YHVH."*

The image of the apple orchard derives from another interpretation of the verse in Genesis. See BT *Ta'anit* 29b in the name of Rav: "*Like the fragrance of a field blessed by YHVH...—like the fragrance of a field of apple trees.*"

In Kabbalah both the Garden of Eden and the apple orchard symbolize *Shekhinah*. She is filled with apple trees, namely the sefirotic triad of *Hesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, whose respective colors all appear in the apple: the white pulp, the red skin, and the green stem.

See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 7:9; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 35–37; *Zohar* 1:36a, 85a–b, 122a, 128b, 139a, 142b–143b, 224b, 249b; 2:39a–b, 60b, 61b, 84b, 127b; 3:74a, 84a–b, 88a, 95a, 128b (*IR*), 133b (*IR*), 135b (*IR*), 143a (*IR*), 202b, 286b–287a, 288a (*IZ*), 292b (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 365. On the passage in *Bereshit Rabbah*, see also *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:11; *Tanḥuma*, *Toledot* 11; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Toledot* 10, 22.

According to rabbinic sources, the Garden of Eden is of immense size, and this prompts Rabbi Abba's question here. See JT *Berakhot* 1:1, 2c; BT *Ta'anit* 10a, *Pesaḥim* 94a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 6:9.

67. the blessed Holy One has another holy Garden of Eden... Namely *Shekhinah*. She accompanies and assists the righteous, especially Jacob, who symbolizes Her partner, *Tif'eret*.

68. The land on which you lie... God's promise to Jacob. See BT *Hullin* 91b: "*The land on which you lie. What is so great about that? [The actual area of land occupied by*

Jacob's body was miniscule.] Rabbi Yitshak said, "This teaches that the blessed Holy One rolled up the whole land of Israel and placed it beneath our father Jacob, so that it would be easily conquered by his descendants." See *Bereshit Rabbah* 69:4; *Zohar* 1:72a, 156a; ZH 28d (MhN).

On the size of the land of Israel as "four hundred parasangs by four hundred parasangs," see BT *Megillah* 3a, *Bava Qamma* 82b, *Menaḥot* 64b; *Midrash Petirat Mosheh* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:125). The Persian parasang equals about 3.5 modern miles.

69. the blessed Holy One has another holy supernal land... Namely *Shekhinah*, who is called "the land of Israel" and "Land of the Living." Since *Shekhinah* is situated beneath *Tif'eret*, who is symbolized by Jacob, the verse in Genesis alludes to Her as *the land on which you* [namely Jacob] *lie*. Out of His love for Israel, the blessed Holy One bestows *Shekhinah* to them.

The phrase *the land of the living* appears frequently in the Bible. On its identification with the land of Israel, see, e.g., *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 34:5; *Bereshit Rabbah* 74:1; BT *Ketubbot* 111a.

70. a place that the blessed Holy One loathes... Such as idolatry. The last sentence of this paragraph is explained in the following one.

71. forbidden to gaze upon a rainbow... Whose beauty resembles the Divine Glory, according to the prophet Ezekiel, and whose colors convey the hidden sefirotic spectrum of *Shekhinah*.

See BT *Ḥagigah* 16a: "'Whoever shows no concern for the honor [or: glory] of his Maker, it were better for him if he had not come into the world' (M *Ḥagigah* 2:1). What does this mean? Rabbi Abba said: 'It refers to one who gazes at the rainbow,' ... for it is written: *Like the appearance of the bow in the cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the radiance all around—the appearance of the semblance of the glory of YHVH* (Ezekiel 1:28)."

See BT *Qiddushin* 40a; *Zohar* 1:1b, 71b, 72b, 117a, 232a; 2:66b, 99a; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 336–40.

Similarly, it is forbidden to gaze at the fingers of the priests when they bless the people because *Shekhinah* rests upon their hands.

See JT *Megillah* 4:7, 75c; BT *Hagigah* 16a; *Zohar* 2:66b; 3:147a. Cf. *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:8; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15, 72a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:9; *Tanḥuma, Naso* 8; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Naso* 15; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:2.

72. Here Scripture comes to warn Israel... This chapter of Leviticus includes parallels to the Ten Commandments. For example, the command *Do not turn to idols, [and do not make molten gods for yourselves]* matches *You shall have no other gods beside Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image or any form.*

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 24:5: “[*Speak to all the community of the Children of Israel, and say to them: ‘You shall be holy, for I, YHVH your God, am holy’* (Leviticus 19:2).] Rabbi Hiyya taught, “This teaches that this portion was spoken in full assembly. And why was it spoken so? Because most of the essentials of Torah hinge upon it.” Rabbi Levi said, “Because the Ten Commandments are included in it [as he proceeds to illustrate].”

See *Tanḥuma, Qedoshim* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Qedoshim* 3; above, [note 29](#). There are some differences among the rabbinic sources regarding which verses in Leviticus parallel certain of the Ten Commandments. Rabbi Yitshak’s version here includes a couple of unique parallels, as explained in the following note. Furthermore, it does not mention *You shall not covet* (Exodus 20:17)—which is included in the rabbinic sources and matched with *You shall love your fellow as yourself* (Leviticus 19:18), or with *You shall not exploit [or: oppress, defraud] your fellow and you shall not rob* (ibid., 13).

73. *You shall not steal; you shall not deny and you shall not lie...* The first clause obviously parallels the commandment *You shall not steal*. The last clause—*You shall not lie*—matches the commandment *You shall not bear false witness*.

The middle clause—*You shall not deny*—apparently corresponds to the commandment *You shall not commit adultery*, because an adulterer who engenders new life by intercourse with a forbidden partner compels God to form the embryo in the divine image, thereby denying (or falsifying) that holy image since the newborn is a bastard. See *Zohar* 3:44b; Vol. 7, pp. 273–74, n. 54. Cf. *Tanḥuma*, *Naso* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Naso* 4.

The rabbinic sources (listed in the preceding note) match *You shall not bear false witness* with Leviticus 19:16: *You shall not go about as a slanderer among your kin*. These same sources match *You shall not commit adultery* with various verses, either Leviticus 19:29 (*Do not profane your daughter to make a whore of her*); 20:10 (*The adulterer and the adulteress are doomed to die*); or 19:2 (*You shall be holy*). In its simple sense, Leviticus 19:11 reads: *You shall not steal; you shall not dissemble [or: deny] and you shall not lie to one another*.

74. *You shall not stand over the blood of your fellow...* That is, “You shall not stand by—idle or aloof, not intervening—when your fellow is in danger or his blood is (about to be) spilled.”

75. *this portion includes the entirety of Torah* See above, [note 72](#).

76. *Originally ... in the singular...* In the Ten Commandments, Israel is addressed in the singular, whereas here in Leviticus 19 the people are addressed in the plural.

77. *they were never so unified...* Rabbi Ḥiyya explains that the singular voice in the Ten Commandments corresponds to Israel’s unified state at Mount Sinai, while

the plural voice in Leviticus 19 indicates that by then they had splintered.

See *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 1, commenting on the singular verb וַיִּחַן (va-yiḥan), [he] camped, in Exodus 19:2: “וַיִּחַן שָׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל” (Va-yiḥan sham Yisra’el), *Israel camped there, in front of the mountain*—Wherever Scripture says וַיִּסְעוּ (va-yise’u), *they journeyed*; וַיִּחַנוּ (va-yāḥanu), *they camped*, they were journeying in dissension and camping in dissension. But here they harmonized as one heart, so it is said [in the singular]: *Va-yiḥan sham Yisra’el, Israel camped there, in front of the mountain.*”

See *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 19:2; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 19:2; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 9:9; *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 20; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:14; *Pirgei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 41; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Yitro* 9; Rashi on Exodus 19:2.

78. Rabbi Yose son of Rabbi Shim’on son of Lekonya... According to rabbinic tradition, Rabbi El’azar’s father-in-law was named Rabbi Shim’on son of Yose son of Lekonya. The *Zohar* normally switches father and son, transforming Shim’on son of Yose into Yose son of Shim’on.

Although father and son are reversed, the scenario here is modeled on rabbinic sources. See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:20, and JT *Ma’aserot* 3:8, 50d: “Rabbi El’azar son of Rabbi Shim’on was going to Rabbi Shim’on son of Yose [or: Rabbi Yose] son of Lekonya, his father-in-law.”

See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:11; *Devarim Rabbah* 7:11; *Seder ha-Dorot*, s.v. *Shim’on ben Yose ben Leqonya*; *Zohar* 1:5a, 61b, 143b; 2:57b (where the wording accords with rabbinic tradition: “Rabbi Shim’on son of Rabbi Yose son of Lekonya”); 3:55b (*Tos*), 188a, 193a, 204a; *ZH* 10d (*MhN*), 14a (*MhN*), 20d (*MhN*), 22c (*MhN*). On Rabbi El’azar’s father-in-law, see also *Zohar* 3:90b, 119a.

In BT *Bava Metsi’a* 85a, the name of Rabbi El’azar’s brother-in-law is given as Rabbi Shim’on son of Issi (Yose) son of Lekonya, which would make Yose his father-in-law,

as in the *Zohar*—but nowhere in rabbinic literature is he named Yose son of Shim'on. Rabbi El'azar's own father, of course, is Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai.

79. *I am YHVH your God since the land of Egypt...* Rabbi El'azar wonders why *YHVH* describes himself as *your God since the land of Egypt*, when of course He was recognized already by the patriarchs—as indicated by the quotation from Genesis, where Jacob instructs his household and entourage to get rid of their idols and then proceed to Bethel, where he will build an altar to God.

The full verse in Hosea reads: *I am YHVH your God since the land of Egypt, and you know no God but Me; there is no savior beside Me.* The context in Genesis (35:2–3) reads: *Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Get rid of the alien gods in your midst, purify yourselves, and change your garments. Let us rise and go up to Bethel, and I will build an altar there to the God who answered me on the day of my distress and was with me on the way that I went."*

80. *they never recognized the glory...* Israel did not recognize and acknowledge God's glory until they were tried and tested in Egypt, where in the midst of their suffering they cried out to God and remained faithful to Him.

On the Israelites preserving their uniqueness in Egypt, see *Mekhilta, Pisha* 5; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 32:5; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:6; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:12; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:28; *Zohar* 1:7a; 2:4a, 26b.

On Egyptian expertise in sorcery, see Exodus 7:11; *Bereshit Rabbah* 86:5; BT *Qiddushin* 49b, *Menaḥot* 85b; *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'era* 12; *Shemot Rabbah* 9:6–7; *Zohar* 1:83a, 249a; 2:25a, 30b; 3:50b, 70a.

"Dross" renders שִׁפְסָא' (shiphsa'ei), a Zoharic neologism that may be a variation on another of its neologisms, סוּסְפִיטָא (susпита), "dross, dregs, scoria, slag." *Susпита*, in turn, may be based on Greek *susephis*, "putrefaction," or on Aramaic

כוספא (*kuspa*), “pomace, husk, residue.” See *Zohar* 1:30a, 71b, 118b, 179b, 228a; 2:24b, 203a, 224b, 236b; *Bei’ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 182; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 389, n. 54; idem, *Alchemy and Kabbalah*, 38–40; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 336–38; idem, *Pulhan ha-Shaḥar*, 200.

81. Afterward, they saw many signs... God manifested His glory and power by bringing the ten plagues upon the Egyptians and redeeming Israel, so in this sense He was their *God since the land of Egypt*.

See David Kimḥi on Hosea 12:10. On Israel’s vision of God at the Red Sea, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 1, 3; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:1, 2; *Midrash Tanna’im*, Deuteronomy 33:2; *Tosefta Sotah* 6:4; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 15:2; *JT Sotah* 5:4, 20c; *BT Berakhot* 50a, *Sotah* 11b, 30b–31a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:9; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 42; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 14–15; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:12; 23:8; *Midrash Tehillim* 8:5; 68:14; *Zohar* 2:55b, 60a, 64b, 94a.

82. Do not say... God tells Israel that they should not say, “It was another God who spoke with us (at Mount Sinai).” Rather, this was the very same God they saw in Egypt.

83. The wages of a hired man... Rabbi El’azar finds the reason for this commandment in the parallel from Deuteronomy, which explains that such a hired worker *is poor and toward it he lifts his soul*.

According to the simple sense of the verse in Deuteronomy, *and the sun shall not set on him* means, of course, that the employer must pay his hired hand at the end of the workday before sunset. But Rabbi El’azar offers a more imaginative interpretation: Scripture is warning the employer not to delay payment because otherwise his own sun will set before its time; he will die early because he mistreated his worker. Rabbi El’azar may be construing (*and the sun shall not set*) עליו (*alav*), *on him*, as “on account of him,” that is, on account of the exploited worker.

Alternatively, he is construing *alav, on him*, as referring to the employer: his *sun should not set on him* before its time.

The verse in Leviticus reads: *You shall not exploit [or: oppress, defraud] your fellow and you shall not rob....* The full verse in Deuteronomy reads: *On his day you shall give his wage, and the sun shall not set on him—for he is poor and toward it he lifts his soul [that is, he has his heart set on it (on his wage), he is yearning for it]—that he not call against you to YHVH and there be a sin in you.*

The verse in Ecclesiastes refers to aging and impending death. The context (12:1-2) reads: *Recall your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of evil come, and the years arrive when you will say, “I have no delight in them.” Before the sun darkens, and the light and the moon and the stars, and the clouds come back after the rain.* Cf. *Zohar* 1:227a.

84. If one restores the soul of a poor person... If one supports a poor person, thereby restoring his soul, then his own soul will be “restored” and protected, thereby extending his life.

See the story in BT *Bava Batra* 11a. In numerous rabbinic sources, the verset in Proverbs 10:2 and 11:4—*וְצַדִּיקָהּ (u-tsdakah), and righteousness, saves from death*—is interpreted as *and charity saves from death*. See BT *Shabbat* 156b, *Rosh ha-Shanah* 16b, *Bava Batra* 10a; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 11, p. 53; *Seder Eliyyahu Zuta* 1, p. 170; *Shir ha-Shirim Zuta* on 1:15; *Midrash Mishlei* 10:2; 11:4; *Zohar* 1:104a, 199a-b; 3:111a, 113b, 154a.

85. One who withholds the wage of a poor person... See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 279: “Whoever withholds a hired person’s wages is as though he takes his life.”

All the breaths (and grunts and groans) of the hardworking person rise to heaven, and if he has not been paid promptly, that night his soul and the souls of his household ascend, entering those breaths and complaining before God. Then, even if the employer were destined to

live long and prosper, he dies prematurely and his soul is excluded from “that world” (the world to come).

The concluding quotation from Rabbi Abba means: “May God save us from the punishment inflicted on account of such wronged laborers and their humiliation!” On the passage in *Sifrei*, see *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 24:15; BT *Bava Metsi'a* 112a. Cf. *Shir ha-Shirim Zuta* on 1:15.

86. Even if he is rich?... What if the worker is not needy but well-off—does the employer even then have to pay him immediately? Yes, because the verse states *and toward it he lifts his soul*, implying a close connection between one’s soul and compensation for one’s work. Even a rich worker yearns to be paid fairly and promptly.

According to a rabbinic interpretation of the verse in Deuteronomy, the phrase *his soul* implies “his wage.” See JT *Ma’aserot* 2:8, 50a; *Shir ha-Shirim Zuta* on 1:15; Vital; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

On the requirement to pay every worker promptly, including a wealthy one, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 278 (and Finkelstein’s n. 2); BT *Bava Metsi'a* 111b. For the full verse in Deuteronomy, see above, [note 83](#).

The question “Even if he is rich?” renders יכול אפילו עשיר (*Yakhol afilu ashir*). In rabbinic usage, the term *yakhol* (“one might, it is possible”) often stands for “You (or I) might have thought...,” followed by a supposition that is then proven wrong by careful scrutiny of the biblical text. Here, however, the supposition is supported! The normal usage of *yakhol* appears below at [notes 105-6](#).

87. Take your soul... See the preceding note.

88. he would refuse... Rav Hamnuna would refuse to keep the worker’s wage, which represented all his effort and his very being. The verse in Psalms reads: *In Your hand I entrust [or: commend, commit, deposit] my spirit*.

89. with someone else Other than the employer.

90. He replied... Rabbi El'azar explains that once the employer has handed the payment to his worker, the latter is permitted to return it to his employer for safekeeping.

91. shall not remain with you through the night... This verse in Leviticus implies that the wages must be paid before the next morning, whereas the verse in Deuteronomy implies that they must be paid before sunset. Rabbinic tradition resolves the apparent contradiction by explaining that the first verse applies to a worker hired by day, who completes his work around sundown and who must be paid before the next morning; while the second verse applies to a worker hired by night, who completes his work by morning and must be paid before the sun sets.

See M *Bava Metsi'a* 9:11; BT *Bava Metsi'a* 110b; *Sifra, Qedoshim* 2:12, 88d; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 279; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 24:15.

Here Rabbi El'azar apparently assumes that both verses apply to a day laborer, who should be paid before sundown. He explains that each day of the week corresponds to one of the seven cosmic Days, namely the seven *sefirot* from *Hesed* through *Shekhinah*, which rule over the earthly days of the week. If on any day a person violates one of the commandments (for example, by not paying a worker promptly), he fails to fulfill the corresponding sefirotic Day—to *give its wage*, as it were—and thereby damages it. A particular day's commandments must be fulfilled before sundown, when the next day technically begins, ruled by the next sefirotic Day.

See *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the correspondence between the days of the week and the seven lower *sefirot*, see *Zohar* 2:63b, 88a; 3:92a. Cf. 1:224a. The clause "if he does not give him his soul" means "if he does not give him his wage." See above, [note 86](#).

92. does not ascend... Whereas the souls of the wronged worker and his household ascend to heaven at night and complain before God, the employer's soul is

confined to earth due to his wrongdoing. Rabbi El'azar is reading the verse as לא תלין פעולת שכיר אתך (*Lo talin pe'ullat sakhir ittekha*), *Do not cause [your soul] to remain [below] with you through the night, [on account of your not having promptly paid] the wages of a hired man.* See above, [note 85](#).

93. You shall not curse the deaf... Rabbi Ḥiyya accepts the simple sense of the verse but seeks to supplement this with deeper meaning. All the verse's meanings are interconnected.

On the significance of this portion of Leviticus, see above, [note 29](#). The full verse reads: *You shall not curse [or: insult, ridicule, vilify] the deaf, and before the blind you shall not put a stumbling block. You shall revere your God; I am YHVH.*

94. is as though he spills his blood... See BT *Bava Metsi'a* 58b: "Whoever publicly humiliates his fellow [literally "blanches his face"] is as though he spills blood."

Whereas the Talmudic statement refers to humiliating a person in his presence, Rabbi Ḥiyya applies the command of Leviticus—*You shall not curse the deaf*—to cursing someone who is not present and thus *deaf* to the curse.

95. There is not a single word... If a person humiliates another, the sound of his nasty word ascends and arouses demonic powers who dwell in the Great Abyss.

"Quaestors" renders קסטירין (*qastirin*), probably based on rabbinic קוסטור (*qustor*), which derives from Latin *quaestor*, a Roman official or prosecutor.

On the potency and effect of spoken words, see *Zohar* 1:92a; 2:47b, 201a; 3:31b, 55a, 61a, 105a, 121b, 168b-169a, 260b, 294a-b (*IZ*). Cf. 1:4b; 2:59a, 100b. On the demonic effects of wrong or evil speech, see BT *Berakhot* 19a; *Zohar* 1:175a, 195b; 2:47b, 264b-265a (*Heikh*), 266a; 3:46b-47a, 53a, 85a, 155b.

96. Before the blind you shall not put a stumbling block... Rabbi Ḥiyya confirms the literal meaning of this commandment but refers as well to rabbinic tradition,

which generalizes it and understands it metaphorically: Do not tempt someone to sin by preying on his weakness or susceptibility (his “blindness”); do not mislead someone who cannot “perceive” a situation.

See *Sifra, Qedoshim 2:14*, 88d: “*Before the blind you shall not put a stumbling block*—before one who is blind about something.... If someone asks you for advice, do not give him advice that is unsuitable for him.”

See BT *Pesahim 22b* (and *Avodah Zarah 6a-b*), in the name of Rabbi Natan: “How do we know that a person should not hold out a cup of wine to a Nazirite [who has vowed not drink it]...? Because Scripture states: *Before the blind you shall not put a stumbling block.*”

See BT *Mo’ed Qatan 17a*: “*Before the blind you shall not put a stumbling block*—Scripture speaks of one who beats his grown-up son [thereby causing him to rebel].”

Rabbi Hiyya adds another example of placing a stumbling block before the blind—one who is unqualified to render legal decisions (or to teach) and yet does so. Such a person misleads all those who hear and accept his word; they will consequently act improperly and “stumble” into punishment in the world that is coming.

He links this example with a verse in Proverbs, which reads in full: *For many the victims she has felled, numerous all whom she has slain*. The simple sense of this verse refers to a seductive harlot, but in the Talmud it is applied to disciples of Torah who act improperly. See BT *Sotah 22a*, in the name of Rav: “What is the meaning of the verse *For many the victims she has felled, numerous all whom she has slain*? *Many the victims she has felled*—this refers to a disciple who has not attained the qualification to render legal decisions and yet does so. *Numerous all whom she has slain*—this refers to a disciple who has attained that qualification and does not render decisions.”

See the parallel in BT *Avodah Zarah 19b*; Rashi on both Talmudic passages; *Zohar 1:5a*. In *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot*

Talmud Torah 5:4, Maimonides describes the qualified disciple who does not render decisions as “placing stumbling blocks before the blind.”

On the verse in Leviticus, see also Maimonides, Commentary on the Mishnah, *Shevi'it* 5:6; idem, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, negative *mitsvah* 299; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Rotseah* 12:14; *Zohar* 2:49b; Levine, *Leviticus*; and Milgrom, *Leviticus*, ad loc. According to BT *Niddah* 57a, the Samaritans (typically) accepted only the literal sense of *Before the blind you shall not put a stumbling block*, and not its midrashic interpretation. See Rashi on BT *Hullin* 3a, S.V. *va-afilu kuti*.

On the intriguing question of whether this commandment was ever intended literally, see *Midrash Haserot vi-Yterot*, 93 (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:271); Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, negative *mitsvah* 299; *Sefer ha-Hinnukh*, *mitsvah* 240; Joseph Babad, *Minhat Hinnukh*, *mitsvah* 232, n. 4; Elijah Mizrahi on Rashi on Leviticus 19:14; Vital; Judah Loew ben Bezalel, *Gur Aryeh*, 44d, on Leviticus 19:14; Aaron ibn Hayyim, *Qorban Aharon*, 2:205a–b (on *Sifra, Qedoshim* 2:14); Judah Rosanes, *Mishneh la-Melekh*, on Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Malveh ve-Loveh* 4:6; *Malbim* on Leviticus 19:14; Jeroham Perla’s discussion in his edition of Saadiah Gaon, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, negative *mitsvah* 55, 2:54a–56a; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Moshe Feinstein, *Iggerot Moshe, Oraḥ Hayyim* 5:13; Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 2:1641. Cf. the hermeneutical principle (BT *Shabbat* 63a; *Yevamot* 11b, 24a) that despite the validity of midrashic interpretation, “a verse cannot escape its simple meaning.”

97. That word of Torah issuing from his mouth... Such a word rises to heaven, accompanied by supernal angels, is adorned with a crown, and is bathed in the river of *Binah* (known as the World that is Coming), which issues from *Hokhmah* (pictured as Eden).

On a word of Torah ascending and being crowned, cf. *Zohar* 1:4b–5a. On the river issuing from Eden, see Genesis

2:10; Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows from Eden*, 229–51.

עלמא דאתי (*Alma de-atei*) is the Aramaic equivalent of the rabbinic Hebrew העולם הבא (*ha-olam ha-ba*), “the world that is coming.” This term has often been understood as referring to the hereafter and often been translated as “the world to come.” From another point of view, however, “the world that is coming” already exists, occupying another dimension. See *Tanḥuma, Vayiqra* 8: “The wise call it *ha-olam ha-ba* not because it does not exist now, but for us today in this world it is still to come.” See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhoh Teshuvah* 8:8; and Guttman, *Philosophies of Judaism*, 37: “‘The world to come’ does not succeed ‘this world’ in time, but exists from eternity as a reality outside and above time, to which the soul ascends.”

In Kabbalah “the world that is coming” often refers to *Binah*, the continuous source of emanation. See *Zohar* 3:290b (*IZ*): “the World that is Coming, constantly coming, never ceasing.” Cf. *Bahir* 106 (160); Asher ben David, *Peirush Shelosh-Esreh Middot*, in *Kabbalah* 2 (1997): 293; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 26 (30); idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot*, 375; *Zohar* 1:83a, 92a, 141b.

98. that word ascends and strays from the path... If a person is misled by an unqualified teacher, who causes him to stumble in his learning, his word of Torah is rejected above. Therefore, *you shall revere your God* and teach carefully and only if you are qualified.

On a word of Torah being rejected above, cf. *Zohar* 1:5a. On improper teaching as placing a stumbling block before the blind, see above, [note 96](#). For the full verse in Leviticus, see above, [note 93](#).

99. he pores over her and stammers in her ignorantly... In such a case, the student’s loving devotion turns his stammering and babbling into something precious to God. Each of his words is warmly received and planted around the stream of *Binah*. See above at [note 97](#).

The phrase “willows of the stream” derives from a description of the four species of vegetation held on *Sukkot*. See Leviticus 23:40: *You shall take for yourselves on the first day fruit of a majestic tree, fronds of palms, and a branch of a thickly-leaved tree [or: branches of thickly-leaved trees] and willows of the stream, and you shall rejoice before YHVH your God seven days.* These four species became identified as the *etrog* (citron), *lulav* (palm branch), *hadas* (three sprigs of myrtle), and *aravah* (two willow twigs).

The full verse in Proverbs, describing one’s wife, reads: *A loving doe, a graceful gazelle—let her breasts ever quench your thirst [or: satisfy you, fill you, refresh you]; תשגה (tishgeh) lose yourself [or: stray, stagger, be ravished, intoxicated, infatuated], always in her love.* Here, Rabbi Ḥiyya interprets the conclusion of the verse as *Err always in her love*—even when you err in Torah, if it is based on love, God finds this delightful.

See BT *Eruvin* 54b: “*Lose your yourself always in her love*—as with Rabbi El’azar son of Pedat, of whom it was said that he was sitting engaged in Torah in the lower market of Sepphoris, while his cloak lay in the upper market of Sepphoris.” See JT *Berakhot* 5:1, 9a.

The notion of God delighting over stammered words of Torah recalls a related midrashic teaching. See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:4, interpreting ודגלו (*Ve-diglo*), *And his gaze upon me* [or: *and his banner over me*], was love (Song of Songs 2:4): “Rabbi Aḥa said, ‘If an ignorant person misreads אהבה (*ahavah*), “love,” as איבה (*eivah*), “hate,” saying, for example, ואייבת (*Ve-ayavta*), *You shall hate*, [YHVH your God,] instead of ואהבת (*Ve-ahavta*), *You shall love*, [YHVH your God] (Deuteronomy 6:5), the blessed Holy One says, “ודילוגו (*Ve-dillugo*), *And his skipping* [that is, misreading], *is beloved to me.*”” Rabbi Yissakhar said, ‘If a child misreads *Moshe* (Moses) as *Mashe*, *Aharon* (Aaron) as *Haron* [or: *Aharan*], *Efron* as *Efran*, the blessed Holy One says, “וליגלוגו (*Ve-liglugo*), *And his stammering* [or: *babbling*], *is beloved to me.*””

Cf. *Tanḥuma, Bemidbar* 10; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bemidbar* 10; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 2:3; *Tosafot, Avodah Zarah* 22b, s.v. *raggala*.

100. A Torah of truth was in his mouth... In Malachi this applies to the tribe of Levi and its priests.

101. a person should learn ... from anyone... See M *Avot* 4:1, in the name of Ben Zoma: “Who is wise? One who learns from every person.” Cf. *Zohar* 2:95a: “Sometimes in those empty fools, you may discover bells of gold.”

102. A person should always engage in Torah... See *Pesaḥim* 50b, in the name of Rav: “A person should always engage in Torah and *mitsvot* even if not for their own sake, because by engaging in them not for their own sake, he will come to do so for their own sake.”

See JT *Hagigah* 1:7, 76c; *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 2; BT *Nazir* 23b; *Sotah* 22b, 47a; *Sanhedrin* 105b; *Horayot* 10b; *Arakhin* 16b; *Bahir* 137 (196); *Zohar* 1:190a.

103. this portion contains... On the significance of this portion of Leviticus, see above, [note 29](#). The concluding sentence is clarified below.

104. There are two rungs here... *Mishpat* (justice) symbolizes *Tif'eret*, who is also known as *Raḥamim* (Compassion). *Tsedeq* (righteousness) symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is often called *Din* (Judgment). Compassion and Judgment need one another, because if Compassion conducted the world alone, evil would go unpunished; while if strict Judgment operated alone, humanity would not survive.

The phrase “turning fragrantly firm” renders אַתְּבִסָּם (*itbesam*). The root בִּסַּם (*bsm*) conveys both fragrance and firmness. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 66:2; *Midrash Shemu'el* 26:4; *Zohar* 1:30b, 31a, 34a, 37a, 56a, 137a; 2:10a, 94a, 105a, 143a, 147b, 168a, 227a; 3:14a-15a, 18a, 31a, 62a, 91a, 292a (*IZ*); Bronsnick, “Ha-Shoresh ‘Bsm’”; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 165, 388, n. 44; idem, *Kabbalah*, 228.

105. When righteousness is aroused... *Righteousness* (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) conveys strict judgment without compassion or leniency, whereas *justice* (symbolizing *Tif'eret*) includes compassion. Yet *justice* on its own might be too compassionate, so it needs to be balanced with *righteousness*, which treats everyone equally. See *Zohar* 3:91a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 367.

106. Be-tsedeq, In righteousness... The verse reads: *Be-tsedeq, In righteousness*, תִּשְׁפֹּט (tishpot), *you shall judge, your fellow*, which implies that *righteousness* (conveying strict judgment) must be balanced by *mishpat* (*justice*), conveying compassion.

107. the blessed Holy One is found there... God inheres in justice, so human courts must balance compassion and judgment, imitating the sefirotic harmony of Compassion and Judgment. On God being present with human judges, see *Midrash Tehillim* 82:1, and the following note.

108. The blessed Holy One sets His throne... When human judges sit below, the divine judicial Throne is established. *Binah* (sometimes called the blessed Holy One) is enthroned upon *Shekhinah* (*righteousness*) and *Tif'eret* (*justice*)—as demonstrated by the verse צדק ומשפט (Tsedeq u-mishpat), *Righteousness and justice, are the foundation of Your throne*.

Any human judge must render judgment “on the Throne of the King”—that is, by balancing *righteousness and justice*, judgment and compassion. If he disregards (“damages”) either one, it is as if he damages the Divine Throne, and God withdraws from such flawed judicial proceedings.

See BT *Sanhedrin* 7a, in the name of Rabbi Yonatan: “Any judge who delivers an absolutely true verdict causes *Shekhinah* to dwell in Israel, as is said: *God takes His stand in the divine assembly, in the midst of* אלהים (elohim), *the gods*

[understood here as *the judges*], *He renders judgment* (Psalms 82:1). And any judge who does not deliver an absolutely true verdict causes *Shekhinah* to depart from Israel, as is said: *'From the plunder of the poor, from the groans of the needy, now will I rise,' says YHVH....* (Psalms 12:6)."

See *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 16:19; *Tanḥuma, Mishpatim* 4, 6; *Shemot Rabbah* 30:24; *Midrash Tehillim* 12:3; and Baḥya ben Asher on Leviticus 19:15 (whose wording resembles the language here). On *elohim* as *judges*, see below, [p. 169](#), [n. 326](#). On the verse in Psalm 89, see *Zohar* 2:122a; 3:59b, 73b, 287a, 291b (*IZ*).

109. They rose... From sitting in the field, as described above at [note 78](#).

The context in Leviticus reads: *You shall not go about as a slanderer among your kin. You shall not stand over the blood of your fellow. I am YHVH. You shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall surely reprove your fellow and not bear guilt because of him. You shall not take vengeance or harbor a grudge against members of your people. You shall love your fellow as yourself. I am YHVH.*

110. My statutes you shall keep... Rabbi El'azar proceeds to the following verse in Leviticus. The term כְּלָאִים (*kil'ayim*) means "both, pair, two," and thus here "a different kind, two kinds." The precise meaning and etymology of שְׂאֵטֶז (*sha'atnez*) are uncertain. It seems to be a foreign loanword (perhaps from Egyptian) and probably serves in this verse as a lexical gloss clarifying the meaning of a *garment of kil'ayim, two kinds of thread*. In Deuteronomy 22:11, *sha'atnez* itself requires explication: *You shall not wear sha'atnez, wool and linen together.*

See Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 2:1659, 1664. The concluding phrase in the verse from Leviticus—*shall not come upon you*—means: *shall not be donned by you.*

111. You are My witnesses... According to the simple sense of the verse, the people of Israel are God's *witnesses*.

Rabbi El'azar adds that the *witnesses* can also be “heaven and earth,” as in the verse from Deuteronomy.

112. *My servant ... Jacob...* As indicated by the verse in Isaiah 49: *You are My servant, Israel*, since Israel is equivalent to Jacob. The verse in Isaiah 41 actually reads: *But you, Israel, My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen*. On the phenomenon of Zoharic biblical quotations differing from the Masoretic text, see Vol. 7, p. 8, n. 24.

David too is described as *My servant*. The title “supernal David” refers to *Shekhinah*—or *Malkhut* (Kingdom), with whom King David is intimately linked. See above, [notes 63, 65](#).

113. What is meant by *I am He*? The divine identity includes both Jacob and David, who symbolize respectively *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*.

114. *Before Me no God was formed...* The divine name אֱל (El), *God*, can actually refer to Jacob, based on a radical interpretation of the verse in Genesis. That full verse reads (normally): *He [Jacob] set up an altar there* ויקרא לו אל אלהי ישראל (*va-yiqra lo El Elohei Yisra'el*), *and called it God, God of Israel*. According to the simple sense, Jacob assigns a divine name to the altar, but a midrashic reading turns *God of Israel* into the subject who names Jacob *God*!

See BT *Megillah* 18a, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: “How do we know that the blessed Holy One called Jacob ‘God’? Because it says: *Va-yiqra lo El Elohei Yisra'el, The God of Israel called him God*. For if you imagine that Jacob called the altar ‘God,’ then the verse should read: *Jacob called it [God]*. Rather, *He called him, namely Jacob, God*. And who called him *God*? *The God of Israel*.”

Here Rabbi El'azar applies this interpretation to the verse in Isaiah 43. *Before Me no El, God, was formed* now implies that before the emanation of the *sefirot*, *Tif'eret*—symbolized by Jacob, who is called *El, God*—was not *formed*.

David symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is also called *El, God*; so David shares this name. The conclusion of the verse in

Isaiah—*and after Me none shall exist*—now implies there is no other emanation called *EI, God*, after the emergence of the final *sefirah: Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by David, both of whom are also called *EI*.

On the clause “*I am He—all*,” see the preceding note. On the passage in BT *Megillah*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 79:8, and Theodor, ad loc.; Rashi, Naḥmanides, and Baḥya ben Asher on Genesis 33:20; Recanati on Genesis 33:20, 31d–32a; *Zohar* 1:138a, 150a, 234b.

115. He arranged every single thing... And appointed heavenly powers over each one. Whatever is made by humans from any natural resource, or whatever each created thing does, derives from the potency of these celestial forces. Such forces are described as “laws,” constituting the laws of nature, and they derive their authority from *Shekhinah*, who conveys divine Judgment.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 10:6 (per Oxford MS 147), in the name of Rabbi Simon: “You cannot find a single blade of grass below that does not have a constellation [or: planet] in the sky, striking it and telling it: ‘Grow!’”

See Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 2:10; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 544; Naḥmanides on Genesis 1:11; 2:8; Leviticus 19:19; *Zohar* 1:34a; 2:15b (*MhN*), 30b, 80b, 171b; *ZḤ* 8b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 181, 294; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 135. On this *Zohar* passage, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1205–9.

116. They all move according to another, higher law... The appointed celestial powers are conducted by *Shekhinah*, the divine law. Rabbi El’azar is playing on two senses of the word חֻק (ḥoq): “statute” and “portion.” Once they receive their ḥoq (*portion*) from *Shekhinah*, these forces become full-fledged ḥuqqot (*statutes*). *Shekhinah* actually conveys the “legal” flow of emanation from *Tif’eret*—who is known as *heaven*—so the forces are called חֻקוֹת שָׁמַיִם (ḥuqqot shamayim), *the statutes of heaven*.

The verse in Psalms—*For it is ḥoq, a statute, for Israel*—confirms that these *statutes* derive from *Tif'eret*, whose full name is *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel).

The full verse in Proverbs reads: *She rises while it is still night, and provides טרף (teref), food [or: prey], for her household and a portion for her maidens.* This section in Proverbs, describing the ideal wife—*the woman of strength* [or: *valor*] (Proverbs 31:10)—is applied to *Shekhinah*, who according to this verse provides sustenance each night to Her angels. The full verse in Job reads: *Do you know the laws [or: statutes] of heaven, can you fix its rule on earth?* Cf. Jeremiah 33:25.

117. Thus it is written *Ḥuqqotai, My statutes...* One must not mingle species because this violates the celestial *ḥuqqot*, “statutes” or “laws,” of Creation, each of which is appointed over a single earthly thing. By cross-breeding, for example, one produces a new “kind” for which no heavenly power has been designated. Any mingling of species displaces a celestial power “from its place,” that is, from the species to which it has been assigned, or from its heavenly position.

The phrase “negates the celestial Family” renders אכחיש פמליא דלעילא (*akhḥish pamalya di-l'eila*), which derives from BT *Sanhedrin* 67b, where Rabbi Yoḥanan teaches that sorcerers “מכחישין פמליא של מעלה” (*makhḥishin pamalya shel ma'lah*), negate [or: impair, deny] the celestial Family [i.e., the heavenly household, divine agencies].” Here, Rabbi El'azar indicates that one who mingles species “impairs” the celestial powers or “denies” their efficacy.

The phrase “falsifying the royal solemnity” renders אכחיש פומבי דמלכא (*akhḥish pumbei de-malka*). *Pumbei* derives from Greek *pompe*, “pomp, solemn procession, solemnity.” Here it refers to the splendid divine arrangement of nature.

Pumbei may also imply “coin, coinage.” See BT *Avodah Zarah* 54b, where Rabbi Shim'on son of Lakish teaches as follows concerning an act of adultery: “The blessed Holy

One said, ‘Not enough that the wicked make My coinage פומבי (*pumbei*), public, but they trouble Me and make Me set My seal [upon it] against My will!’” Based on the Talmudic phrase “make My coinage *pumbei*, public,” the Zoharic author may be identifying *pumbei* with “coinage.” Thus one who mingles species is “counterfeiting the royal coin.”

See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 295–96; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 134–35; *Zohar* 3:44b (Vol. 7, pp. 273–74, n. 54); *TZ* 70, 128b; Recanati on Leviticus 19:19, 64b; *Arukh ha-Shalem*, s.v. *pumbei*; Scholem, 5:1319 (unnumbered); idem, *Major Trends*, 389, n. 52; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 110–11, n. 21. Cf. the expression מכחיש במעשה בראשית (*makhshish be-ma’aseh vereshit*), “negating (or denying) the Act of Creation,” (and equivalent expressions) in connection with the prohibition against mingling species: Naḥmanides on Genesis 1:11; Leviticus 19:19; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 295–96; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 135; Baḥya ben Asher on Leviticus 19:19; Deuteronomy 22:10.

On this and the following paragraphs, see Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 544; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 19:19 (and Genesis 1:11; Deuteronomy 18:9); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 295–96; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 133–36; Baḥya ben Asher on Leviticus 19:19; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1206. On the passage in BT *Sanhedrin*, see BT *Hullin* 7b; *Tanḥuma*, *Miqqets* 2; *Zohar* 1:243b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 279.

118. כלאים (*Kil’ayim*), **a different kind...** Rabbi El’azar associates כלאים (*kil’ayim*) with כלא (*kele*), “prison,” because a person who mingles species “imprisons” the heavenly powers, as it were, making it impossible for them to function properly.

See Baḥya ben Asher on Leviticus 19:19. The phrase “into prison” renders בבי מטרונא (*be-vei matrona*). *Matrona* is a corruption of (or playful variation on) מטררא (*mattera*), “guard post, custody.” The manuscripts offer several variants.

119. Kil'ayim—prevention... The root כלא (kl') can mean “to prevent, restrain.” See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 295; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 135; Bahya ben Asher on Leviticus 19:19; Recanati on Deuteronomy 22:9-12, 89b-c.

120. Kil'ayim—confusion... Based on the simple sense of the verse. See above, [note 110](#). On “falsifying the royal solemnity,” see above, [note 117](#).

121. But from the tree of knowledge... Adam sinned by eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, which symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who vacillates between opposites and is vulnerable to the demonic Other Side. He should have united *Shekhinah* with *Tif'eret*, who is symbolized by the Tree of Life and represents the sefirotic core, perfecting and harmonizing all. By eating from the Tree of Knowledge, he separated *Shekhinah* from *Tif'eret* and became subject to Her vacillations and vulnerable himself to demonic forces. The phrase “another place” alludes to the dark aspect of *Shekhinah*, or to the Other Side.

See *Or Yaqar*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1207; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the nature of Adam's sin, see *Zohar* 1:12b, 35b-36a, 51a-52a, 53b, 221a-b; 2:194a-b; 3:107a-b, 122a; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 231-32, 236, 404-5, n. 105; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:373-76; Vol. 1, p. 298, n. 1438.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *But from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat, for on the day that you eat from it, you will surely die.*

122. one must demonstrate action... A person should model his actions on the pattern of the *sefirot*, thereby stimulating activity above. If he fails to do so and acts improperly (as did Adam), he draws upon himself a negative influence.

On the need to manifest action, see *Zohar* 1:99b-100a, 161a, 220b (standard editions); 2:47b; 3:37a-b, 66b, 92b, 95a, 99b, 105a, 118b-119a, 120b, 149a; *ZH* 43c. According

to an essential principle of Kabbalah, “By an action below is aroused an action above.” See *Zohar* 1:35a, 77b–78a, 82b, 86b, 88a, 156b, 164a–b, 220a (standard editions), 233a, 235a, 244a; 2:31b, 35b, 47b, 125a, 184a–b, 232b, 265a (*Heikh*); 3:30b–31b, 36b, 38b, 40a–b, 47a–b, 66a, 92a–b, 105a, 110b, 112b, 113b, 118a, 119a, 145a (*Piq*), 152a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 144; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1160–61.

123. *She seeks out wool and flax...* This section of Proverbs describes the ideal wife—*the woman of strength* [or: *valor*] (Proverbs 31:10). As mentioned above ([note 116](#)), this capable woman often symbolizes *Shekhinah*. Here, *She seeks out* those who by combining *wool and flax* violate the command in Leviticus 19:19: *and a garment of kil'ayim, two kinds of thread—sha'atnez—shall not come upon you.*

The full verse in Proverbs reads: *She seeks out wool and flax, and performs with willing hands.* Cf. *Zohar* 3:51a.

124. *Why is it permitted in tzitzit?...* Why can wool and flax be combined in tzitzit?

According to Numbers 15:38, the Israelites are commanded to *make for themselves תצצית (tsitsit), a tassel, on the hem of their garments for their generations and place on the tassel of the hem a thread of violet [or: bluish purple].* In Deuteronomy 22:11–12, the commandment of tzitzit is immediately preceded by the prohibition against wearing wool and linen together. Based on this juxtaposition, rabbinic tradition indicates that the commandment of tzitzit supersedes this prohibition against the forbidden mixture: the colored woolen thread should be placed even on a linen garment.

Rabbi El'azar explains that “there,” namely regarding tzitzit, the (linen) garment is perfected by placing the woolen thread according to the Torah's commandment. Moreover, tzitzit conveys perfection, or completeness, because it reminds one of all 613 *mitsvot*.

On combining wool and linen in tzitzit, see M *Eduyyot* 4:10; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Deuteronomy 22:12; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 22:10; BT *Yevamot* 3b-5b; *Nazir* 41b-42a, 58a; *Menahot* 39b-40a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 4:6; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 14, 64a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:15; 4:1; 7:7; *Devarim Rabbah* 4:9; *Tanḥuma, Shemini* 8; *Ḥuqqat* 7; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemini* 12; *Ḥuqqat* 23; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 19:15; Rashi and Ibn Ezra on Deuteronomy 22:12; *Zohar* 3:215b (RM); Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 2:1662-64. Cf. *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 7; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 233; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 5:12; 22:12.

125. to wreak vengeance... Upon anyone who combines *wool and flax* in a garment, except in fulfilling the *mitsvah* of tzitzit.

The phrase “when it is in perfection” includes the category of the Sanctuary and the priestly garments. For example, the lower cover of the Tabernacle and the curtain closing off the Holy of Holies were a mixture of linen and dyed wool, and various priestly garments also contained this mixture. Such items are made with the blessing of *Shekhinah*—as it were, *with Her willing hands*. However, when *wool and flax* are combined in any other fashion (“not in perfection”), the person who does so arouses a demonic spirit.

On the mixture of wool and linen in the Tabernacle and the priestly garments, see Exodus 26:1, 31, 36; 27:16; 28:6, 8, 15, 37, 39; 39:29; M *Kil'ayim* 9:1; Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 2:1659-65. On the demonic spirit aroused by combining wool and flax, see Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 135; Baḥya ben Asher on Leviticus 19:19.

126. Abel and Cain prove it... Abel represents the right side, characterized by *Ḥesed* (Love), whereas Cain represents the left side, characterized by *Din* (harsh Judgment), source of the demonic Other Side.

According to Genesis 4:3-4: *It happened in the course of time that Cain brought from the fruit of the soil an*

offering to YHVH. And Abel, he too brought from the firstlings of his flock and from their fat. YHVH regarded Abel and his offering, but He did not regard Cain and his offering.

A midrashic tradition records that Cain brought mere flax seed, whereas Abel brought lambs that had not yet been shorn of their wool. Consequently, God commanded that flax and wool should not be mixed in a garment, since “it is not proper that the offering of the sinner be mixed with the offering of the innocent one.” Here, Rabbi El’azar indicates that Cain’s offering was “distanced” or rejected because his flax could not be combined with Abel’s woolly lambs.

See *Tanḥuma, Bereshit 9; Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer 21* (and Luria’s n. 20); *Targum Yerushalmi, Genesis 4:3; Midrash Aggadah, Genesis 4:3; Rashi on Genesis 4:3; Moses de León, Sefer ha-Rimmon, 293–94. Cf. Zohar 1:54a.*

127. A garment of kil’ayim ... shall not come upon you—unspecified... According to Rabbi El’azar, the subject of the verb *shall not come upon you* is uncertain, because if it is simply *a garment*, the verse should read *shall not be upon you*. He concludes that the verse alludes here to a demonic spirit, who *shall not come upon you*—but who does *come upon you* if you wear a garment of mingled species.

See BT *Yoma 38b–39a*: “Resh Lakish said: ‘... If one comes to defile himself, they open the door for him; if one comes to purify himself, they assist him.’ ... Our rabbis taught: ‘*Do not become impure with them, becoming impure through them* (Leviticus 11:43). If one defiles himself slightly, he is defiled greatly; [if one defiles himself] below, he is defiled from above; in this world, he is defiled in the world that is coming.’ Our rabbis taught: ‘*You shall hallow yourselves and become holy* (ibid., 44). If one sanctifies himself slightly, he is sanctified greatly; below, he is sanctified from above; in this world, he is sanctified in the world that is coming.’” See above, [notes 8](#), [122](#).

On the reading of *shall not come upon you*, see Baḥya ben Asher on Leviticus 19:19. On the terms *kil'ayim* and *sha'atnez*, see above, [note 110](#).

The concluding quotation here—*You shall hallow yourselves and become holy, for I, YHVH, am holy*—includes elements from the Masoretic text of Leviticus 11:44 and 20:7. The former verse reads: *For I am YHVH your God, and you shall hallow yourselves and become holy, for I am holy*. The latter reads: *You shall hallow yourselves and become holy, for I am YHVH your God*. The wording *for I, YHVH, am holy* appears in a similar context in Leviticus 19:2; 20:26. On the wording here, see Rosenthal, “Al Derekh Tippulam shel Ḥazal be-Ḥillufei Nussaḥ ba-Miqra,” 400. On the phenomenon of Zoharic biblical quotations differing from the Masoretic text, see Vol. 7, p. 8, n. 24.

[128.](#) ***But from the tree of knowledge...*** Adam's sin involved separating *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the Tree of Knowledge) from *Tif'eret* (symbolized by the Tree of Life), thereby inflicting death upon the world. If a person empowers the demonic Other Side—for example, by mingling two species—his action is even worse!

[129.](#) ***An ox and a donkey prove this...*** In Ezekiel's vision of the Chariot-Throne (Ezekiel 1:10), the ox appears on the left, symbolizing *Din* (Judgment). The donkey represents a demonic power. The command in Deuteronomy against plowing with these two species is understood as a warning not to stimulate the union of *Din* and demonic power, which would strengthen the Other Side. By keeping these two species separate, one increases peace (not only between the ox and donkey but also) throughout the world. Similarly, whoever keeps wool and flax separate weakens the demonic realm and increases world peace.

In M *Kil'ayim* 9:8, the word שְׂטָנוֹ (*sha'atnez*) is interpreted according to the method of *notarikon* (shorthand) as: “that which is שׁוּעַ טָוִי וְנוּז (*shu'a tavui ve-nuz*), carded, spun,

and twined [or: woven].” Here, this is apparently understood as meaning that the wool and flax become a forbidden mixture only when both are carded together, spun together, and woven together.

See *Sifra, Qedoshim* 4:18, 89b; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 232; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Deuteronomy 22:11; BT *Yevamot* 5b (and Rashi and *Tosafot*, ad loc.), *Niddah* 61b (and Rashi and *Tosafot*, ad loc.); Rashi and Nahmanides on Leviticus 19:19; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhhot Kil’ayim* 10:2; Solomon ben Abraham Adret on BT *Yevamot* 5b, *Niddah* 61b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1209, n. 397 (and the fuller version of Tishby’s note in *Mishnat ha-Zohar*, 2:475); *Matoq mi-Devash*.

In *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 135, Moses de León offers a remarkable anagram of שַׂטָּן (sha’atnez): אֶזְרַח (satan az), “fierce Satan,” which he compares with the Christian (that is, Greek and Latin) term *Satanas*. See Recanati on Leviticus 19:19, 64b.

On the term *sha’atnez*, see above, [note 110](#). On the significance of not plowing with an ox and a donkey, see *Zohar* 1:166b, 172b; 2:6a, 64b–65a; 3:163b, 207a.

130. So, what was Cain’s offering?... As mentioned above ([note 126](#)), a midrashic tradition records that Cain brought mere flax seed, whereas Abel brought lambs that had not yet been shorn of their wool. Here, Rabbi El’azar indicates that Abel offered the wool, which symbolizes *Hesed*; whereas Cain’s offering of flax represents *Din*, on the left side, the source of the demonic realm.

“Cain was *kil’ayim*, of two kinds,” because he was engendered by a human mother (Eve) and Samael. See *Pirquei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 21 (according to David Luria’s emendation, based on *Yalqut Shim’oni*, Genesis 35): “The serpent-rider [Samael] copulated with her and she conceived Cain. Afterward her husband, Adam, copulated with her and she conceived Abel.”

The sentence “In Eve’s womb these two aspects joined....” apparently alludes to the tradition that Cain and Abel were twins. According to Rabbi El’azar, Cain reflected the aspect of impurity, while Abel reflected holiness; but Abel’s fetus was infected by his brother’s impurity, so neither one endured. Abel, of course, was killed by Cain, while the latter’s descendants all drowned in the Flood. For another interpretation, see *Matoq mi-Devash*.

On Abel’s offering as including wool, see David Luria’s n. 20 on *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 21. On Cain as *kill’ayim*, see ZH 78c (*MhN, Rut*).

On Samael’s (or the serpent’s) role in engendering Cain, see also *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 4:1 (per British Library MS 27031, ed. Clark); *Zohar* 1:36b-37a, 52a, 54a-55a; 2:167b, 178a (*SdTs*), 231a; 3:76b, 143a (*IR*); ZH 8c-9b, 63c (*ShS*), 83b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 294; Stroumsa, *Another Seed*, 38-53. Cf. BT *Shabbat* 145b-146a, in the name of Rav Yosef: “When the serpent copulated with Eve, he injected her with זוהמא (*zohama*), filth [or: slime, lust].” See below, [p. 127](#), [n. 214](#).

On Cain and Abel’s being twins, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 21. Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 22:2-3, 7; 61:4; BT *Yevamot* 62a; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 1; Vol. 7, p. 524, n. 533.

[131](#). Still to this day, their aspect endures... The spirits of Cain and Abel endure, and whoever mingles species (such as by wearing a combination of wool and linen) arouses them. On the spirits of Cain and Abel, see *Zohar* 3:143b (*IR*).

[132](#). The priest shall wear בדו בדו (*middo vad*), his linen raiment... Rabbi El’azar associates the word בד (*bad* or *vad*), *linen*, with the root בוד (*bdd*), “to be solitary, separate, alone.” The description of the priest’s garment as *vad*—rather than פשתים (*phishtim*), “flax”—indicates that it must not contain any other species.

On this midrashic reading of *bad*, see BT *Yoma* 71b; *Zohar* 2:239a. Cf. *Sifra*, *Tsav* 2:1, 29d. The full verse in Leviticus 6 reads: *The priest shall wear his linen raiment and linen breeches he shall wear on his body, and he shall take away the fatty ashes to which the fire has reduced the ascent offering on the altar and put them beside the altar.* The term *דֶּשֶׁן* (*deshen*), *fatty ashes*, refers to burnt wood mixed with fat of the sacrificial animal on the altar.

133. Why must the priest display himself in this?...

Why does the priest (who symbolizes *Hesed*) wear garments of linen (flax), a material that represents *Din* (harsh Judgment)? Because he is now clearing away the fatty ashes of the ascent offering, which atones for sinful thoughts, such as those of idolatry. His linen garments (representing the left side) correspond to such thoughts, which ultimately derive from that side; so these garments must not be intermingled with wool (representing *Hesed* on the right).

According to biblical and rabbinic tradition, the common priests wore four garments: linen breeches, a linen tunic, a linen headdress, and a sash. The more widely accepted view (held by Rabbi Yehudah the Prince) was that the sash was also made of linen but included dyed woolen yarn, though Rabbi El'azar son of Rabbi Shim'on taught that it contained no wool. See JT *Yoma* 7:5, 44b; BT *Yoma* 12a-b.

Furthermore, the generally accepted view was that the priest who removed the fatty ashes wore all four garments (breeches, tunic, headdress, and sash). However, the Talmud records one opinion (associated with Resh Lakish) that only two garments were required—linen breeches and a linen tunic—based on the wording in Leviticus 6:3: *The priest shall wear his linen raiment and linen breeches he shall wear on his body, and he shall take away the fatty ashes.* This is apparently the position adopted here by Rabbi El'azar, who indicates that such a priest wore only

linen and no wool. (Based on what follows here, it is very unlikely that Rabbi El'azar holds the opinion that the priest removing the fatty ashes wore a sash made only of linen, even though this view would match the Talmudic view of Rabbi El'azar mentioned above.)

See *Sifra, Tsav* 2:1, 30a; BT *Yoma* 23b; *Tosefot Rabbeinu Asher*, ad loc., s.v. *kakh maḥaloqet ba-haramah*. On the priestly garments, see Exodus 28 and 39; Leviticus 8:7-9, 13; Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1:501-13. Exodus 39:29 specifies that the sash for Aaron and his sons included linen and dyed woolen yarn. For various explanations of Rabbi El'azar's position here and in the following paragraph, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Nefesh David*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; Soncino; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Scholem; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

On the ascent offering, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 7:3, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "The ascent offering is due only על הרהור הלב (*al hirhur ha-lev*), for sinful imagining [literally: for imagining of the heart, or mind]."

See JT *Yoma* 8:9, 45b; *Shevu'ot* 1:6, 33b; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Leviticus 6:2; *Tanḥuma, Lekh Lekha* 10; *Tetsavveh* 15; *Tsav* 7, 13; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Lekh Lekha* 13; *Tsav* 9; *Zohar* 1:70a; 2:239b; 3:5b-6a, 9a, 11a, 38a; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 1:4; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 54, 263. Cf. Job 1:5.

According to a rabbinic tradition, the intention to commit idolatry is itself a punishable sin. See BT *Qiddushin* 39b-40a, *Hullin* 142a; *Midrash Aggadah*, Numbers 1:15 (all quoting Ezekiel 14:5). On the connection between the ascent offering and idolatry, see *Zohar* 2:239a-b (Vol. 6, p. 385, n. 358).

134. But when he enters the Sanctuary... The altar for the ascent offering (from which the ashes were removed) was situated in the priests' courtyard, outside the Sanctuary proper. According to Rabbi El'azar, when the priest entered the Sanctuary itself, he wore garments that combined linen and wool—meaning, apparently, that in

addition to his linen breeches and linen tunic (which he wore while removing the ashes), he now wore also his linen headdress and his sash, the latter including not only linen but dyed woolen yarn. See the preceding note.

The fact that the priest's sash included wool and linen poses no problem, because the Sanctuary represents completeness, reflects the combination of different divine qualities, and includes items of mingled elements or species, reflecting those qualities. See above, [note 125](#); *Or Yaqar*. On tzitzit, see above, [note 124](#).

On the priest's wearing his sash in the Sanctuary (whether or not he is performing a ritual), see *Tosefta Kil'ayim* 5:27; Lieberman, *Tosefta ki-Fshutah*, 2:664-65; BT *Yoma* 69a; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Kil'ayim* 10:32 (and Abraham ben David, ad loc.); *Hilkhot Kelei ha-Miqdash* 8:12 (and Abraham ben David, ad loc.).

[135. Rabbi Hiyya opened following him...](#) Following Rabbi El'azar. The simple sense of the passage in Leviticus, of course, relates to entering the land of Israel, but Rabbi Hiyya broadens the discussion. *The land*—or the earth—produces fruit through the heavenly power assigned over each and every thing, according to the principle presented earlier by Rabbi El'azar. See above, [note 115](#).

The context in Leviticus (19:23-25) reads: *When you come to the land and plant any fruit-bearing tree, you shall treat its foreskin with its fruit as foreskin [or: you shall leave its fruit uncircumcised]. Three years it shall be foreskin [or: uncircumcised, forbidden] to you; it shall not be eaten. In the fourth year all its fruit shall be sacred, a jubilation before YHVH. In the fifth year you may eat of its fruit, that its yield may be increased for you. I am YHVH your God.* Here, the term ערלה (*orlah*), “foreskin,” refers to the fruit enclosed in its bud; the closed bud is to be plucked before its fruit emerges, leaving the fruit “uncircumcised.” See Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 2:1678-80.

136. Until a female conceives three times... Her third offspring is the most complete, and when this “fruit of her womb” becomes three years old, it is fully ripened. Thus Levi, the third son born to Leah, was the finest of the tribes, providing all the priests and Levites.

In *Zohar* 3:143a-b (*IR*), Rabbi Shim'on discusses the birth of Adam and Eve's three children (Cain, Abel, and Seth) and indicates that the third was the finest.

The reference to the third-born offspring recalls rabbinic discussions of the term עגלא תלתא (*igla tilta*). This simple sense of this phrase is “a three-year-old calf,” matching the biblical term עגלה משלשת (*eglah meshuleshet*), a *three-year-old heifer* [or: *calf*] (Genesis 15:9). However, according to a ninth-century Gaon, Natronai bar Hilai, *igla tilta* means “a calf that is third-born [that is, the third calf of its mother], which is the finest of all born to a cow.” This interpretation is both adopted and disputed by medieval commentators on the Talmud. (According to another interpretation, the phrase means “a calf that has reached a third of its full growth.”) Cf. *M Bava Metsi'a* 5:4.

On the term *igla tilta*, see Natronai Gaon, *Teshuvot*, 527; Rashi on *Shabbat* 11a, *Eruvin* 63a, *Pesahim* 68b, *Megillah* 7a, *Sanhedrin* 65b; *Tosafot* on *Gittin* 56a, *Bekhorot* 19a; Maimonides, *Commentary on the Mishnah*, *Parah* 1:1; Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic*, s.v. *tilta*; Vol. 7, pp. 515–16, n. 513.

137. sacred, a jubilation... The root of the word הלולים (*hillulim*), a *jubilation*, is הלל (*hll*), “to praise,” indicating that when the fruit is fully ripened, one should offer praise to God.

The phrase “Until here” marks the conclusion of the simple sense of the verse, following which Rabbi Hiyya proceeds to a deeper meaning. For other interpretations of this paragraph, see Scholem; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

138. For in the fourth year... The ripening of the fruit after three years symbolizes the union of *Shekhinah* (known

as Assembly of Israel) and *Tif'eret* (called the blessed Holy One). Rabbi Ḥiyya equates the biblical word הלולים (*hillulim*), a *jubilation*, with the Aramaic term הלולא (*hillula*), “festivity, wedding feast, wedding celebration.” On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, [note 32](#).

139. Who is the fourth year?... First, Rabbi Ḥiyya indicates that this alludes to *Tif'eret* (the blessed Holy One), perhaps because (being the core of the *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*) He comes after *Keter*, *Ḥokhmah*, and *Binah*.

Then he identifies *the fourth year* with *Shekhinah* (Assembly of Israel), who is the fourth leg of the Throne, whose other three legs are *Ḥesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*. Together, these four *sefirot* constitute a throne for the highest level of Divinity (or they support *Binah*, who constitutes that Throne). The union of *Tif'eret* (who includes *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*) with *Shekhinah* is marked by a wedding celebration, signaling that “all is permitted to be eaten,” especially ripened fruit.

Ḥesed, *Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* are symbolized respectively by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who according to rabbinic tradition constitute the Divine Chariot-Throne. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 47:6 (in the name of Resh Lakish): “The patriarchs themselves constitute the Chariot.”

See Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 57; *Zohar* 1:60b, 99a, 150a, 154b, 173b, 186a, 222b, 223b-224a, 248b; 2:23b, 31b, 144a; 3:17b, 38a, 71b, 99a, 142b (*IR*), 145a (*IR*), 146a, 151a, 182a, 262b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 239-40; Chaze, “De l’identification des patriarches au char divin.” On the fourth leg of the divine throne, see also *Zohar* 1:5b, 20a, 82a, 89b (*ST*); Vol. 3, p. 134, n. 311.

On the question of whether the fruit of a tree can be eaten in the fourth year or not until the fifth, see Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 2:1680-82.

140. Until [the fruit] is entirely completed... If a person eats the fruit before its proper time, he

demonstrates a complete lack of holiness. If he recites a blessing over such fruit, that blessing is in vain.

In the medieval Jewish world, there was a dispute over whether one should recite a blessing over forbidden food. The Sephardic view was that one should not; the Ashkenazic view was that one should. Here the *Zohar* upholds the Sephardic position. See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Berakhot* 1:19; Abraham ben David, ad loc.; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 62. Cf. JT *Hallah* 1:9, 58a; *Shabbat* 13:3, 14a.

141. *You shall not eat over the blood...* The verse continues: *You shall not divine nor interpret omens*. The first half of the verse apparently relates to a pagan rite of divination, in which a ritual meal was consumed over a pit or large receptacle containing blood, perhaps with the idea that spirits of the dead could be conjured up from the blood. See Nahmanides on the verse; Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 2:1685–86; Alter, *Five Books of Moses*, ad loc.

According to BT *Berakhot* 10b, Rabbi Eli'ezer son of Ya'akov interpreted this verse to mean that one should not eat in the morning before praying: "*You shall not eat before you have prayed for your blood [i.e., your life].*"

On *You shall not eat over the blood*, see also *Sifra, Qedoshim* 6:1, 90b; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 21:21; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 28:8; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:15; BT *Mo'ed Qatan* 14b, *Sanhedrin* 63a; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 10:1; *Zohar* 1:207b; 2:122a (Vol. 5, p. 149, n. 30), 215b; ZH 90d–91a (*MhN, Rut*). Three of these sources (*Vayiqra Rabbah*, *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah*, and *Bemidbar Rabbah*) discuss the relationship between this verse and Leviticus 19:23, expounded above by Rabbi Hiyya.

Leviticus 19:32 reads in full: *Before a gray head you shall rise, and you shall honor the face of [or: defer to] an elder; you shall revere your God. I am YHVH*. Here, Rabbi Yose indicates that a *gray head* means "one who is learned in Torah." The word "generally" may imply that this

includes even a young scholar. See BT *Qiddushin* 32b, where Rabbi Yose the Galilean interprets the verse similarly. See also *Sifra, Qedoshim* 7:12, 91a; *Targum Onqelos* and *Targum Yerushalmi*, Leviticus 19:32.

142. a person should rise before a Torah scroll... See BT *Qiddushin* 33b: “Should one rise before a Torah scroll? Rabbi Hilkiyah, Rabbi Simon, and Rabbi El’azar say, ‘קל וחומר (Qal va-homer), A fortiori: If we rise before those who study her, how much more so before [Torah] herself!’” (The legal term “a fortiori,” originally from Latin, means “from the stronger,” that is, a conclusion that is inferred to be even more certain than an already accepted truth: “If X is true, then certainly Y is true.”) See JT *Megillah* 41:1, 74d; BT *Makkot* 22b.

A *humash* (literally “one-fifth”) refers to one of the five books of the Torah (and later to all five books). The medieval use of the term refers to a book not written as a scroll. Even though such a *humash* is not as holy as a Torah scroll, a custom developed to rise before it. See Solomon ben Abraham Adret, *She’elot u-Tshuvot* 1:144.

143. because he has attained supernal holy stature... A scholar of Torah has perfected the divine image in which all humans are created. An aged scholar corresponds to *Keter* (known as the Holy Ancient One), and his white hair matches the description in Daniel 7:9: *The Ancient of Days sat—His garment like white snow, the hair of His head like clean fleece.* “The supernal Priest” refers to *Hesed*, whose purity is symbolized by the color white. See below, [p. 316](#), [n. 82](#).

Written Torah and Oral Torah symbolize respectively *Tif’eret* and *Shekhinah*. Rabbi Shim’on may be indicating that while the Torah scroll itself is Written Torah, the scholar embodies Oral Torah; or that the scholar represents the sefirotic union of *Tif’eret* and *Shekhinah*. Possibly, he is associating the word והדרת (*ve-hadarta*), *You shall honor*, with

Yesod, who links the divine couple and is sometimes described as הדר (*hadar*), “majestic.” See, e.g., *Zohar* 3:186b.

For various interpretations of this paragraph, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Haggahot Maharḥu*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

144. This verse comes in order to be expounded...

It is not very praiseworthy if a person avoids wrongdoing only when he turns old and has lost much of his passion and energy. Rather, one should strive to be virtuous while still in his prime.

On this interpretation of the verse in Leviticus, see *ZḤ* 7a-d (*MhN*); *Zohar* 3:227b (*RM*); David ben Abraham Maimuni (the grandson of Maimonides), *Midrash David*, 14; Scholem.

The full verse in Ecclesiastes reads: *Recall your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of evil come, and the years arrive when you will say, “I have no delight in them.”* See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 18:1; *BT Shabbat* 151b; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 12:1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ḥayyei Sarah* 7; Rashi on Ecclesiastes 12:1; *Zohar* 1:204a; 3:13b.

See *BT Avodah Zarah* 19a, which quotes an interpretation by Rav of the verse *Happy is a man who reveres YHVH* (Psalms 112:1): “*Happy is one who engages in teshuvah while he is still a man,*” that is, in his prime. Cf. *BT Sanhedrin* 22a.

On the expression “This verse comes in order to be expounded,” see *BT Megillah* 2b, *Yevamot* 54b, *Qiddushin* 4a, *Sanhedrin* 55a; *Zohar* 2:29b–30a, 160b, 175a; 3:32a, 267a; *ZḤ* 25d (*MhN*), 86a–b (*MhN, Rut*); Gikatilla, *Sha’arei Orah*, 2a; Matt, “New-Ancient Words,” 198.

The verse in Proverbs can also be rendered: *Even in his deeds a lad may dissemble, though his acts be pure and upright.*

145. Surely this way is paved before us... Rabbi El’azar rejoices that the way on which he and his

companions have traveled has been enhanced by their new words of Torah.

See above at [notes 78, 109](#). On the importance of engaging in Torah while walking or traveling, see above, [note 4](#).

146. For YHVH knows the way of the righteous... Since God walks before the righteous, one should welcome Him by engaging in Torah.

The verse in Psalms concludes: *and the way of the wicked will perish* [or: *will become lost, be destroyed, is doomed*].

147. All by itself... Once God withdraws His attention and providential care from the wicked, they automatically perish.

148. דרך (derekh), way, and ... ארה (orah), path... By discovering fresh meanings of Torah and *mitsvot*, the righteous create a new *path*, unlike the well-worn *way* that is familiar to all.

On the distinction between *path* and *way*, see *Zohar* 2:215a. Cf. 1:197b; 2:31a-b. The verse in Job records Elihu's sharp criticism of Job: וַאֲרַח (ve-arah), *and he goes about* [or: *journeys*], *in company with evildoers and walks with wicked people*. Rabbi El'azar apparently construes the verb *arah* as *he sets out*, supporting his interpretation of *orah*, *path*, as that which is "opened only recently." See Vital.

1. YHVH said to Moses... According to Leviticus, a dead body contaminates a living person. Since the priests are innately holy, they must not come into contact with a corpse. A concession is granted to ordinary priests (but not to the high priest): they may defile themselves by coming into contact with the corpse of their closest kin. See Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 2:1796-97.

The context in Leviticus (21:1-4) reads: *YHVH said to Moses, "Say [or: Speak] to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say to them: For no dead person among his kin shall he [that is, a priest] defile himself, except for his own flesh that is closest to him, for his mother and for his father, for his son and for his daughter and for his brother, and for his virgin sister who is close to him, who has not belonged to a man, for her he may defile himself. He shall not defile himself among his kin, profaning himself."*

2. Why is this juxtaposed with that... Rabbi Yose wonders why the opening verses of this *parashah* follow immediately after the commandment against consulting a *ghost or wizard-spirit*. He explains that after Scripture directed Israel to sanctify themselves, it commanded the priests to do the same. Similarly, in the book of Numbers the Levites are commanded to donate a tithe of their own tithe to the priests. Thus "all" branches of the people are guided toward holiness.

On the juxtaposition of the end of Leviticus 20 and the beginning of Leviticus 21, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 26:7; *Tanḥuma, Emor* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Emor* 3-4; and *Leqah Tov*, Leviticus 20:27.

The context in Leviticus (20:26-27) reads: *You shall be holy to Me, for I, YHVH, am holy, and I set you apart from the peoples to be Mine. A man or a woman who is a medium for a ghost or wizard-spirit shall surely be put to death; they shall be pelted with stones—their bloodguilt is upon them.*

3. the sons of Aaron... Obviously the priests are descended from Aaron, but by specifying him (rather than

his ancestor, Levi), Scripture directs the priests to imitate Aaron's passionate commitment to peace.

According to rabbinic tradition, Aaron excelled in resolving disputes and reconciling married couples. Here, Rabbi Yose alludes to his ability to stimulate the union of the divine couple: "to bring peace to the celestial Family."

On Aaron's talent for peacemaking, see M *Avot* 1:12, in the name of Hillel: "Be among the disciples of Aaron, loving peace and pursuing peace, loving human beings and drawing them near Torah." See *Sifra, Millu'im (Shemini)* 1:37, 45d-46a; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 12; B, 24-25; BT *Yoma* 71b, *Sanhedrin* 6b; *Zohar* 3:60a.

On the significance of the formulation *the sons of Aaron* (in this verse), cf. *Sifra, Emor* 1:1, 93c; BT *Yevamot* 85a, *Sotah* 23b, *Qiddushin* 35b-36a. All of these rabbinic sources conclude from the precise wording *the sons of Aaron* that *the daughters of Aaron* are permitted to come in contact with the dead.

4. How abundant Your goodness... By which God sustains the world. See *Zohar* 2:148b-149a, 166b-167a (referring to the hidden light, which is identified below with this *goodness that You have hidden*).

On the verse in Psalms 31, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 307; *Zohar* 1:7a, 46a, 47a; 2:127a, 220a-b; 3:173b, 264a. On *the goodness of YHVH*, see also Jeremiah 31:11.

5. That You have hidden... See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 11:7 (in the name of Rabbi Yehudah son of Rabbi Simon): "With the light created by the blessed Holy One on the first day, a person could gaze and see from one end of the world to the other. When the Holy One foresaw the corruption of the generation of Enosh and the generation of the Flood, He hid it away from them, as is written: *The light of the wicked is withheld* (Job 38:15). Where did He hide it? In the Garden of Eden: *Light is sown for the righteous, joy for the upright in heart* (Psalms 97:11)."

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 3:6; 41:3; BT *Hagigah* 12a; *Shemot Rabbah* 35:1; *Tanḥuma, Shemini*, 9; *Midrash Tehillim* 27:1; *Bahir* 97-98 (147), 106 (160), 131 (190); *Zohar* 1:1a, 7a, 21a, 30b, 31b-32a, 45b-46a, 47a, 59a, 121b (*MhN*), 131a, 203b; 2:35a, 78b, 127a-b, 147b, 148b-149a 166b-167a, 220b, 224b, 230a; 3:34a-b, 93a, 173b, 225b, 231b; *ZH* 1a (*MhN*), 15b (*MhN*), 85a-b (*MhN, Rut*).

6. When a person is about to depart... To the world beyond. Three angelic messengers come to a person who is about to die, and he attains a unique vision (as explained below). God seeks to retrieve the person's soul, which has been deposited with him through his lifetime. Ideally, one who is dying can return his soul in purity.

On the three angelic messengers (or companies of angels), see BT *Ketubbot* 104a; *Sifrei Zuta* 6:26; *Hibbut ha-Qever*, ed. Higger, 257-58; *Beit ha-Midrash*, 5:48-49; *Kallah Rabbati* 3:1; *Zohar* 1:79a, 98a (*MhN*); 2:199a; 3:126b.

7. sees the Angel of Death... Who seizes and binds his victim.

The soul yearns to reunite with *Shekhinah*, but only one who has lived virtuously succeeds in cleaving to Her. See *Zohar* 3:53a. Cf. Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 396.

On seeing the Angel of Death's drawn sword, see BT *Avodah Zarah* 20b. Cf. *Hibbut ha-Qever*, ed. Higger, 257-58; *Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:150; *Kallah Rabbati* 3:1.

On seeing the Divine Presence at the moment of death, see *Sifra, Nedavah* 2:12, 4a, in the name of Rabbi Dosa: "Scripture states: *No human can see Me and live* (Exodus 33:20). In their lifetime they do not see, but in their death they do!"

See *Sifrei, Numbers* 103; *Sifrei, Deuteronomy* 357; *Pirgei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 34; *Tanḥuma, Huqqat* 16; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Huqqat* 39; *Hibbut ha-Qever*, ed. Higger, 258; *Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:150; *Kallah Rabbati* 3:1; *Midrash Tehillim* 22:32; 103:3; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:22; 19:18; *Zohar* 1:65b,

79a, 98a (*MhN*), 99a (*ST*), 218b, 226a, 245a; 2:263a (*Heikh*); 3:53a, 126b, 147a, 205a; *ZH* 10a (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 393.

The phrase “a quaestor with chains binding” renders the intentionally cryptic Aramaic קסטור בקטרין בקומטא (*qastar be-qitrin be-qumta*). *Qastar* is apparently based on rabbinic קוסטור (*qustor*), which derives from Latin *quaestor*, a Roman official or prosecutor. *Qitrin* is based on the root קטר (*qtr*), “to tie,” perhaps referring here to bonds or chains. *Qumta* is based on the root קמט (*qmt*), “to bind, tie” (as in *Targum Yonatan*, Proverbs 5:22). On the various elements of the phrase, see *Derekh Emet*; *Bei’ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 187, s.v. *qumta*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; Luria, *Va-Ye’esof David*, s.v. *qumta*, *qstr*; *Sullam*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:851; idem, *Mishnat ha-Zohar*, 2:168; Scholem.

8. After the soul leaves the body... A body that “remains so”—that is, without a soul—is vulnerable to roaming impure spirits, who are eager to assume any bodily form. Therefore it is essential to bury the body before nightfall, when impure spirits begin to prevail.

The closing phrase, “defiling it more,” means “defiling the corpse more than if it is buried promptly,” or “... more because of the impure spirit’s nighttime power.”

According to Deuteronomy 21:23 (referring to one who has been executed for a capital offense, after which his body is hung and exposed), *You shall not leave his corpse on the tree overnight, rather you shall surely bury him on that day, for a hanged body is under God’s curse, and you shall not defile your land*. Based on this verse, the Mishnah teaches that all corpses should normally be buried on the day of death. See *M Sanhedrin* 6:5; *BT Sanhedrin* 46a-b; *Zohar* 1:169b-170a; 2:141a; 3:25b, 143b-144a (*IR*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 397. On the meaning of *under God’s curse*, see Tigay, *Deuteronomy*; and Alter, *Five Books of Moses*, ad loc.

On demonic spirits lacking bodies, see *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 17: “It is not written here [*He ceased from all His work*] that [God] had created and made, but rather [*that God had created*] לעשות (*la’asot*), to make (Genesis 2:3), for the Sabbath came first and their work [i.e., *all His work* of Creation] was not completed. Rabbi Benaya said, ‘This refers to the demons, for He created their souls, and as He was creating their bodies, the Sabbath day was hallowed. He left them, and they remained soul without body.’”

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 7:5; 11:9; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 17:7; *Zohar* 1:14a, 47b–48a, 178a; 2:155b, 178b (*SdTs*), 214b; 3:19a, 43a, 48b, 142b (*IR*); *ZḤ* 32d–33a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 397.

The wording of this paragraph is based on the manuscripts M8, V3, V6, and V7, and the Cremona edition. The text preserved in *Or Yaqar* and the Mantua edition (followed by nearly all subsequent printed editions) includes a long interpolated passage, which derives from Joseph Gikatilla’s *Ta’amei ha-Mitsvot* (Cambridge MS Dd. 10.11.6, 23a):

“After the soul leaves the body, and the body remains without a spirit, it is forbidden to leave it unburied, as is written: *You shall not leave his corpse on the tree overnight, rather you shall surely bury him on that day* (Deuteronomy 21:23); for a corpse that tarries twenty-four hours—a day and a night—without burial, weakens the limbs of the Chariot and hinders the action of the blessed Holy One. For perhaps the blessed Holy One decreed [death] upon him in order to bring him into another reincarnation immediately, on the very day that he died, to benefit him. And as long as the body remains unburied, the soul cannot enter the presence of the blessed Holy One or inhabit another body in a second reincarnation, for a soul is not granted another body until the first one is buried. This is like a man whose wife has died: it is not fitting for him to

marry another woman until he buries the first one. Therefore, Torah says, *You shall not leave his corpse on the tree overnight.*

“Another interpretation: When the soul is separated from the body and seeks to go to that world, it cannot enter that world until it is given another body of light, after which it can enter. You may learn this from Elijah, who has two bodies: one in which he appears below to human beings, and another in which he appears above among supernal holy angels.

“As long as the body remains unburied, the soul suffers, and an impure spirit appears, to settle upon it and defile that body....”

In this interpolated passage, “the limbs of the Chariot” are the sefirotic limbs. On reincarnation in Kabbalah, see Vol. 5, pp. 38–39, n. 108. On Elijah’s two bodies, see Vol. 6, p. 121–22, n. 40. For further commentary, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:851–52; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

9. Therefore, Scripture warned the priests... Since the priests are inherently holy, they must guard themselves from contact with the dead, who are vulnerable to demonic spirits and convey impurity. See above, [note 1](#).

10. אמור (Emor), Say—quietly... Compared to the verb דבר (*dbr*), “to speak,” the verb אמר (*'mr*), “to say,” connotes quietness. This fits the role of the priests, who act quietly and whose silent intention is vital, stimulating sefirotic union.

On the semantic distinction between *dbr* and *'mr*, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 99; BT *Makkot* 10b–11a; *Leqah Tov* and *Sekhel Tov* on Exodus 6:2; *Zohar* 1:86b; 2:22b, 25b, 83a–b; 3:132b–133a (*IR*). Cf. *Mekhilta*, *Bahodesh* 2; *Sifra*, *Sheratsim* 2:7, 47c; *Zohar* 1:16b, 157a, 234b; 2:17a (*MhN*); 3:50b, 161a. On *'mr* as implying thought or intention (rather than speech), see, e.g., Genesis 20:11; 21:16; 26:9, 28;

31:31; 1 Samuel 20:4; 1 Kings 8:12; *Zohar* 1:234b; 2:17a (*MhN*), 25b; 3:17b, 147a, 161a.

On the quiet (or silent) quality of priestly service, see *Zohar* 3:146a, 147a, 177b; cf. 3:39a. Cf. also the Geonic tradition quoted by Abraham ben Isaac of Narbonne, *Sefer ha-Eshkol*, 1:47: “[A priest] who spreads out his hands should not bless ‘... who has sanctified us [with the holiness of Aaron and commanded us to bless His people Israel in love]’ loudly but rather quietly.” See Albeck’s note, ad loc.; Abraham ben Nathan ha-Yarḥi, *Sefer ha-Manhig*, 1:94.

11. Once, twice... Referring to the repetition of the verb אמר (*’mr*), “to say”: *Say to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say to them: For no dead person among his kin shall he defile himself.* Rabbi Yitshak explains that the repetition emphasizes the importance of the priests not becoming defiled.

On the significance of the repetition of *’mr* in this verse, see *Sifra, Emor* 1:3, 93c; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 26:5, 8; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:41; BT *Yevamot* 114a; *Midrash Shemu’el* 24:8; *Tanḥuma, Emor* 1, 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Emor* 1-2, 5.

12. impure spirits crave the bodies of Israel... These bodiless spirits seek the corpses of Israel, which, although emptied of souls, still retain a degree of sanctity and constitute empty vessels of holiness. See above, [note 8](#).

The human priest symbolizes *Ḥesed*, the Divine Priest, so “he stands below corresponding to the pattern above.”

The verse in Numbers refers to the נזיר (*nazir*), “Nazirite” (the one set apart, consecrated); like the high priest, he must not defile himself by contact with any corpse at all. The verse reads in full: *For his father and for his mother, and for his brother and for his sister, he shall not defile himself for them when they die, for נזר (nezer), the crown of, his God is on his head.* Leviticus 21:12, referring to the high priest, reads in full: *From the sanctuary he shall not go out, and he shall not profane the sanctuary of his God, for nezer, the distinction of, his God’s anointing oil is upon*

him. I am YHVH. Here, it is quoted without the word *nezer*. On the similarity between the Nazirite and high priest, based partly on these two verses, see *Bemidbar Rabbah* 10:11.

13. Like fine oil on the head... This oil symbolizes the flow of emanation issuing from the “holiness” of *Hokhmah* to *Binah*, and conveyed by Her (“the deepest river”) to the lower *sefirot*.

On this verse, see *Zohar* 2:87b; 3:7b–8a, 34a, 39a, 132b (*IR*), 209a, 295b (*IZ*); *ZH* 42b; Baḥya ben Asher on Numbers 21:19.

14. flowing forth from the head of all heads... From *Keter*, the most concealed realm.

15. head of Primordial Adam The emanation from *Keter* flows upon *Binah* (or *Hokhmah* and *Binah*), pictured as the head of the Primordial Adam (who spans the *sefirot* of *Hokhmah* through *Yesod*). For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Haggahot Maharḥu*; *Zacuto*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Liebes, Peraqim*, 39.

16. the glorious beard... The divine beard is described in detail elsewhere in the *Zohar*. See *Zohar* 2:122b, 176b–177b (*SdT*s); 3:130b–134b (*IR*), 139a–141b (*IR*), 289a–b (*IZ*), 295a–b (*IZ*). On the “glory” of the beard, see BT *Shabbat* 152a, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu’a son of Korḥah: “The glory of a face is the beard.”

17. the High Priest above... Namely, *Hesed*.

18. על פי מדותיו (al pi middotav), according to his attributes... The simple meaning of this phrase in Psalms is *over the collar of his robes*, but here Rabbi Yitshak construes it as *according to middotav, his attributes*—namely through the lower *sefirot*, which are Divine Attributes. When the priest is anointed with oil, this corresponds to the anointing above, and he too receives some of the divine essence. See *Zohar* 3:7b; *Or Yaqar*.

19. The beginning of this verse does not match its end... Why does the verse begin by referring to *the priests* and *them* (in the plural) and then switch to the singular:

among his kin shall he defile himself? Rabbi Yitshak explains that whereas the beginning of the verse refers to human priests, the end alludes to *Hesed*, the singular Divine Priest.

20. But it is written: *The priest who is exalted...* Apparently, Rabbi Yehudah begins by challenging (or pretending to challenge) Rabbi Yitshak: The allusion to the Divine Priest does not appear in the earlier verse—*For no dead person among his kin shall he defile himself*—but rather in a later verse: *The priest who is exalted over his fellows.... Near any dead person he shall not come in; for his father or for his mother he shall not defile himself.* However, Rabbi Yehudah concludes by agreeing with his colleague: “It is certainly so...,” that is, the earlier verse does indeed allude to the Divine Priest, whereas the latter verse refers to the human high priest.

The exact meaning of this paragraph is unclear, and there is some evidence that material is missing in the text. For example, V6 leaves a blank space toward the end of the paragraph. See Vital; *Nitsotsei Orot*; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Scholem; and also the interpretations offered by *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

The context in Leviticus (21:10–11) reads: *The priest who is exalted over his fellows, on whose head the anointing oil has been poured and who has been ordained to wear the garments, shall not dishevel his hair nor rend his garments. Near any dead person he shall not come in; for his father or for his mother he shall not defile himself.*

21. corresponding to the one above... To *Hesed*, the Divine Priest.

22. And for his virgin sister... The context (Leviticus 21:1–4) reads: *For no dead person among his kin shall he [i.e., the priest] defile himself, except for his own flesh that is closest to him, for his mother and for his father, for his son and for his daughter and for his brother; and for his virgin sister who is close to him, who has not belonged to a*

man, for her he may defile himself. He shall not defile himself among his kin, profaning himself.

23. Who is this coming from Edom... The biblical context refers to the end of days, when God will wreak vengeance upon Israel's enemy, Edom. In rabbinic literature, Edom often represents the Roman Empire (which destroyed the Second Temple), and in medieval Jewish literature, it often represents Christianity. Bozrah was the ancient capital of Edom.

Here, Assembly of Israel refers both to the nation and to *Shekhinah*. See above, [p. 11](#), [n. 32](#).

The image of birds and beasts feeding on the corpses of Israel's enemy derives from biblical sources. See Ezekiel's description of the slaughter of Gog, ruler from Magog (Ezekiel 39:4-5, 17-21) and Isaiah's description of the fate of (probably) the Assyrians (Isaiah 18:6). The period of twelve months is based on the rabbinic tradition that "The judgment of Gog and Magog in the time to come will last for twelve months." See M *Eduyyot* 2:10; *Seder Olam Rabbah* 3 (the latter quoting Isaiah 18:6). The reference to "seven years" may derive from Ezekiel 39:9.

Rabbi Abba indicates that God's garments of vengeance will be so stained by the blood of the enemy that they will be defiled. Isaiah 63:3 reads: *All My attire אגאלתי (eg'alti), I will stain [or: desecrate, defile].*

24. צועה (Tso'eh), Striding... Rabbi Abba interprets this word as "smashing." Cf. Jeremiah 48:12, where the verb וצעוהו (*ve-tse'uhu*), *and they will tip him over [or: and they will decant it]*, is followed by the verb ינפצו (*yenappetsu*), *they will smash*. Vital suggests that Rabbi Abba's interpretation matches one offered by David Kimḥi (which Vital paraphrases and adapts to the Zoharic context). See Kimḥi on Isaiah 51:14; 63:1; Jeremiah 48:12; idem, *Sefer ha-Shorashim*, s.v. *ts'h*; Vital.

25. It is I, speaking in righteousness... *Tif'eret*, Husband of *Shekhinah*, is known as צדקה (*tsedaqah*),

righteousness, and מִשְׁפָּט (*mishpat*), *justice*. He will redeem His exiled Wife along with their people.

26. Why all this?... Why will *Tif'eret* (the blessed Holy One) Himself wreak vengeance? Because His Beloved, *Shekhinah* (Assembly of Israel), is suffering in exile.

The *Zohar* sometimes interprets the verse in Amos as implying that *Shekhinah* (*Virgin Israel*, who has *fallen*) will not *rise again* on Her own, but the blessed Holy One Himself will raise Her.

See BT *Berakhot* 4b; *Zohar* 2:239b–240a (Vol. 6, p. 388, n. 366); 3:6a–b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 122–23. On the verse in Isaiah, see above, [note 23](#).

On the relation between *Shekhinah* and the Virgin Mary, see Patai, *The Hebrew Goddess*, 139–40, 151–54; Pope, *Song of Songs*, 168–71; Green, “*Shekhinah*, the Virgin Mary, and the Song of Songs”; Schäfer, *Mirror of His Beauty*, 217–43; Liebes, “Ha-Omnam Betulah Hi ha-Shekhinah?”; Idel, *Kabbalah and Eros*, 45–49; idem, *Ben*, 385–99; Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being*, 455–56, n. 224; Abrams, “The Virgin Mary as the Moon that Lacks the Sun.”

27. And for his virgin sister... *Shekhinah* is pictured as the *virgin sister* of *Tif'eret*. She has never *belonged to a man*—namely to Esau, who is described in Genesis as *a man skilled in hunting, a man of the field*. Esau is identified not only with the enemy Edom but also with the demonic Other Side, to whom *Shekhinah has not belonged*. For the sake of *Shekhinah*, *Tif'eret may defile himself*—bloodying His garments of vengeance.

See above, [note 23](#). The full verse in Genesis reads: *The boys grew up. Esau became a skilled hunter, a man of the field, and Jacob was a simple man, dwelling in tents*. The full verse in Isaiah reads: *Arise, shine, for your light has come! The Glory of YHVH has shone upon you!*

28. They shall not make any baldness... The verse describes pagan mourning rituals forbidden to the priests. It reads in full: *They shall not make any baldness on their*

head, and the edge of their beard they shall not shave, and in their flesh they shall cut no gash.

29. יקרהה לא (Lo yiqreḥuh), **They shall not make any baldness...** Rabbi Yose wonders why the word יקרהה (yiqreḥuh) is spelled unusually, ending with a ה (he) rather than a ו (vav). He explains that this alludes to the flow of emanation perfecting the seven cosmic days, namely the seven *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* to *Shekhinah*. This flow is conveyed by *Binah*, who is symbolized by the first ה (he) in יהוה (YHVH). If a priest blemishes his head by intentionally making it bald, the flow conveyed by *Binah* is removed from him, “balding” him more profoundly. Rabbi Yose may be construing יקרהה לא (Lo yiqreḥuh), *They shall not make any baldness*, as יקרהה לא (Lo yiqraḥ he), *He shall not bald himself of he*—that is, of *Binah*’s flow.

The priest symbolizes *Ḥesed*, the Divine Priest, whose “head” above is the flow conveyed by *Binah*.

The full verse in Leviticus 8 reads: *From the entrance of the Tent of Meeting you shall not go out for seven days, until the day of completion of the days of your ordination, כי שבעת ימים ימלא את ידכם (ki shiv’at yamim yemalle et yedekhem), because seven days shall your ordination be.* Here, Rabbi Yose reads this last clause hyperliterally: *because seven days shall ordain you*—that is, *Binah*, who is called *seven days, shall ordain you*. The expression *seven days* refers to *Binah* because She includes within Herself all six *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* to *Yesod* and is Herself known as *Seven*. She *shall ordain* the priests by conveying the flow to them. See *Zohar* 3:37a; below, [note 31](#). On the spelling יקרהה (yiqreḥuh), see *Leqāḥ Tov* and *Minḥat Shai*, ad loc.

30. When YHVH restored Zion... This psalm is often understood as referring specifically to the return from the Babylonian exile. According to the verse in Jeremiah, this exile lasted for seventy years.

The simple sense of the psalm’s opening verse may be that Israel experienced the miraculous nature of the return

like a dream come true. (See Ibn Ezra, ad loc.) Here, the sense is that after the redemption, the entire exile seemed like a (bad, passing, or unreal) dream, which resembles the view expressed in a Talmudic story about Ḥoni the Circle-Drawer. Rabbi Yose's reference to "a dream of seventy years" alludes to this same story.

See BT *Ta'anit* 23a, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "All the years of his life, that righteous man [Ḥoni] was troubled over this verse: *A song of ascents. When YHVH restored Zion, we were like dreamers* (Psalms 126:1). He said, 'Is there anyone who sleeps for seventy years dreaming?' One day he was traveling on the road and he saw a certain man planting a carob tree. He asked him, 'In how many years will this bear fruit?' He replied, 'Seventy years.' [Ḥoni] asked him, 'Is it clear to you that you will live another seventy years?' He replied, 'I found the world already planted with carob trees; just as my fathers planted for me, so I plant for my children.'

"[Ḥoni] sat down and ate a meal, and sleep overcame him. As he slept, a mound of earth encircled him and he was hidden from sight, and he slept for seventy years. When he awoke, he saw a man gathering fruit from that carob tree. He asked him, 'Are you the one who planted it?' He replied, 'I am his grandson.' [Ḥoni] said, 'This proves that one can sleep for seventy years!'"

See JT *Ta'anit* 3:8, 66d; *Midrash Tehillim* 126:1. The full verse in Jeremiah reads: *When Babylon's seventy years are completed, I will attend to you, and I will fulfill for you My word of favor—to restore you to this place.* Cf. Jeremiah 25:11.

31. because seven days shall ordain you... *Seven days* alludes to *Binah*, who includes within Herself (and gives birth to) all six *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* to *Yesod*. She is called Seven and also *Teshuvah* (Return), because from Her all emerges and to Her all ultimately returns.

The verse in Leviticus implies that *Binah shall ordain* the priests by conveying the flow to them. See above, [note 29](#). On *Binah* as *Teshuvah*, see *Zohar* 1:219a; 2:106a-b; 3:15b-16b, 40b, 74b-75a, 122a, 185b.

[32. If one sits fasting on Sabbath...](#) See BT *Berakhot* 31b: “Rabbi El’azar said in the name of Rabbi Yose son of Zimra, ‘If one sits fasting on Sabbath, [even] a decree of seventy years standing against him is torn up [i.e., annulled]. Yet even so, he is still punished for [ruining] the delight of Sabbath.’ What is his remedy? Rav Nahman son of Yitshak said, ‘Let him sit fasting [on a weekday to atone] for this fast.’”

According to one view, the Sabbath fast referred to in this Talmudic passage is in response to a bad dream, undertaken as an act of *teshuvah* (return, repentance) to ensure that the dream is not fulfilled. This view is reflected here by Rabbi Yose. He identifies the “decree of seventy years” as one which has been confirmed by all seven lower *sefirot*, which are “faces of the King.” Such a decree is annulled by one who fasts on Sabbath (the seventh day) because he is linked with *Binah*, who is called Seven and is identified with the Sabbath.

On the passage in *Berakhot*, see *Tosafot, Berakhot* 31b, s.v. *kol ha-yoshev* (quoting Hananel son of Hushi’el on this Sabbath fast being for a bad dream); *Zohar* 2:165b, 207a-b; 3:105a-b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 125-26. On fasting in order to avert the fulfillment of a dream, see below, [note 96](#). On fasting on Sabbath, see also *Zohar* 3:288b (*IZ*). On *Binah* as symbolizing the Sabbath, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1224, 1226.

[33. the priest is crowned with Seven...](#) He is adorned with the flow from *Binah*, who includes the lower six (or seven) *sefirot* and is thus called Seven and *seven days*. If he blemishes his head by making it bald, then *Binah* removes all the sefirotic holiness from him. Now the verse in Leviticus implies that לא יקרה ה קרהה (*Lo yiqrah he qorhah*), “[The

letter] *he shall not make any baldness, on their head*”—that is, “The priests should not act in such a way that *Binah* (symbolized by the letter *he*) will bald them of their holiness.”

See above, [note 29](#). The description “the one who is highest of them all” refers to the high priest.

[34. Here with lower ה \(he\)...](#) According to Rabbi Abba, the high priest is ordained by *Binah*, who is symbolized by the first ה (*he*) in יהוה (*YHVH*), whereas an ordinary priest is ordained by *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by the second *he* of that name. Since the high priest is so holy, corresponding to the sefirotic pattern, he is commanded not to leave the sanctuary.

See above, [note 29](#). Leviticus 21:10-12 reads in full: *The priest who is exalted over his fellows, on whose head the anointing oil has been poured and who has been ordained to wear the garments, shall not dishevel his hair nor rend his garments. Near any dead person he shall not come in; for his father or for his mother he shall not defile himself. From the sanctuary he shall not go out, and he shall not profane the sanctuary of his God, for the distinction of his God’s anointing oil is upon him. I am YHVH.*

[35. Yours, O YHVH, is righteousness...](#) The full verse reads: *Yours, O YHVH, is righteousness, and ours is a face filled with shame to this very day, and so for the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, all Israel, near and far, in all the lands where You have banished them, for the sacrilege they have committed against You.*

The Torah is pictured as God’s Name, so whoever studies Torah is engaging, as it were, with God. See above, [p. 7, n. 23](#).

[36. Come and see...](#) Rabbi Abba compares the verse in Daniel with a verse in Chronicles, which opens identically and reads: *Yours, O YHVH, are הגדולה והגבורה והתפארת והנצח וההוד* (*ha-gedullah ve-ha-gevurah ve-ha-tif’eret ve-ha-netsah ve-ha-hod*), *the*

greatness and the power and the beauty and the victory and the splendor—yes, all that is in heaven and on earth.

Quoted often in kabbalistic literature, this list of divine qualities (in Chronicles) is understood as designating respectively *Hesed* (also called *Gedullah*), *Gevurah*, *Tif'eret*, *Netsah*, *Hod*, *Yesod* (known as *all*), and *Shekhinah* (symbolized by *earth*), who is joined with *Tif'eret* (*heaven*). All of these “belong” to *YHVH*, which here refers to *Binah* (or the triad of *Keter*, *Hokhmah*, and *Binah*). See *Zohar* 1:235b, 241a–b; 2:40b, 178b (*SdTs*); 3:24a, 92a, 137b (*IR*), 148a.

According to Rabbi Abba, in the similar verse from Daniel the term *righteousness* alludes to *Tif'eret*, who is known by this designation. *Tif'eret* is the core of all the lower *sefirot*, the divine faces that focus on, and are reflected in, Him.

37. *And ours is a face filled with shame...* The sinners acknowledge that they are associated with the demonic realm, from which the radiant divine faces distance themselves.

38. *And righteousness is truth...* Both of these qualities represent *Tif'eret*. The root of צדקה (*tsedaqah*), *righteousness*, is צדק (*tsdq*), which often means “to be right (or true).”

39. *The supreme priest...* The high priest should radiate joy, corresponding to the sefirotic model.

See *Zohar* 3:39a. The full verse in Numbers reads: *YHVH said to Aaron, “In their land you shall have no inheritance, and no share shall you have in their midst. I am your share and your inheritance in the midst of the Children of Israel.”* The full verse in Deuteronomy (referring to all the Levites) reads: *He shall have no inheritance in the midst of his brothers; YHVH is his inheritance, as He promised them.* On these verses, see Milgrom, *Numbers*, ad loc.; and Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, ad loc.

40. *He shall take as wife...* The subject is the high priest.

41. And look, he has brought an accusation... The passage concerns a case in which a husband accuses his new wife of not being a virgin. The immediate context (Deuteronomy 22:16-19) describes what happens if the charge is untrue: *The young woman's father and mother shall take and bring out to the elders of the town at the gate the signs of the young woman's virginity [namely a bloodied bedsheet or garment]. The young woman's father shall say to the elders, "My daughter I gave to this man as wife, and he hated her. And look, he has brought an accusation of misconduct, saying, 'I found no signs of virginity for your daughter,' but these are the signs of my daughter's virginity."* And they shall spread out the garment before the elders of the town; and the elders of that town shall take the man out and discipline him, and they shall fine him a hundredweight of silver and give it to the young woman's father, for he has defamed a virgin of Israel.

Rabbi Shim'on asks why Scripture reads *a virgin of Israel*, rather than *a virgin of her father* or *a virgin of her husband*. He responds by quoting the verse from Deuteronomy 32, in which *your father* alludes to the father of the soul: *Tif'eret*, whose full name is *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel). Rabbi Shim'on is apparently indicating that the phrase *a virgin of Israel* represents *Shekhinah*, the virgin bride of *Tif'eret Yisra'el*. A husband who falsely accuses his wife of not being a virgin defames not only her but also the Divine Virgin, *Shekhinah*.

Just as *Tif'eret* is married to the Virgin *Shekhinah*, so the high priest (who corresponds to the Divine Male) must marry a virgin.

Rabbi Shim'on adds that the high priest's wife should behave modestly, not venturing outside at harvest time, when she might be attacked by dissolute field hands. Cf. Ruth 2:9.

On the verse in Deuteronomy 32, see *Zohar* 2:250a (*Heikh*); 3:298b. On the relation between *Shekhinah* and the Virgin Mary, see above, [note 26](#). For various interpretations of this paragraph, see *Or Yaqar*; *Haggahot Maharḥu*; Vital; Zacuto; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

42. Food He provides... If a person reveres God and rises at midnight to engage in Torah, he thereby participates with *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel), who is preparing for union with Her Beloved, *Tif'eret*. As a reward, *Shekhinah* nourishes him with the rich flow of emanation that She obtains from the distant realm of *Hokhmah*.

The context in Proverbs (31:14–15) reads: *She is like merchant ships, from afar she brings her bread. She rises while it is still night, and provides תרף (teref), food [or: prey], for her household and a portion for her maidens.* This section in Proverbs, describing the ideal wife—the woman of strength [or: valor] (Proverbs 31:10)—is applied to *Shekhinah*, who according to these verses obtains emanation from far above and provides sustenance each night to Her angels.

Here Rabbi Shim'on focuses on the literal meaning of *teref*, “what is torn (by beasts),” implying that *Shekhinah* “seizes” the riches of emanation *from afar*—from the remote realm of *Hokhmah*.

On *Hokhmah* as *afar*, see *Zohar* 1:6a, 107a; 2:50b; 3:20b, 35b, 60a. On the midnight ritual of studying Torah, and also on Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, [pp. 10–11](#), [n. 32](#).

43. He recalls forever His covenant... According to the simple sense of the verse, the subject is, of course, God; but Rabbi Shim'on interprets this clause as describing the devotee who continually *recalls* and engages in Torah, which is identified with *His covenant*. Such a person attains the sustenance of *Shekhinah*.

The term *covenant* also alludes to *Yesod*, the divine phallus (site of the covenant of circumcision). *Yesod* is known as Righteous One, and a righteous disciple of Torah joins with Him, both of them possessing the spiritual *land* of *Shekhinah*.

Yesod is known as Righteous One, based on Proverbs 10:25: וצדיק יסוד עולם (*Ve-tsaddiq yesod olam*). Although the simple sense of the verse is *The righteous one is an everlasting foundation*, it is understood midrashically as *The righteous one is the foundation of the world*.

See BT *Yoma* 38b, *Hagigah* 12b; *Bahir* 71 (102); Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 34. The full verse in Isaiah reads: *Your people, all of them righteous, will inherit the land forever—sprout of My planting, work of My hands, that I may be glorified*.

44. He shall not profane his seed... The simple sense of this verse is that the high priest should not stigmatize and desecrate his offspring by marrying a widow, a divorcée, or a whore, as mentioned in the preceding verse. However, Rabbi Shim'on interprets "profaning one's seed" as wasting semen. Anyone who commits this act does not attain a vision of *Shekhinah*. However, a husband is permitted to have sexual relations with his pregnant, nursing, postmenopausal, or barren wife, even though she cannot (or, in the case of a nursing wife, might not) conceive.

In the world of the *Zohar*, masturbation is a heinous sin. See BT *Niddah* 13b; *Zohar* 1:56b-57a, 62a, 69a, 100b, 188a, 219b; 2:263b (*Heikh*); 3:158a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 353; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 230; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1365-66.

The description of spilling seed in vain as *evil* is sometimes derived from the story of Judah's sons Er and Onan. According to Genesis 38:7, *Er, Judah's firstborn, was evil in the eyes of YHVH, and YHVH put him to death*. Judah then instructed Er's younger brother Onan to fulfill the duty of levirate marriage by wedding Er's widow, Tamar.

However, *Onan knew that the seed would not be his and so when he would come in to his brother's wife, he would waste [his seed] on the ground, so as not to give seed to his brother.* Although Scripture does not specify the nature of Er's sin, rabbinic tradition maintains that it was the same as that of Onan; thus Er's being *evil* refers to his spilling seed in vain. See *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 38:7; *Bereshit Rabbah* 85:4 (and Theodor's note); BT *Yevamot* 34b, *Niddah* 13b; *Zohar* 1:56b-57a, 62a, 188a, 219b; 2:103b.

The clause "one who emits it by hand" refers, of course, to masturbation. The wording "or otherwise" likely refers to masturbating by foot, as mentioned in BT *Niddah* 13b. On this bizarre act, see *Tosafot*, *Niddah* 13b, s.v. *bein ba-yad bein ba-regel*; *Zohar* 1:188a. The reading או במלה אחרא (*o be-millah aḥra*), "or otherwise" (literally "or with something else") appears in numerous manuscripts and editions of the *Zohar* (including both Mantua and Cremona). In the Constantinople edition (1736), this was revised (either due to squeamishness or failure to understand the implication) to: או באנתו אחרא דלא כשרא (*o be-intu aḥra de-la khashra*), "or in another woman who is unfitting [that is, forbidden to be married by him]." This change was then adopted in subsequent editions of the *Zohar*.

On a husband's being permitted to have sexual relations with his wife even if she cannot conceive, see *Tosafot*, *Yevamot* 12b, s.v. *shalosh nashim*; Joseph Ḥabiba, *Nimmucei Yosef*, *Yevamot*, chap. 6; *Or Yaqar*; Moses Isserles on *Shulḥan Arukh*, *Even ha-Ezer* 23:5; Isaiah Horowitz, *Shenei Luḥot ha-Berit*, *sha'ar ha-otiyot*, 73d; Ḥayyim Joseph David Azulai, *Midbar Qedemot* 7:4; Lauterbach, "Talmudic-Rabbinic View on Birth Control," 210, 221; Feldman, *Birth Control in Jewish Law*, 65-69.

The verse in Leviticus reads: *He shall not profane his seed among his people [or: among his kin]....*

45. a worthy vessel... A worthy wife.

On the statement “Woe to him who spoils his seed!” see BT *Qiddushin* 70a: “Woe to him who disqualifies his seed, spoils his family, and marries a woman who is not fitting for him! Elijah binds him, and the blessed Holy One lashes him.” See *Zohar* 2:77a-b; 3:237a; Moses de León, *Orḥot Hayyim*, par. 58.

46. how much more so with the high priest... Who symbolizes *Hesed*. Therefore, the Torah commands: *He shall not profane his seed among his people, for I am YHVH who sanctifies him.*

47. among his people... Since the preceding verse specifies three types of women whom the high priest must not marry, Rabbi Shim'on wonders why Scripture doesn't read here: *He shall not profane his seed בְּהֵן (ba-hen), within them.* Why does it read: *בְּעַמּוֹ (be-ammav), among his people?* Because, he explains, this phrase indicates that if the high priest violates this command, he causes a disgraceful defect *among his people*. Rather, he should marry *a virgin from his people*, corresponding to the Divine Virgin, *Shekhinah*.

The context in Leviticus (21:14-15) reads: *A widow or a divorcée or a defiled whore, these he shall not take as wife; rather, a virgin from his people [or: kin] he shall take as wife. He shall not profane his seed among his people [or: kin], for I am YHVH who sanctifies him.*

48. Another person is to be served... The subject is apparently the common Israelite, who ideally should have his hands washed in the morning by someone who has already washed.

See BT *Berakhot* 51a, in the name of Rabbi Yishma'el son of Elisha: “Three things were told to me by Suriel, Prince of the [Divine] Countenance: Do not take your shirt from the hand of the attendant when dressing in the morning, do not let your hands be washed by anyone who has not washed his hands, and do not return a cup of asparagus to anyone other than the one who has handed it

to you. For a band of demons (some say: a cluster of angels of destruction) lies in wait, saying, ‘When will a human do one of these things, so that we can capture him!’”

See *Zohar* 1:53b, 184b, 198b; Moses de León, *Orḥot Ḥayyim*, pars. 10, 12; Lieberman, *Tosefet Rishonim*, 4:147; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 31, 121, n. 59.

Leviticus 20:26 reads in full: *You shall be holy to Me, for I, YHVH, am holy, and I set you apart from the peoples to be Mine.* The concluding quotation here—*You shall hallow yourselves and become holy, for I, YHVH, am holy*—includes elements from the Masoretic text of Leviticus 11:44 and 20:7. The former verse reads: *For I am YHVH your God, and you shall hallow yourselves and become holy, for I am holy.* The latter reads: *You shall hallow yourselves and become holy, for I am YHVH your God.* See above, [p. 44](#), [n. 127](#).

49. Salvation is YHVH’s!... The simple sense of the verse, of course, is that God is the one who saves Israel, but Rabbi Shim’on offers a radically different interpretation, based on the midrashic theme that God shares in Israel’s exile. Thus, when Israel is redeemed, YHVH Himself is saved!

See BT *Megillah* 29a, in the name of Rabbi Shim’on son of Yohai: “Come and see how beloved are Israel in the sight of the blessed Holy One! Wherever they went in exile, *Shekhinah* accompanied them. When they were exiled to Egypt, *Shekhinah* was with them. ... When they were exiled to Babylon, *Shekhinah* was with them.... And even when they are destined to be redeemed, *Shekhinah* will be with them, as is said: ושב יהוה אלהיך את שבותך (Ve-shav YHVH Elohekha et shevutekha), *YHVH your God will return with your captivity* (Deuteronomy 30:3). The verse does not read ויהשיב (ve-heshiv), *will restore*, but rather ושב (ve-shav), *will return*. This teaches that the blessed Holy One will return with them from amidst the exile.”

The full verse in Deuteronomy reads: *YHVH your God will restore your fortunes [or: will return your captivity] and*

have compassion on you [or: and take you back in love]. He will return and gather you from all the nations where YHVH your God has scattered you. According to the midrashic reading, the word אַת (et) in the clause ושב יהוה אלהיך את שבוֹתְךָ (Ve-shav YHVH Elohekha et shevutekha), *YHVH your God will return your captivity*, is construed not as signaling the direct object (*your captivity*), but rather as meaning *with*, thereby yielding the radical reading: *YHVH your God will return with your captivity*.

See *Mekhilta, Pisha* 14; *Sifrei, Numbers* 84, 161; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 7:10; *Zohar* 1:120b, 145b; 3:22a–b, 115a, 266b, 270a–b. On God’s own salvation, see also *Mekhilta, Amaleq (Beshallah)* 2; *JT Sukkah* 4:3, 54c; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 9:3; *Midrash Shemu’el* 4:4; *Tanḥuma, Aḥarei Mot* 12; *Tanḥuma (Buber), Aḥarei Mot* 18, *Bemidbar* 10; *Shemot Rabbah* 30:24; *Midrash Tehillim* 9:14; 13:4; 80:3; 91:8; *Zohar* 2:55b, 57b; 3:69a; *Minḥat Shai* on Isaiah 43:14.

On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see also *JT Ta’anit* 1:1, 64a; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:54; *Shemot Rabbah* 23:5; *Zohar* 1:68b–69a, 134a, 149a, 159b, 182a, 210a, 211a, 237a; 2:2a–b, 41b (*Piq*), 82a, 189a–b, 191a, 216b; 3:4b, 6a–b, 17a–b, 66a, 74a–75a, 93b, 102b, 114a–115a, 197b, 297b; *ZḤ* 65b (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 122–23; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 73–74 (92–93); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:382–85.

50. one who is blemished has no faith... On the notion that physical deformities indicate a person’s character or behavior, see *Seder Eliyyahu Zuta* 23, p. 41. Cf. *BT Megillah* 29a; Vol. 7, p. 216, n. 32.

51. Rabbi El’azar was sitting in his father-in-law’s castle... Apparently bothered by a leaky roof, Rabbi El’azar suggests to his father-in-law that they seek some expert advice.

On Rabbi El’azar’s father-in-law, see above, [p. 27](#), [n. 78](#). The two instances here of the word “castle” render קישטרא (*qistera*) and קסטירא (*qastira*), both derived from Latin *castrum*

(pl. *castra*), “fortress, castle.” On the phrase “his father-in-law’s castle,” cf. *Zohar* 1:92b.

For various interpretations of Rabbi El’azar’s remark, see *Derekh Emet; Bei’ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 177, s.v. *zilga de-qista; Miqdash Melekh; Soncino; Sullam; Scholem; Matoq mi-Devash*.

52. blemished and not trustworthy See above, [note 50](#).

53. Let us pose a question... To test his character.

54. Who is the hottest dish... That is, the best person.

“The hottest dish” is a conjectural rendering of טופקא (*tufqa*), which may be based on the rabbinic term טפקא (*tafqa*), “a baking surface (or tile) heated from below.” See BT *Shabbat* 125a. Alternatively, *tufqa* is a playful variation on תקיפה (*taqqifa*), “strong, powerful,” in which case the question they are posing is: “Who is the most powerful in the world?”

For various interpretations, see *Derekh Emet; Haggahot Maharḥu; Bei’ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 179, s.v. *tafqa; Miqdash Melekh; Nitsotsei Orot; Luria, Va-Ye’esof David*, s.v. *tafqa; Soncino; Sullam; Scholem; Matoq mi-Devash*.

55. But as for pulling out... Perhaps referring to the skill of picking others’ pockets. For various interpretations, see *Derekh Emet; Haggahot Maharḥu; Miqdash Melekh; Soncino; Sullam; Scholem; Matoq mi-Devash*.

56. For Torah and testimony... According to Rabbi El’azar, *Torah* refers to Written Torah, symbolizing *Tif’eret*, while *testimony* refers to Oral Torah, symbolizing *Shekhinah*. Just as Oral Torah is based on Written Torah, so *Shekhinah* derives from *Tif’eret* (and the *sefirot* surrounding Him), and since She conveys such supernal holiness, She does not settle upon a defective place or person.

On *Shekhinah* as *testimony*, see Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 49; *Zohar* 3:35a. The context in Isaiah (8:19–

20) reads: *Now, should people say to you, "Inquire of the ghosts and the wizard-spirits that chirp and moan; for a people may inquire of its divine beings [i.e., the shades of the dead]—of the dead on behalf of the living—לתורה (Ietorah), for instruction, and testimony," surely for one who speaks thus there shall be no dawn.*

57. Bind up the testimony... Alluding to the fact that *Shekhinah* (known as *testimony*) includes the entire "bundle of (divine) life."

Shekhinah Herself is often called "bundle of life," a phrase deriving from 1 Samuel 25:29: *The soul of my lord will be bound in the bundle of life with YHVH your God.* See *Zohar* 1:65b, 209a, 224b; 2:11a, 36b, 59a, 142b; 3:24b, 70b, 71b, 92a, 139a (*IR*), 157b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 123; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 57; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 60-61 (75-76).

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *Bind up the testimony, seal תורה (torah), the teaching [or: the instruction], among My disciples.* See *Zohar* 3:35a, 91b.

58. From there below... Beneath the unified realm of *Shekhinah* begins multiplicity.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *A river issues from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four riverheads.* In Kabbalah, this river symbolizes the flow of emanation issuing from *Hokhmah*, conveyed by *Binah* through *Yesod*, entering the garden of *Shekhinah*. See Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows from Eden*, 229-51.

59. Seal Torah... The flow of emanation from *Tif'eret* (who is known as Written Torah) gathers or is "sealed" within *Netsah* and *Hod*, who are the source of prophecy and are themselves pictured as divine prophets or *disciples*.

This sefirotic pair are also identified with the two pillars that flanked the entrance to Solomon's Temple. They represent the divine legs of "the body of six aspects," namely the six *sefirot* from *Hesed* to *Yesod*. In quoting the verse

from Song of Songs, Rabbi El'azar plays with two different meanings of שש (*shesh*): “six” and “marble.”

On *Netsah* and *Hod* as *disciples* and the source of prophecy, see Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 49, 78; *Zohar* 2:170a; 3:35a, 36a, 61a, 91b; ZH 27d, 45b-c; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 337; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 47-48 (57-59). Cf. Ibn Ezra on Isaiah 50:4.

On the Temple pillars Jachin and Boaz, see 1 Kings 7:15-22; *Zohar* 3:58a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 337. The full verse in Kings reads: *He set up the pillars at the portico of the Hall; he set up the pillar on the right and named it Jachin, and he set up the pillar on the left and named it Boaz.*

On the numerical sense of *shesh* in the verse from Song of Songs, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 25:8; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:15; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 10:1; *Zohar* 3:53b, 143a (IR), 236a (RM).

60. All stands only in completeness... The sefirotic union requires perfect wholeness. Since *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel) completes the sefirotic decade, She is fittingly called שלם (*shalem*), *complete*. She is identified with *Melchizedek king of Shalem (Salem)*, and is also pictured as the divine *abode*, which is in *Shalem (Salem)*. Her identification with מלכי-צדק (*Malki-tsedeq*) is based on Her names מלכות (*Malkhut*), “Kingdom,” and *Tsedeq*, “Righteousness.” Melchizedek was the king-priest of Salem (Jerusalem), who participated in Abraham’s victory over an alliance of eastern kings. The full verse in Genesis reads: *Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine, for he was priest to El Elyon.* On *Shekhinah* as *Melchizedek*, see *Zohar* 1:87a-b; 3:53b, 193b, 291b (IZ). On the verse in Psalms, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 56:10; *Zohar* 1:86b-87a, 172b.

61. for it will not be accepted... The full verse reads: *Whatever has a defect you shall not offer, for it will not be accepted favorably for you.*

62. But the blessed Holy One dwells... Since God dwells with the brokenhearted, who are considered His own broken vessels, then why are those who are physically broken excluded from divine service? Rabbi El'azar explains that the *crushed and lowly in spirit* attain completeness through their humility, whereas those who are physically defective are incomplete.

See above, [note 50](#). On God's broken human vessels (who endure suffering or poverty), see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 7:2; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 24:5; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 11, p. 211; *Midrash ha-Gadol*, Genesis 38:1; *Zohar* 1:10b; 2:86b, 218a; 3:9a; *ZH* 77c (*MhN, Rut*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1455, n. 120; 1463, nn. 288, 308. The verse in Isaiah reads: *I dwell on high, in holiness, and with the crushed and lowly in spirit—reviving the spirit of the lowly, reviving the heart of the crushed.*

On the concluding sentence, see BT *Eruvin* 13b: "Whoever humbles himself, the blessed Holy One elevates; and whoever elevates himself, the blessed Holy One humbles."

63. When you present the blind for sacrifice... The full verse reads: *When you present the blind for sacrifice—it is not evil! [or: is it not evil?] When you present the lame or sick—it is not evil! [or: is it not evil?] Just offer it to your governor: Will he accept you? Will he show you favor?—said YHVH of Hosts.*

According to the simple sense of the verse, the wording *the blind... the lame or sick* refers to defective animals. Here, Rabbi El'azar applies these terms to defective priests who offer sacrifices. It may seem that God is calling this *not evil*, but actually He is quoting Israel's own speech.

The image of a gift being thrown to the dogs (in the context of sacrifices) recalls a rabbinic discussion in BT *Yoma* 21b: "Five things were reported about the fire from the pile of wood on the Temple altar: it crouched like a lion.... But it has been taught: Rabbi Hanina, prefect of the

priests, said, 'I myself saw it, and it was crouching like a dog.' There is no contradiction: the former refers to the First Temple, the latter to the Second Temple."

See *Zohar* 1:6b; 3:32b, 211a. On physical deformities indicating a lack of faith, see above at [note 50](#).

64. The blessed Holy One will one day perfect Israel... On the healing of resurrected bodies, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 95:1; BT *Pesaḥim* 68a, *Sanhedrin* 91b; *Otiyyot de-Rabbi Aqiva* (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:349–50); *Qohelet Rabbah* on 1:4; *Tanḥuma*, *Vayiggash* 8, *Metsora* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayiggash* 9, *Metsora* 7; *Zohar* 1:203b; 2:199b.

On the verse in Job (in the context of resurrection), see JT *Kil'ayim* 9:4, 32b; *Ketubbot* 12:3, 35a; *Bereshit Rabbah* 95:1; *Midrash Shemu'el* 6:2; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 5:10; *Tanḥuma*, *Vayiggash* 8, *Emor* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayiggash* 9, *Emor* 4; *Semaḥot* 9:23; *Zohar* 1:224b. Cf. BT *Ketubbot* 111b, *Sanhedrin* 90b; *Pirḳei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 23.

65. Alternatively... they will rise as they entered... They will first be resurrected in the same bodily "garment"—that is, with whatever affliction or deformity they had when they passed away—to prove that the resurrected person is the same one who died.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 95:1; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 1:4; *Tanḥuma*, *Vayiggash* 8; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayiggash* 9.

66. Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains... Righteousness symbolizes *Shekhinah*, the last of the sefirotic crowns.

67. Like the mighty mountains... Powers of *Binah*, who is symbolized by balsam. *Shekhinah* ascends to join these upper forces, which convey Judgment to Her, not yet tempered by Compassion.

According to a rabbinic tradition, thirteen rivers of balsam await the righteous in the world that is coming. Here, the rivers turn into mountains. Balsam symbolizes *Binah*, who is known as the World that is Coming.

On the rivers of balsam, see JT *Avodah Zarah* 3:1, 42c; *Bereshit Rabbah* 62:2; BT *Ta'anit* 25a; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 12, p. 238; *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 1; *Zohar* 1:4b, 7a, 88a (ST), 176a; 2:27b, 127a-b, 146b, 177a (SdTs); 3:131a (IR), 144b (IR), 181a, 289a-b (IZ). On mountains of balsam, see *Zohar* 1:35a; 2:15a (MhN), 83a-b, 87b, 175b; 3:67a, 144b (IR). Cf. *Zohar* 2:200b-201a, and the reference to *mountains of spices* in Song of Songs 8:14. On *Binah* as the World that is Coming, see above, [pp. 33-34](#), [n. 97](#).

On the even, though untempered, *righteousness* of *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 3:85b; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 367.

68. מִשְׁפָּט (Mishpat), Justice... The strict Judgment of *Shekhinah* is assuaged by the Compassion of *Tif'eret*, who is symbolized by *mishpat*, "justice." See *Zohar* 3:85b.

The phrase "to establish... sweetly" renders לבסמא (*levassama*). The root בסם (*bsm*) conveys both sweetness (or fragrance) and firmness. See above, [p. 36](#), [n. 104](#).

69. Since He is Compassion... Because *Tif'eret* is characterized by Compassion, He delivers both humans and animals.

On God's compassion for animals, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Leviticus 22:28; JT *Berakhot* 5:3, 9c; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 27:11; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 9:11; *Devarim Rabbah* 6:1; *Tanḥuma, Emor* 13; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Emor* 18.

70. one who is human and conducts himself like a beast See the interpretation of *Human and beast You deliver, O YHVH* in BT *Hullin* 5b, in the name of Rav: "This refers to humans who are clever in knowledge yet conduct themselves like a domestic animal [humbly, submissively, or innocently]."

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 27:1; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 9:1; *Tanḥuma, Emor* 6; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Emor* 9; *Midrash Tehillim* 9:16.

71. the law for a *human* and the law for a *beast*... A male Jew is circumcised on his eighth day of life, and a *beast* may be sacrificed once it is eight days old.

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 27:1, 10; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 9:1, 10; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 20, p. 370; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 3:19; *Devarim Rabbah* 6:1; *Tanḥuma, Emor* 6, 12, 15; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Emor* 9, 17, 21; *Zohar* 3:44a (*Piq*), 91b.

On circumcision as a sacrificial offering, see *Zohar* 1:93a, 94b-95a; 2:66b, 255b; 3:44a (*Piq*), 164a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 55 (68). Cf. *Shemot Rabbah* 19:5; *Pirgei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 10. According to some biblical scholars, circumcision originated as a substitute for child sacrifice. See Exodus 22:28-29; Leviticus 12:2-5; 22:27; Wolfson, *Circle in the Square*, 32-33.

72. a supernal rung called Holiness... The *sefirah* of *Hokhmah*.

“From the eighth day” male Jews are “inscribed with His Name,” because the mark of circumcision is identified with the ך (yod) of the divine name יְדַי (Shaddai), which is also the initial letter of יהוה (YHVH), as well as the symbol of the primordial point of *Hokhmah*.

See *Tanḥuma, Tsav* 14, *Shemini* 8; *Zohar* 1:13a, 56a, 60a, 89a, 93a, 95a-b; 2:3b, 36a, 87b, 90a, 216b, 235a; 3:13b, 73a, 142a (*IR*), 215b, 220a, 256a (*RM*), 266a; Wolfson, “Circumcision and the Divine Name”; idem, *Circle in the Square*, 29-48.

The full verse in Jeremiah reads: *Holy* [literally: *Holiness*] *is Israel to YHVH, the first-fruits of His harvest. All who eat of it will be held guilty; evil will befall them—declares YHVH.* The verse in Chronicles reads: *Who is like Your people Israel, גוי אחד (goi ehad), a unique nation* [literally: *one nation*], *on earth?* This wording reappears almost identically in 2 Samuel 7:23.

73. He summoned the people of Esau... According to rabbinic tradition, before giving the Torah to Israel, God offered it to the other nations, including Edom (who

dwelled in Seir). However, they refused to accept its moral constraints. This tradition is linked here with the verse from Judges, quoted by Rabbi Hiyya at the beginning of the preceding paragraph: *YHVH, when You came forth from Seir, when You strode from the field of Edom, the earth trembled...*

The earth—or the land—symbolizes Shekhinah, who is known as the Holy Land. Here She is also linked (and identified) with the feminine Torah, and She trembles out of fear that the “joyous splendor” of Torah (which preceded Creation) will now be delivered into the hands of the uncircumcised nations.

On God offering the Torah to other nations, see *Mekhilta, Bahodesh* 5; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 343; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 33:2; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Deuteronomy 33:2; *BT Avodah Zarah* 2b; *Pirgei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 41; *Tanḥuma, Vezot Haberakhah* 4; *Shemot Rabbah* 27:9; *Leqaḥ Tov*, Exodus 20:2; *Zohar* 2:3a; 3:19b, 192a–193a.

On Torah preceding the world by two thousand years, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:2; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 19:1; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:24; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:11; *Midrash Shemu'el* 5:2; *Tanḥuma, Vayeshev* 4; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Yitro* 16; *Midrash Tehillim* 90:12; *Bahir* 4 (5); *Zohar* 2:49a, 84b, 99a, 161a; 3:128a (*IR*), 159a.

“Splendor” renders פִּסְטִירָא (*pastira* or *pasteira*), based on Greek *phoster*, “that which gives light, splendor.” See *Ma'arikh*, s.v. *pastira*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Scholem.

74. O throne, throne... The blessed Holy One reassures *Shekhinah* (who is pictured as the Divine Throne) that the covenant of Torah is to be given to those who bear the covenant of circumcision. *Shekhinah* had “*trembled—surely*” out of fear that this principle might be violated.

If a person teaches Torah to one who is uncircumcised, he betrays not only the covenant of Torah (which may

allude here to *Tif'eret*, symbolized by Written Torah) but also the covenant of *Yesod* (known as Righteous One) and *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel). The phrase “this place” apparently refers to the link between the divine couple.

On the prohibition against teaching Torah to Gentiles (or the uncircumcised), see BT *Ḥagigah* 13a; *Tanḥuma, Mishpatim* 5; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Mishpatim* 3; *Shemot Rabbah* 30:12; *Zohar* 2:111b; 3:73a. Cf. BT *Sanhedrin* 59a.

On *Yesod* as Righteous One, see above, [note 43](#). On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, [p. 11, n. 32](#).

75. He betrays three supernal places... Symbolized respectively by the three divisions of the Bible: Torah, Prophets, and Writings. Torah alludes to *Tif'eret*, who is known as Written Torah. The wording in last book of the Torah (Deuteronomy)—*This is the Torah that Moses set before the Children of Israel*—implies here that Torah is intended only for Israel.

The section of Prophets alludes to *Netsah* and *Hod*, who are pictured as divine *disciples* and are the source of prophecy. According to the verse in Isaiah (from the Prophets), all of Israel—and only Israel—will become *disciples of YHVH*.

The section of Writings (traditionally composed through the Holy Spirit) alludes to *Shekhinah*, who is identified with the Holy Spirit. The verse from Psalm 78 (from the Writings) apparently alludes to this last division of the Bible.

In another verse from the Writings (from Psalm 140), the term *the righteous* alludes to *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*, who are known respectively as Righteous One and Righteousness. Only those who are circumcised enter the covenant of this sefirotic pair and are privileged to *acclaim Your name* by engaging in Torah, which is identified with the Divine Name.

On the symbolism of Torah, Prophets, and Writings, see Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 48-49; *Zohar* 3:35a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 337; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 19-20.

On *Netsah* and *Hod* as *disciples* and the source of prophecy, see above, [note 59](#). On Torah as God's Name, see above, [p. 7](#), [n. 23](#). The verse in Isaiah 54 reads: *All your sons will be [or: are] disciples of YHVH*.

76. the earth turned calm... At first, *the earth feared* that the Torah might be given to other nations, but once God began to reveal Himself to Israel, it became tranquil and *still*.

On the verse in Psalms, see BT *Shabbat* 88a, *Avodah Zarah* 3a; *Tanḥuma*, *Shemini* 6; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemini* 10; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 21, 99b-100a; *Midrash Tehillim* 76:4.

77. When a person is born... Once he is circumcised, he receives his full נפש (*nefesh*), "soul," which is actually the first aspect of soul. If he subsequently delves into Torah, he receives רוּחַ (*ruah*), "spirit." If he fulfills the commandments, he is gifted with נשמה (*neshamah*), "breath, soul, soul-breath."

On the three aspects of soul, see *Zohar* 1:62a, 81a (*ST*), 83a-b, 206a, 224b-225a; 2:95a-b, 141b-142b, 182a; 3:16a, 24b-25a, 70b-71a; *ZH* 6d (*MhN*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:684-722, 761-64. Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 14:9; *Devarim Rabbah* 2:37.

78. However, as for an animal... As soon as it is born, it possesses its full energy and never receives anything further.

See BT *Bava Qamma* 65b, in the name of Rava: "A one-day-old ox is called 'ox,' as is written: *When an ox or a sheep or a goat is born.*" The full verse in Leviticus reads: *When an ox or a sheep or a goat is born, it shall be seven days under its mother, and from the eighth day onward it is acceptable as a fire offering to YHVH.*

79. It shall be seven days under its mother... Once a Sabbath has passed, the animal's vitality is fully

established, so it is *acceptable as a fire offering*.

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 27:10; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 9:10; *Tanḥuma, Emor* 12; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Emor* 17; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 20, p. 370; *Zohar* 3:44a (*Piq*); above, [note 71](#). For the full verse in Leviticus, see the preceding note.

80. As for a person... Once a Sabbath has passed, a newborn male's physical vitality is established. As soon as he is circumcised, he receives his full *nefesh* and *Shekhinah* bestows upon him a spirit from above.

See above, [note 77](#). The verse in Ezekiel, which portrays Jerusalem as an abandoned infant, is applied midrashically to the blood of circumcision, as explained below.

81. There, when Israel went out of Egypt... The verse in Ezekiel reads: *I passed by you and saw you wallowing* בַּדָּמַיִךְ (*be-damayikh*), *in your blood* [literally: *in your bloods*]. Rabbi Ḥiyya explains the plural *bloods* as referring to two types of blood featured in the Exodus: the blood of the paschal lamb and the blood of circumcision—since according to rabbinic tradition, the Israelites circumcised themselves before leaving Egypt.

See *Shemot Rabbah* 17:3: “By [the merit of] two bloods, Israel was redeemed from Egypt: by the blood of the paschal lamb and by the blood of circumcision, as is said: *I passed by you and saw you wallowing in your blood, and I said to you, ‘In your blood, live!’ And I said to you, ‘In your blood, live!’*—by the blood of the paschal lamb and by the blood of circumcision.”

However, Rabbi Ḥiyya wonders how the plural *bloods* can apply “here,” that is, to the act of circumcision itself. He explains that it refers to two stages of the procedure. First, the foreskin is cut and removed, disclosing the mucous membrane. This step corresponds to *Shekhinah*. Then, the membrane is tom down the middle and pulled back, revealing the corona. This act is called פְּרִיעָה (*peri'ah*),

“uncovering [the corona],” and it corresponds to *Yesod*, the divine phallus.

The original midrashic interpretation of “two bloods” is apparently based on the repetition of the exclamation *In your blood, live!*, though possibly on the plural בַּדַּמִּיךָ (*be-damayikh*), *in your bloods*. See *Mekhilta, Pisha* 5; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 12:13; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:6; 7:4; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 17, 86b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:12; 5:2; *Rut Rabbah* 6:1; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 29; *Tanḥuma, Vayera* 4; *Shemot Rabbah* 19:5; *Midrash Tehillim* 114:5; *Zohar* 2:35b–36a, 41a (*Piq*); 3:95a–b, 149a. Cf. Exodus 12:44, 48; Joshua 5:5; BT *Kareitot* 9a; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Toledot* 18; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15, 70b; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:12; 17:3; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:12.

On the two stages of circumcision, see M *Shabbat* 19:6: “If one circumcises but does not uncover the circumcision, it is as if he has not circumcised.” See also *Zohar* 1:13a, 32a (*Tos*), 32a–b, 93b, 96b, 98b (*ST*), 238b; 2:3b, 40a, 57b, 60b–61a, 66b–67a, 125b; 3:95b, 163a–b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 133; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 55 (67).

82. The secret... for those who revere... Or *The counsel... for those who fear*. Rabbi Shim’on applies the first half of the verse to *Shekhinah*, and the second to *Yesod* (known as Righteous One). These two *sefirot* join “in a single bond” together with one who is righteous.

On the verse in Psalms, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 49:2; *Tanḥuma, Lekh Lekha* 19, *Vayera* 5–6, *Ḥayyei Sarah* 4, *Vayḥi* 14; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Lekh Lekha* 23; *Vayera* 6, *Vayḥi* 13; *Midrash Tehillim* 25:13; Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 1, intro; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 526; *Zohar* 1:37b, 73a, 95a, 236b; 2:75a, 234a, 237b; 3:43b (*Piq*), 48a, 79a, 127b (*IR*), 141b (*IR*), 142b (*IR*), 294b (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 339; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 226–28. On *Yesod* as Righteous One, see above, [note 43](#).

83. יוד (Yod)—three letters... Rabbi Shim'on begins to expound on *the secret of יהוה* (YHVH)—namely the secret meaning of the four letters constituting this Divine Name.

The full spelling of the name of the first letter י (yod) is יוד (yod), and the three letters of this name symbolize the sefirotic spectrum. The first letter, י (yod), symbolizes the primordial point of *Hokhmah*. (*Keter*, the first *sefirah* is so transcendent and concealed that it is not represented here, or is merely hinted at by the tip of the letter *yod*.)

The next letter, ו (vav), whose numerical value is six, symbolizes *Tiferet* together with the five *sefirot* surrounding Him (*Hesed* to *Yesod*). *Tiferet* completes (or perfects) all five sefirotic aspects and conveys the spiritual flow from *Binah* above.

The last letter ד (dalet) symbolizes the Garden of *Shekhinah*, who is sometimes described as דלה (dallah), “poor,” until She is filled with the riches of emanation from above. On Her description as “bundle of life,” see above, [note 57](#).

On the significance of the full spelling of the letter *yod*, see *Zohar* 3:10b, 65b, 290b (IZ). On the sefirotic significance of all the letters of YHVH, see Asher ben David, *Peirush Shem ha-Meforash*, 112; *Zohar* 1:162a (ST); 2:123b, 126b–127a, 219b; 3:4b, 10b, 65b, 66b, 106a, 267b; *Gikatilla*, *Sha'arei Orah*, 44a–45b.

84. This letter is small... י (yod) is the smallest letter, yet symbolically it includes all emanation. When pronounced fully as יוד (yod), it emerges, revealing all the royal powers. Afterward, it returns to its compact form to join other letters, spelling out countless words. Within it is concealed the sefirotic potential, which inevitably emerges; so it is both “closed and open.” On the *yod* being “enclosed on all sides,” see *ZH* 70a (*ShS*).

85. הוה (He)—fullness of all... The full spelling of the second letter of יהוה (YHVH) is הוה (he), which, like יוד (yod), symbolizes the sefirotic spectrum. The letter ה (he) itself, often a feminine marker, symbolizes the Divine Mother,

Binah. The letter א (alef), which completes the full name אה (he), can be pictured as including three letters: ך (yod), forming its upper right stroke; ם (vav), its diagonal middle; and an upside-down ך (dalet) as its lower left stroke. Thus “א is ךי,” consisting of the same three letters that spell out the full name of the letter symbolizing *Hokhmah*, “the Head.”

The clause “although א (alef) has already been established” apparently refers to another depiction of א, differing from the one just mentioned only in that the lower left stroke (like the upper right stroke) is a ך (yod) rather than an upside-down ך (dalet).

The full spelling of אה (he)—when it “carries א”—alludes to *Binah* being adorned with crowns by *Hokhmah*.

86. ה (he) alone... in its image... This may refer to a depiction of ה (he) as consisting of the three letters ך ם ך (yod, vav, dalet): yod as its upper right corner, vav as its left vertical stroke, and dalet as its top horizontal line and its right vertical stroke. These three letters symbolize the sefirotic spectrum, “perfection of all.” See above, [note 83](#).

87. ם (vav), whether in one aspect or another... Rabbi Shim'on now turns to the third letter of יהוה (YHVH). The phrase “one aspect or another” may refer to the two possible spellings of this letter: ם (vav) or םא (vav). Alternatively, it alludes to the two *sefirot* that can be symbolized by vav: *Tif'eret* and *Yesod*.

The final letter of יהוה (YHVH)—the second ה (he)—symbolizes *Shekhinah*. When vav is combined with this he, such divine union represents “greater perfection, crowning all.”

88. ה (He)—all is one... This last letter of יהוה (YHVH), symbolizing *Shekhinah*, signifies complete union.

89. םהיה (Ve-hayah), It shall be, seven days... The full verse reads: *When an ox or a sheep or a goat is born, םהיה (ve-hayah), it shall be, seven days under its mother, and from the eighth day onward it is acceptable as a fire offering to YHVH.* Rabbi Shim'on focuses on the word םהיה (ve-hayah), *it shall be*, which is an anagram of יהוה (YHVH). Its first two

letters— וה (*vav, he*)—symbolize respectively *Tif'eret* (together with the five *sefirot* surrounding Him, from *Hesed* to *Yesod*) and *Shekhinah*. Thus, together these two letters signify “seven [sefirotic] days.”

Rabbi Shim'on proceeds to the last two letters of והיה (*ve-hayah*): וה (*yod, he*). As indicated above ([note 83](#)), the letter *yod* symbolizes *Hokhmah* and includes the whole sefirotic spectrum. The letter ה (*he*) symbolizes *Binah*, and the shape of this letter can be imagined as consisting of three *vavs*, alluding to *Binah* Herself and two sons—*Tif'eret* and *Yesod*. The first of these sons, *Tif'eret*, includes (or harmonizes) “two fathers,” namely *Hesed* and *Gevurah*, who are symbolized respectively by the two patriarchs Abraham and Isaac. This group of six (*Hokhmah, Binah, Hesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret, and Yesod*) is supplemented by *Shekhinah*, the divine daughter, yielding again a total of seven. Alternatively, one can say that “supernal ה (*he*) is totality of six”—that is, *Binah* includes Herself, *Hesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret, Yesod, and Shekhinah*. When this ה (*he*) is joined with ו (*yod*), symbolizing *Hokhmah*, there are seven.

These two septets correspond to the description of the dedication of the Temple and the celebration of *Sukkot* in the book of Kings. The verse reads in full: *Solomon observed the Feast at that time, and all Israel with him—a great assemblage from Lebo-hamath to the Wadi of Egypt—before YHVH our God, seven days and seven days: fourteen days.* See *Zohar* 1:204b. 247a; *ZH* 62b (*ShS*). On the original meaning of the wording *seven days and seven days*, see Fishbane, *Haftarot*, 410–11. Cf. 2 Chronicles 7:8–10.

90. under its mother... The *seven* (sefirotic) *days* (from *Hesed* to *Shekhinah*) issue from *Binah*, the Divine Mother, and are adorned *under* Her.

The verse in Chronicles reads: *Yours, O YHVH, are ויהוד הגדולה והגבורה והתפארת והנצח* (*ha-gedullah ve-ha-gevurah ve-ha-tif'eret ve-ha-netsah ve-ha-hod*), *the greatness and the power and the*

beauty and the victory and the splendor—yes, all that is in heaven and on earth.

Quoted often in kabbalistic literature, this biblical list of divine qualities is understood as designating *Hesed* (also called *Gedullah*), *Gevurah*, *Tif'eret*, *Netsah*, *Hod*, *Yesod* (known as *all*), and *Shekhinah* (symbolized by *earth*), who is joined with *Tif'eret* (*heaven*). All of these “belong” to *YHVH*, which here refers to *Binah* (or the triad of *Keter*, *Hokhmah*, and *Binah*). See above, [note 36](#).

91. While עקרה (*aqarah*), the barren one... Rabbi Shim'on interprets עקרה (*aqarah*), *the barren one*, as עקרא (*iqqara*), “essence.” The phrase עקרא דכל ביתא (*iqqara de-khol beita*), “essence of the whole house,” is a play on Psalms 113:9: *He sets עקרת הבית (aqeret ha-bayit), the barren woman of the house [or: the barren woman in her house], as a happy mother of children. Hallelujah!*

Binah, the maternal *iqqara* (essence) of the divine realm, bears seven—namely the seven lower *sefirot*, who are symbolized by the seven days of the Festival of *Sukkot*. On the other hand, the number of bulls offered for the many—the seventy nations—*dwindles* on each subsequent day of the Festival (from thirteen to twelve to... seven), finally reaching a total of seventy. According to *Or Yaqar*, the phrase *the mother of many* alludes to Lilith, mother of the seventy nations.

During the seven days of *Sukkot* a total of seventy bulls were sacrificed on the altar. According to rabbinic tradition, these benefited the seventy nations of the world.

On the seventy bulls, see Numbers 29:12-34. On these bulls and the seventy nations, see *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:23; BT *Sukkah* 55b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 28:9; *Tanḥuma, Pinḥas* 16; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Pinḥas* 14-15; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 21:24; *Zohar* 1:64a-b, 208b, 221a (standard editions); 2:58b-59a, 135a, 185a, 186b-187a, 233b; 3:24b, 32a, 54b-55a (*Tos*), 96b-97a, 103b (*Piq*), 104b, 258b-259a; Moses de

León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 177-78; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1251-53; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 244, n. 92.

On the gradual diminishment of the Festival offerings, see Numbers 29:12-34; BT *Sukkah* 47a; *Tanḥuma*, *Pinḥas* 17; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Pinḥas* 16; *Leqah Tov*, Numbers 29:36; Rashi on Numbers 29:18; *Zohar* 2:135a, 233b; 3:24b, 258b-259a.

On *aqarah*, “barren,” and *iqqara*, “essence,” see *Bereshit Rabbah* 71:2; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 20:2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayetse* 15; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:8, 11; *Zohar* 1:29a-b, 50a, 149b, 154a, 157b, 158b, 165b (ST), 223a; 2:44a, 169b; Moses de León, *She’elot u-Tshuvot*, 44.

92. These ascend... those descend... Israel ascends in holiness, while the nations descend, just as their offerings on *Sukkot* gradually diminish.

The verse in Obadiah, delivered against Edom, reads: *If you soar [or: raise your nest] as high as the eagle, if you make your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down—declares YHVH.* The verses in Genesis allude here to Israel’s ascent from *the dust to the stars of heaven.*

93. According to its translation... The verse reads: *An ox or sheep—אתו ואת בנו (oto ve-et beno), it and its young, you shall not slaughter on the same day.* The wording *oto ve-et beno* (literally *him and his young*) could refer to the father and his young (or perhaps to either the father or the mother and its young). But the Aramaic translation (*Targum Onqelos*) on the verse reads *her and her young*, implying that it is only forbidden to slaughter the mother and her young on the same day, not the father and his young. In rabbinic sources this question is disputed, though the *halakhah* follows the view reflected in *Targum Onqelos*, because only the mother’s identity is certain.

See *Sifra*, *Emor* 8:10-12, 99b; 8:1-2, 99b; BT *Hullin* 78b-79a, *Bekhorot* 45b; Rashi and Naḥmanides on Leviticus 22:28; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, *Hilkhot Sheḥitah* 12:11.

94. because of the animal's grief... If the reason for the prohibition is to spare the mother the emotional pain of seeing her offspring slaughtered (or perhaps to also spare the offspring the pain of seeing its mother slaughtered), then one could slaughter them separately.

On the humanitarian rationale for this prohibition, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Leviticus 22:28; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 27:11; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 9:11; *Tanḥuma*, *Emor* 13; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Emor* 18; *Devarim Rabbah* 6:1; Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 3:48; Naḥmanides on Deuteronomy 22:6; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 310.

On opposition to this type of humanitarian explanation, see M *Berakhot* 5:3, 9c; *Megillah* 4:9; JT *Berakhot* 5:3, 9c; *Megillah* 4:9, 75c; BT *Berakhot* 33b, *Megillah* 25a; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, *Hilkhot Tefillah* 9:7; Naḥmanides on Deuteronomy 22:6.

95. There are some who permit that... To slaughter the mother and her offspring separately on the same day.

96. Fasting is as fine for a dream... If a person has a bad dream, he can avert its fulfillment by fasting, which annuls the dream as effectively as fire consumes tow (short or broken fibers combed off flax).

Rabbi Yose explains that such a fast must be undertaken on the day immediately following the night of the dream, because each day of the week is ruled by one of the seven cosmic days (the *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* to *Shekhinah*), which can effectively annul only a dream of the preceding night. If one postpones the fast, that later day is ruled by a different *sefirah*, which has no power over the earlier day.

See *Zohar* 3:105a. For the rabbinic saying quoted here, see BT *Shabbat* 11a: “Rava son of Meḥasia said in the name of Rav Ḥama son of Gorias in the name of Rav: ‘Fasting is as fine for a dream as fire for tow.’ Rav Ḥisda said, ‘If it is on the same day.’ Rav Yosef said, ‘Even on Sabbath.’”

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 44:12; BT *Ta’anit* 12b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 28:3; *Tanḥuma*, *Bereshit* 2. On the specific

dominion of each of the sefirotic days, see *Zohar* 2:63b, 88a.

97. one must not spoil that day... If a person spoils a day by his behavior, that day remains defective in the presence of other days, which are all arrayed in heaven. See *Zohar* 1:224a-b.

98. By an action below... On this essential principle of Kabbalah, see above, [pp. 41-42](#), [n. 122](#).

99. With the very measure... A common rabbinic principle. See, e.g., M *Sotah* 1:7.

100. cruelty is withheld from Israel... They are innately kind and compassionate.

Any cruel act is immediately witnessed by heavenly beings; any worthy act stimulates the divine flow above.

On Israel's inherent compassion, see JT *Qiddushin* 4:1, 65b; *Sanhedrin* 6:4, 23d; BT *Beitsah* 32b, *Yevamot* 79a; *Midrash Shemu'el* 28:7; *Devarim Rabbah* 3:4; *Midrash Tehillim* 1:10; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 8:4. Cf. *Zohar* 2:12b.

101. Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt... Rabbi Shim'on wonders what the connection is between the beginning of this verse (mentioning the *grain in Egypt* in contrast to the famine in Canaan) and Jacob's question to his sons.

The context (Genesis 42:1-2) reads: *Jacob saw that there were provisions [or: that there was grain] in Egypt, and Jacob said to his sons, "Why do you keep looking at one another?" He said, "Look, I have heard that there are provisions in Egypt. Go down there, and get us provisions from there that we may live and not die."*

102. When the blessed Holy One wants to punish... See BT *Berakhot* 55a, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "Three things the blessed Holy One proclaims Himself: famine, plenty, and a good leader. Famine, as is written: *For YHVH has proclaimed a famine.*

The verse in Kings reads: כי קרא יהוה לרעב (*Ki qara YHVH la-ra'av*), *For YHVH has called for [or: decreed, proclaimed] a*

famine.

103. other officials are appointed... Heavenly powers are designated. At such a time, if anyone who still has plenty goes around flaunting it, he thereby defies the divine declaration of famine.

The phrase “controlling the markets” renders דתרעין בפקידו (*bi-fqidu de-tar'in*). Menahem Lonzano explains this as equivalent to the expression להפקיע השערים (*le-hafqi'a ha-she'arim*), “to unsettle the markets, to raise prices arbitrarily.” See *Ma'arikh*, s.v. *pqd*; *Nitsotsei Orot*.

104. למה תתראו (Lammah titra'u), Why do you show yourselves?... The simple sense of Jacob's question is apparently: *Why do you keep looking at one another?* According to a midrashic tradition, the question means: *Why do you show yourselves?* “Why should you make yourselves conspicuous by appearing fully sated, thereby arousing envy?” Here, Rabbi Shim'on construes the question as: “*Why do you show yourselves sated, thereby defying the divine declaration of famine?*”

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 91:2; BT *Ta'anit* 10b; *Zohar* 1:197b, 208a. On the phrase “impair the celestial Family,” see above, [p. 40](#), [n. 117](#). On the verse in Genesis, see Sarna, *Genesis*; and Alter, *The Five Books of Moses*, ad loc.

105. Jacob had so much grain... According to a rabbinic tradition, Jacob still had grain for his family. Rabbi Shim'on explains that Jacob instructed his sons not to show themselves sated so that they would not defy the heavenly decree of famine.

On Jacob and his family still having grain, see *Leqah Tov*, Genesis 45:6; Rashi on Genesis 42:1; *ibid.* on BT *Ta'anit* 10b, s.v. *al tar'u*; and the preceding note.

106. Aaron raised ידיו (yadav), his hands... In this verse the word ידו (*yadav*), *his hands*, is spelled without a second ם (*yod*) and can therefore be read as ידו (*yado*), *his hand*. This implies that when a priest blesses the people (or when a person raises his hands in prayer or blessing), the

right hand should be higher than the left, thereby empowering the divine right hand, *Hesed* (Love), over the divine left hand, *Din* (Judgment).

On the peculiar spelling of יָדָוּ (yadav), *his hands*, see Meir ha-Kohen of Rothenberg, *Haggahot Maimuniyyot, hilkhot tefillah* 14:3; Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod*, 29b-c; idem, *Sha'ar ha-Razim*, 57; *Zohar* 2:57a, 67a; 3:146a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 254; *Minhat Shai* on the verse. Cf. *Zohar* 2:66a (Vol. 4, p. 362, n. 572).

On raising the right hand higher than the left, see Meir ha-Kohen of Rothenberg, *Haggahot Maimuniyyot, hilkhot tefillah* 14:3; Todros Abulafia, *Sha'ar ha-Razim*, 57; *Zohar* 2:57a, 66a, 67a, 225a; 3:145a (*Piq*), 146a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 254; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 29; below at [note 126](#). On the principle of an action below arousing an action above, see above, [note 98](#).

107. You shall sound a blasting shofar... The verse describes the proclamation of the Jubilee year on Yom Kippur. Both Jubilee and Yom Kippur symbolize *Binah*, who is associated with liberation. Here Rabbi Shim'on associates תרועה (*teru'ah*), "blast," with the root רעע (*r'*), "to smash," implying the breaking of chains and the freeing of slaves.

It is important that this shofar be straight and not curved, so that freedom and liberation may issue directly for all. The shofar symbolizes *Binah*, whereas a horn symbolizes *Shekhinah*.

In Kabbalah the Jubilee symbolizes *Binah*, who in general is characterized by the number fifty, based on a statement attributed to Rav and Shemu'el (BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b, *Nedarim* 38a): "Fifty gates of בינה (*binah*), understanding, were created in the world, all of which were given to Moses except for one, as is said: *You made him little less than God* (Psalms 8:6)."

On the earthly and sefirotic shofars, see *Zohar* 1:114a-b; 2:81b, 184a-b; 3:38b-39a, 99a-100b, 149a; *ZH* 20c. On *Binah* as the shofar of liberation, see *Zohar* 2:46b; 3:6b, 266b. On *Binah* and freedom, see also *Zohar* 1:220b (standard editions); 3:95b, 101a, 102b, 108a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 167, 169. On *Shekhinah* as horn, see *Zohar* 1:96a; 2:123a, 179a (*SdT*s); 3:19b, 99a. On sounding a straight shofar on Yom Kippur of the Jubilee, see M *Rosh ha-Shanah* 3:3, 5; JT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 3:5, 59a; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 26b. On the distinction between a shofar and another type of horn, see M *Rosh ha-Shanah* 3:2; JT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 3:2, 58d; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 26a; *Zohar* 3:99a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 145.

According to Exodus 21:2, Hebrew slaves are to be set free in the seventh year. However, rabbinic sources sometimes associate the Jubilee with the freeing of slaves. This is based partly on Leviticus 25:10: *You shall hallow the fiftieth year and proclaim דרור (deror), release [or: freedom], in the land for all of its inhabitants. A jubilee it shall be for*

you, and you shall go back each man to his holding, and each man to his clan you shall go back.

Furthermore, according to Leviticus, an Israelite debtor forced to work for another Israelite (as well as an impoverished Israelite sold as a slave to a non-Israelite) both go free in the Jubilee. (See Leviticus 25:40, 54.) Moreover, according to Exodus 21:6, a slave who refuses to be set free in the seventh year *shall serve* [his master] *forever*; and this is interpreted midrashically as “until the Jubilee.”

On *forever* as implying “until the Jubilee,” see *Mekhilta, Neziqin 2; Targum Yerushalmi, Exodus 21:6; BT Qiddushin 15a, 21b*. On Hebrew slaves being liberated in the Jubilee, see also *M Qiddushin 1:2; Sifra, Behar 3:6, 107c; 7:4, 109d; Bekhor Shor on Exodus 21:6; Zohar 3:6b*. On their being liberated in the Sabbatical year, see *Targum Yerushalmi, Exodus 21:7; 22:2; Zohar 3:108a*. For further discussion, see Milgrom, *Leviticus, 3:2251–53; Encyclopaedia Judaica, 17:624, 626*.

108. *These are the appointed times...* The wording here conflates two verses. Leviticus 23:2 reads: *The appointed times of YHVH, which you should proclaim as sacred convocations—these are My appointed times*. Leviticus 23:4 reads: *These are the appointed times of YHVH, sacred convocations, which you shall proclaim at their appointed times*. The entire chapter consists of a list of holy days, beginning with the Sabbath.

109. *The light that existed at first...* See *Vayiqra Rabbah 11:7* (in the name of Rabbi Yehudah son of Rabbi Simon): “With the light created by the blessed Holy One on the first day, a person could gaze and see from one end of the world to the other. When the Holy One foresaw the corruption of the generation of Enosh and the generation of the Flood, He hid it away from them, as is written: *The light of the wicked is withheld* (Job 38:15). Where did He hide it?”

In the Garden of Eden: *Light is sown for the righteous, joy for the upright in heart* (Psalms 97:11).” See above, [note 5](#).

110. a light that already was... The primordial light emerging from the depths of the highest *sefirot*.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 3:2: “It is not written here ודיה אור (*Ve-hayah or*) [which could mean either *And there will be light* or *And there was light*], but rather ודי אור (*Vayhi or*) [which can mean only] *And there was light*—it already was.” Theodor (ad loc.) regards this as a scribal gloss. In any case, the point in *Bereshit Rabbah* is that the creation of light was instantaneous and effortless, whereas here Rabbi Yitshak emphasizes that the light preexisted—it already was.

See *Bahir* 17 (25), elaborating on *Bereshit Rabbah*: “Rabbi Berekhiah said, ‘Why is it written *God said, “Let there be light!”* ודי אור (*Vayhi or*), *And there was light*, and not ודיה (*Ve-hayah*) [which could mean either *And there will be* or *And there was*]? This can be compared to a king who had a beautiful object and set it aside until he had prepared a place for it; then he placed it there. As is written: “*Let there be light!*” *And there was light*. For it already was.’”

Rabbi Yitshak proceeds to examine Genesis 1:5: *God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. There was evening and there was morning, one day*. One might assume that the manifestation of divine energy was complete in *Tif'eret* alone, who is symbolized by *Day*. However, the continuation of the verse indicates that the creative process also entailed the emergence of *Shekhinah*, symbolized by *Night*. Furthermore, each of these *sefirot* (symbolized respectively by *morning* and *evening*) was incomplete without the other. *Tif'eret* is known as the blessed Holy One, while *Shekhinah* is called Assembly of Israel.

On the “light that already was,” see Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 494; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 109; *Zohar* 1:16b, 30b, 45b; 3:245b (RM); ZH 1a, 37d; Recanati on Genesis 1:3, 3c.

On *day* and *night* being incomplete without each other, see *Zohar* 1:46a; 2:46b; 3:134b (*IR*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 26. On the blessed Holy One and Assembly of Israel together constituting *one*, see *Zohar* 3:7b, 77b, 96a; *ZH* 43d. On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, [p. 11](#), [n. 32](#).

[111.](#) Since Assembly of Israel is now in exile... Because *Shekhinah* shares exile with Her people and is separated from *Tif'eret*, He is not fully *one*.

The verse in Zechariah can imply that in the time of redemption *Tif'eret* (known as *YHVH*) and *Shekhinah* (known as *His name*) will both *be one*. See *Zohar* 2:134a, 161b–162a; 3:7b, 56a, 77b. On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see above, [note 49](#).

[112.](#) מועדי יהוה (Mo'adei YHVH), The appointed times of YHVH... Rabbi Yitshak interprets the word מועד (*mo'ed*), “appointed time,” based on the passive verbal form of the root יעד (*y'd*): הועד (*hivva'ed*), “to gather together.” The festivals symbolize various *sefirot*, which should all be united. Corresponding to the divine union, Israel below is called *one nation on the earth*.

On the specific sefirotic correspondences of the various festivals, see *Or Yaqar; Matoq mi-Devash; Tishby, Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1238–40; below, [note 186](#). The verse in Samuel reads: *Who is like Your people Israel, גוי אחד (goi ehad), one nation [or: a unique nation], on the earth?* This wording reappears almost identically in 1 Chronicles 17:21.

[113.](#) By Jerusalem below... When Israel makes pilgrimage to Jerusalem on the festivals, they become truly *one*. Rabbi Yitshak demonstrates this by a creative interpretation of the verse in Samuel. Whereas according to the simple sense of this verse, Israel is described as *one nation בארץ (ba-arets), on the earth*, Rabbi Yitshak reads this as *one nation ba-arets, with the land*—that is, “with the Holy Land,” or specifically with Jerusalem. The Holy Land and the holy city of Jerusalem both symbolize *Shekhinah*, so

Israel's union with *the land* corresponds to the divine union of *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel) and *Shekhinah*.

On *arets, land*, as signifying Jerusalem, see *Zohar* 2:8b. For the full verse in Samuel, see the preceding note.

114. Six days work may be done... The full verse reads: *Six days work may be done [or: shall be done], but on the seventh day, a Sabbath of complete rest, a sacred convocation. No work shall you do. It is a Sabbath for YHVH in all your dwelling places.*

115. [2:32a] Rabbi Yose and Rabbi Hiyya... This remarkable passage (extending below to [p. 97](#) at [n. 126](#)) appears here in numerous manuscripts (including C9, P2, Pr13, V3, V5, V6, V7), *Or Yaqar*, and the Cremona edition. In the Mantua edition (and nearly all subsequent printings of the *Zohar*), it appears in 2:32a, concluding *Parashat Va-Era*. The passage does not fit particularly well there, although it certainly does not fit here, where it interrupts the interpretation of the opening verses of Leviticus 23. Apparently, it constitutes an independent piece that was interpolated here at a relatively early stage in the long editing process of the *Zohar*.

For the question "Why are you silent?" see *Zohar* 2:36b. On the importance of engaging in Torah while walking or traveling, see above, [p. 2](#), [n. 4](#).

116. she later gave birth... Miraculously to Isaac, as recounted in Genesis 21:1-7. See *ibid.* 17:15-22; 18:9-15.

The phrase "holy stock" appears in *Zohar* 1:96a, 223a; 3:103a. Cf. Isaiah 6:13; Jeremiah 2:21; Ezra 9:2; *Tanḥuma, Naso* 7; Baer, *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, 1:245-46; Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*, 27, 36-37. On the innate holiness of the Jewish people, see Judah Halevi, *Kuzari* 1:27-47, 95, 102-11.

117. You see and I see... That is, "You see the fact that eventually Isaac was born, but I see the tragic consequences of Sarai's being barren."

118. because Sarah was hindered... Sarah (who was at that point called Sarai) urged Abraham (Abram) to conceive a son with her slave-girl, Hagar. This type of surrogate maternity is well documented in the ancient Near East.

The phrase “to displace her mistress” echoes Proverbs 30:21-23: *At three things the earth trembles, and four it cannot bear: a slave becoming a king and a scoundrel sated with food, a loathsome woman getting married and a slave-girl dispossessing her mistress.* See Zohar 2:16b-17a (MhN); 3:69a.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *Sarai said to Abram, “Look, please, YHVH has obstructed me from bearing children. Please, come to bed with my slave-girl. Perhaps אבנה (ibbaneh), I will be built up [or: I will obtain a son, be “sonned”], through her.” And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai.*

119. If only Ishmael might live... According to Genesis, when God told Abraham that Sarah would give birth to a son, *Abraham flung himself on his face ויצחק (va-yitshaq), and he laughed, saying to himself, “To a hundred-year-old will a child be born, will ninety-year-old Sarah give birth?” Abraham said to God, “If only Ishmael might live by Your favor!” God said, “Yet Sarah your wife is to bear you a son and you shall call his name יצחק (Yitshaq), Isaac, and I will establish My covenant with him as an everlasting covenant, for his seed after him. As for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and I will make him fruitful and will multiply him most abundantly. Twelve chieftains he shall engender, and I will make him a great nation. But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear you at this season next year” (Genesis 17:17-21).* According to the following passage in Genesis, when Ishmael reached the age of thirteen, he was circumcised.

On the negative consequences of Abraham’s saying *If only Ishmael might live by Your favor*, see Midrash ha-

Gadol, Genesis 50:21. Cf. *Zohar* 1:205b.

120. For four hundred years, the Prince of Ishmael stood pleading... Ishmael's heavenly prince demanded that Ishmael's descendants be rewarded for maintaining the covenant of circumcision.

The mention of four hundred years probably counts from the beginning of the fifth millennium (equivalent to 240 C.E.), pointing to when the land of Israel was conquered by the Arabs in 634–638 C.E. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:118, n. 379. On the connection between circumcision and the Divine Name, see above, [note 72](#).

121. circumcised at the age of thirteen... Which demanded extreme courage, devotion, and endurance. See BT *Sanhedrin* 89b, where Rabbi Levi reports Ishmael's boast to Isaac: "I am greater than you in *mitsvot*, for you were circumcised at eight days, and I at thirteen years."

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 55:4; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 22:1; *Tanḥuma*, *Vayera* 18; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayera* 42.

122. One was circumcised properly... According to rabbinic tradition, complete circumcision involves two stages. First, the foreskin is cut and removed, disclosing the mucous membrane. Then, the membrane is torn down the middle and pulled back, revealing the corona. This act is called פְּרִיעָה (*peri'ah*), "uncovering [the corona]." Islam requires only the removal of the foreskin and not uncovering the corona.

Here Ishmael's circumcision is considered improper because it did not include *peri'ah*. Furthermore, Jewish male infants are circumcised at the age of eight days (as was Isaac), whereas Muslims "are distant from Me" because they do not insist on circumcision at that precise early age. (The timing and precise ritual of circumcision were not regularized across all Islamic cultures; the age for circumcision can range from eight days to the commencement of puberty.)

On the two stages of circumcision, see above, [note 81](#). On Muslim circumcision, see Judah Halevi, *Kuzari*, 3:8; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Melakhim* 10:8; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 340-41; idem, *Shegel ha-Qodesh*, 53-54 (65, 67); Kiener, "The Image of Islam in the *Zohar*," 54-60; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 366, n. 142. Cf. *Zohar* 2:23a (Vol. 4, p. 78, n. 30), 57b (Vol. 4, p. 304-5, n. 375), 86a (Vol. 4, p. 485, n. 427).

[123. He distanced the Ishmaelites...](#) Although God barred the descendants of Ishmael from cleaving to Him directly, on account of the merit of circumcision the Muslims were given a share in the Holy Land and are destined to rule over it for many centuries.

See above, [note 120](#). For other references to Muslim rule over the Holy Land, see *Pirgei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* (ed. Friedlander) 30, (ed. Higger) 29; *Nisterot Rabbi Shim'on ben Yoḥai* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 3:78-82); *Tefillat Rabbi Shim'on ben Yoḥai* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 4:117-26); *Zohar* 3:69a. Cf. *Zohar* 1:119a; 2:16b-17a (*MhN*); *ZH* 27d-28a (*MhN*), 56b-c.

[124. The Ishmaelites will provoke wars...](#) Alluding to battles of the Crusades, in which the Christians (symbolized by Edom) fought with the Muslims (the Ishmaelites) to gain (and later maintain) control over the Holy Land. The battle "on the sea" apparently refers to one of various battles over the coastal city of Acre, which was captured by the Crusaders in 1104, recaptured by the Muslims in 1187, retaken by the Crusaders in 1191, and then conquered and destroyed by the Muslims in 1291, effectively eliminating Christian dominion in Palestine.

As for Jerusalem, the Crusaders captured it in 1099, and it gradually became the capital of the Crusader Kingdom. In 1187, Saladin reconquered Jerusalem, which remained in Muslim hands until 1229, when it was divided between the two powers. In 1244, Jerusalem was attacked by the Turks, in league with the rulers of Egypt. Then in

1250 the city became part of the Mamluk empire and remained so until the sixteenth century, when the Ottomans took control.

These references to Muslim rule and the Crusades became a significant issue in the scholarly dating of the *Zohar*. See Emden, *Mitpaḥat Sefarim*, 21-22; Kunitz, *Sefer Ben Yoḥai*, 73a; Rapoport, *Naḥalat Yehudah*, 9; Steinschneider; *Polemische und apologetische Literatur*, 361; David Luria, *Ma'amar Qadmut Sefer ha-Zohar*, 25b-26a; Franck, *The Kabbalah*, 60-61; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 186; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:68-70; Kiener, "The Image of Islam," 49-53. On the international wars of Islam, see also *ZH* 70a (*ShS*).

125. a nation from the end of the earth... Conceivably, an exaggerated reference to the Mongol invasions of the thirteenth century, which reached into Europe although never as far west as Rome. See Kiener, "The Image of Islam," 51.

In the clause "and they will fall into their hands," the identity of the subject and object is not certain. See *Miqdash Melekh*; Soncino; Kiener, "The Image of Islam," 50; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the reference to Rome, cf. *Zohar* 1:119a.

The verse in Isaiah describes how God will wreak vengeance upon Israel's enemy, Edom, which here symbolizes Christian dominion. Bozrah was the ancient capital of Edom. See above, [note 23](#).

126. To seize the corners of the land... At the time of Israel's redemption, God will shake out the land of Israel, removing all the Ishmaelites.

The right symbolizes *Ḥesed*, the divine right arm, which will redeem Israel. The verse in Deuteronomy (linking Torah with God's right) reads in full: *YHVH from Sinai appeared and from Seir He shone upon them; He radiated from Mount Paran and He came from myriads of holy ones; from His right hand, a fiery law for them*. See *Zohar*

1:198a, 243a; 2:81a, 84a-b, 135a, 166b, 206b, 223a; 3:176a.

On all depending on the right, see *Zohar* 2:52b, 57a, 66a; Wolfson, “Left Contained in the Right.” On raising the right hand above the left, see above, [note 106](#).

The quotation from Job is from God’s speech out of the whirlwind (38:12–13): *Have you ever commanded morning, assigned dawn its place, to seize the corners of the earth [or: land], that the wicked be shaken from it?* The interpretation offered here by Rabbi Ḥiyya derives from *Pirgei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 34. See *Zohar* 1:181b; 2:10a, 17a (*MhN*); 3:72b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 89.

[127.](#) Of You, my heart said, ‘Seek My face’... According to Rabbi Yitṣhak, King David the Psalmist is here speaking for *Shekhinah* (Assembly of Israel), who is pictured as *my heart* because of David’s intimate connection with Her. The opening words—*Of You*—are addressed to King *Tif’eret*, on whose behalf *Shekhinah* (*my heart*) speaks to the inhabitants of the world.

On the verse in Psalms, see *Zohar* 2:128b, 218a. Cf. Rashi, ad loc. On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, [p. 11](#), [n. 32](#).

[128.](#) Seek My face—diadems of the Holy King... The *sefirot* surrounding *Tif’eret*, from *Ḥesed* to *Yesod*, who share His essential nature and are inseparable from Him.

See *Zohar* 2:86a; 3:11b, 70a, 291b (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 98 (125); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:238–40. For other interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

[129.](#) David was more qualified... King David is pictured as the ideal king, so he is intimately linked with *Shekhinah*, or *Malkhut* (Kingdom), who is known as Assembly of Israel.

[130.](#) Alternatively, Of You, my heart said... The verse also yields a somewhat different meaning: On behalf of *Tif’eret*, *Shekhinah* (or perhaps David’s own heart) says to

inhabitants of the world, *Seek My face*—that is, devote yourselves to the holidays and festivals, which correspond to various sefirotic faces. These festive faces are invited to the realm of *Hokhmah*, known as *holiness*, which (together with *Binah*) represents the deep source of the divine flow.

Now Rabbi Yitshak turns to the phrase in Leviticus describing the festivals—מִקְרָאֵי קֹדֶשׁ (*miqra'ei qodesh*), *sacred convocations*—and reads it hyperliterally: *called to holiness*, that is, “invited to *Hokhmah*.” On the sefirotic correspondences of the holidays, see above, [note 112](#).

[131](#). *Miqra'ei qodesh, called by holiness...* Rabbi Abba offers yet another different reading, according to which *Hokhmah* Himself (known as *holiness*) calls, or invites, the festivals. Having been invited by Him, they are also invited by His spouse, *Binah*, the flowing stream of emanation.

[132](#). *fine preserved wine...* This image recalls a description in BT *Berakhot* 34b (in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi) of the world that is coming, when the righteous will enjoy “wine preserved in its grapes since the six days of Creation.” In the *Zohar*, this wine often symbolizes the vintage emanation stored within (and flowing from) *Binah*, who is Herself called “the World that is Coming.”

See *Zohar* 1:135b (*MhN*), 192a, 238b; 2:147a, 169b; 3:4a, 12b, 39b-40a, 100a (*RM*); *ZH* 28a-b, 64c (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 130, 319. On *Binah* as the World that is Coming, see above, [pp. 33-34](#), [n. 97](#).

The verse in Song of Songs reads: *For your caresses are better מִיַּיִן (mi-yayin), than wine*. Here, Rabbi Abba construes this as: *For your caresses are fine, deriving from wine*. See Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 485; *Zohar* 1:70a-b; 3:12b, 95a, 150a; *ZH* 63d (*ShS*), 64c (*ShS*). Cf. *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 1:33 (on 1:4).

[133](#). *Which you shall call at their appointed times...* The verse reads: *Which תִּקְרָאוּ (tiqre'u), you shall*

proclaim, at their appointed times. Rabbi Abba reads this hyperliterally as: *which you shall call—or invite—at their appointed times.* Cf. above, [note 130](#).

The people of Israel are called *people of holiness* because they are linked with *Hokhmah* (known as *holiness*), so they are instructed to invite the sefirotic festivals and celebrate them joyously. Thus, the festivals are invited “above and below,” by *holiness* above and by holy Israel below.

In rabbinic sources, Israel’s vital role in proclaiming the festivals is highlighted by a midrashic reading of the clause אֲשֶׁר תִּקְרְאוּ אֹתָם (*asher tiqre’u otam*), *which you shall call*, which is construed as: אֲשֶׁר תִּקְרְאוּ אֶתְּמֶם (*asher tiqre’u attem*), *which you yourselves shall call*. See *Sifra, Emor* 9:2–3, 99d; 10:1–3, 100a; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 24a, 25a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:13; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15, 77b; *Devarim Rabbah* 2:14; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:2; *Minḥat Shai* on Leviticus 23:2.

134. What is meant by *mo’adei YHVH*... Rabbi Shim’on interprets the word מועד (*mo’ed*), “appointed time,” based on the passive verbal form of the root יעד (*y’d*): הוועד (*hivva’ed*), “to gather together.” So the festivals, symbolizing various lower *sefirot*, are described as *mo’adei YHVH, banding together with YHVH*—that is, with King *Tif’eret* (known as *YHVH*), who is their sefirotic core.

Just as King *Tif’eret* shares in the riches of emanation issuing from His parents, *Binah* and *Hokhmah* (who is known as *holiness*), so through *Tif’eret* the festive lower *sefirot* ascend to *holiness* above. The following phrase in the verse—קִדְשֵׁי מִקְרָאֵי (*miqra’ei qodesh*), *sacred convocations*—is now read hyperliterally: *called by holiness*, that is, “invited by *Hokhmah*.” See above, [notes 112, 130–31](#).

135. Which you shall call... Israel has a double portion in the sefirotic festivals. As demonstrated by the two verses in Deuteronomy, they are linked to King *Tif’eret*, who is known as *YHVH*. Furthermore, they share in the *holiness* of *Hokhmah*, as indicated by another verse (quoted

soon below): *Holiness* [or: *Holy*] *is Israel to YHVH* (Jeremiah 2:3). Consequently, Israel is instructed to *call*—or invite—the divine festivals and celebrate them joyously, each its own manner. See above, [note 133](#).

136. except for my special day... A day of royal celebration.

137. Similarly, the blessed Holy One said... *Tif'eret's* special day is Sabbath; but occasionally He invites an honored guest—namely one of the sefirotic festivals.

138. Is he not Yours... The angels insist that the sefirotic festival pertains to *Tif'eret* Himself, since it derives from *Hokhmah* (known as *holiness*).

139. Are they not holiness... Israel is inherently holy, cleaving to *Tif'eret* and linked with *Hokhmah* (known as *holiness*).

See above, [notes 130-31](#), [133](#). The full verse in Jeremiah reads: *Holy* [literally: *Holiness*] *is Israel to YHVH, the firstfruits of His harvest. All who eat of it will be held guilty; evil will befall them—declares YHVH*. Leviticus 23:3 reads in full: *Six days work may be done* [or: *shall be done*], *but on the seventh day, a Sabbath of complete rest*, שְׁבִעַת יָמֵי מִקְרָא (miqra qodesh), *a sacred convocation* [construed here as: *called by holiness*]. *No work shall you do. It is a Sabbath for YHVH in all your dwelling places*.

140. There are three invited by holiness... Only the three pilgrimage festivals, representing three *sefirot*, are invited by *Hokhmah*.

Pesah is known as Festival of *Matsot* (Unleavened Bread). On the sefirotic correspondences of the festivals, see above, [note 112](#); below, [note 186](#).

141. No, from two aspects... Sabbath (representing *Tif'eret*) does not need to be invited by *Hokhmah* (known as *holiness*) because Sabbath is itself called *holiness* and is inherently holy, intimately linked with *Hokhmah*. The other sefirotic holy days are invited by *holiness* and join together with Sabbath, who is adorned directly by *holiness*.

See *Zohar* 3:95a. The verse in Exodus reads: *Observe the Sabbath, for it is holy* [literally: *holiness*] *to you*. Actually, like the festivals, Sabbath is described as מקרא קדש (*miqra qodesh*), *a sacred convocation* [or: *called by holiness*]. See above, [note 139](#).

142. This may be compared to a son... Sabbath (representing *Tif'eret*) is like a son of *Hokhmah* and *Binah* and needs no invitation.

143. This may be compared to a king... Similarly, King *Hokhmah* has a beloved son, *Tif'eret* (symbolized by Sabbath), for whom He appoints other *sefirot* (symbolized by the festivals) to accompany Him.

The verse in Exodus now implies that *Tif'eret* (known as *YHVH*) is *mighty in holiness*—that is, He boldly grasps His Father, *Hokhmah*, partaking of *holiness* with no need of being invited.

The full verse reads: *Who is like You among the gods, O YHVH? Who is like You, נאדר (ne'dar), majestic, in holiness, awesome in praise, working wonders?* Here, Rabbi Shim'on blends *ne'dar* with its cognate אדיר (*addir*), *mighty*.

144. Six days work may be done... The full verse reads: *Six days work may be done* [or: *shall be done*], *but on the seventh day, a Sabbath of complete rest, a sacred convocation. No work shall you do. It is a Sabbath for YHVH in all your dwelling places.*

The question “What are they doing?” renders עבִידתֵיהוּ (mai avidtaihu), a rabbinic idiomatic expression meaning “What do they do?” “What are they doing here?” “What is their nature?” Here, the literal sense of “doing” immediately pertains.

145. Six days YHVH made heaven and earth... The simple sense of the verse is, of course, *In six days YHVH made heaven and earth*; but Rabbi Yose construes it to mean: *With six days*—namely with the six *sefirot* from *Hesed* to *Yesod*—*YHVH made heaven and earth*. On each day of the primordial week of Creation, one of these cosmic days

performed its work. Similarly, ever since Creation, each sefirotic day conducts the world one day a week.

On the verse in Exodus, see Exodus 31:17; Ibn Ezra on Genesis 14:4; *Bahir* 39 (57), 55 (82), 105 (158); Nahmanides on Exodus 20:11; *Zohar* 1:30a, 247a; 2:31a, 89b; 3:103b, 298b; *ZH* 26c; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 134; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 81b.

146. why are they called 'six profane days'?... If the sefirotic days function throughout the week, why are the weekdays called "profane"?

147. the world is conducted by their agents... In the current state of exile, the world is conducted by the chief angel Metatron and his forces, who are agents of the sefirotic days. Since the weekdays are not influenced directly by *sefirot*, they are considered profane. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1322.

148. the Companions instituted *Havdalah*... The Talmud (BT *Berakhot* 33a) attributes this prayer to the Men of the Great Assembly, referred to here as "the Companions." (According to rabbinic tradition, the Great Assembly was originally convened by Ezra and his associates and became an institution governing the postexilic community of the land of Israel throughout the Persian period.)

Havdalah, marking the end of Sabbath, blesses God for "distinguishing between the holy and the profane." According to Rabbi Ḥiyya, this distinction implies that Sabbath (symbolizing the central *sefirah* of *Tif'eret*) is linked with *Ḥokhmah*, who is known as Holiness and transcends the lower *sefirot*. The emanation from *Ḥokhmah* (or *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*) is concentrated in *Tif'eret* (symbolized by Sabbath), who conveys the flow of holiness to the other *sefirot* (symbolized by the profane weekdays). So weekdays are for work, and Sabbath is to be observed as a day of holiness. When a festival falls on a weekday, observance does pertain, since

the weekday has now been “invited by Holiness,” namely by *Hokhmah*.

For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1323; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the weekday festivals being invited, see above, [notes 130-31](#).

149. adorned with Father and Mother... Sabbath, symbolizing *Tif'eret*, is enriched by the flow from Father *Hokhmah* and Mother *Binah*.

The tranquility of Sabbath extends even to Hell, where the wicked are allowed to rest. According to *Bereshit Rabbah* 11:5, one of the dwellers in Hell reports: “Whoever does not observe the Sabbath willingly in your world observes it here against his will.... All week long we are punished and on the Sabbath we are granted rest.”

See BT *Sanhedrin* 65b; *Tanḥuma*, *Ki Tissa* 33; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 23, 120a; *Zohar* 1:14b, 17b, 41a (*Heikh*), 48a, 62b, 197b, 237b; 2:31b, 88b, 100a, 130a, 136a, 150b-151a, 203b, 207a; 3:105a, 145a (*IR*), 288b (*IZ*); *ZH* 17a-b (*MhN*), 79b (*MhN*).

150. This may be compared to a king... Similarly, King *Hokhmah* arranges a Sabbath wedding celebration for his son *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*. Even the demonic force who controls Hell observes the royal celebration by canceling punishments on that day.

Sabbath (symbolizing *Tif'eret*) is characterized as “holy” and linked with the higher realm of *Hokhmah* (or *Hokhmah* and *Binah*), known as Holiness. The *delight* of Sabbath derives from this supernal realm, which is על (*al*), *above*, *YHVH*—that is, *above Tif'eret*, who is known as *YHVH*.

The context in Isaiah (58:13-14) reads: *If you refrain from trampling the Sabbath, from engaging in your affairs on My holy day, and call the Sabbath “delight,” the holy of YHVH “honored”; if you honor it by not going your own ways, pursuing your affairs, or speaking a word, then you will delight על (al), upon [or: in], YHVH, and I will cause you to ride upon the heights of the earth, and feed you the*

inheritance of your father Jacob—for the mouth of YHVH has spoken. The phrase *speaking a word* may refer to idle, mundane, or excessive talk, discussing business, or legal proceedings.

On the hyperliteral reading *above YHVH*, see *Zohar* 1:216a, 219a; 2:50b, 83a, 88a-b, 155b; 3:67b-68a, 70b. On Sabbath as the divine wedding, see *Zohar* 2:135a-136a; 3:105a, 142b-143a (*IR*). On the term *Matronita*, see the Glossary.

151. the King's sons should prepare three meals...

The people of Israel, whose souls derive from King *Tif'eret* and Queen *Shekhinah*, should celebrate the divine wedding by arranging three Sabbath meals. When a festival falls on Sabbath, one table is sufficient, since the festival guest shares in the King's Sabbath meal.

On the three Sabbath meals, see *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 4; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 16:25; BT *Shabbat* 117b-118b; *Zohar* 2:88a-b; 3:288b (*IZ*); *ZH* 48c; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1234-36. On the question of whether three meals are required on a festival, see Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 63-65.

The verse in Samuel relates to Mephibosheth, the crippled son of David's intimate friend, Jonathan. King David treated Mephibosheth like one of his own sons, showing kindness to the offspring of his deceased comrade. See 1 Samuel 20:14-16; 2 Samuel 9:1-13.

152. When a guest appears at the third Sabbath meal... When the first day of a festival falls on Sabbath. In such a case, Rabbi El'azar wonders whether the third Sabbath meal should be "abandoned"—that is, postponed to the slot of the imminent evening meal of the second day of the festival. If it is not postponed, the festival "guest is thereby rejected from the King's table," which apparently means that after eating the third Sabbath meal a person will have no appetite to eat again shortly afterward in honor of the second day of the festival. On the other hand,

if the third Sabbath meal is postponed, “there is a defect in the King’s meals,” because one of the three Sabbath meals will be lacking.

For various interpretations of this passage, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; Soncino; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; *Ateret Tsevi*; Scholem; *Matoq mi-Devash*; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 63–65; Yisraeli, “Dilemmot Hilkhatiyyot be-Sefer ha-Zohar,” 211–18.

The apparent allusion to the second day of a festival pertains to Jewish practice in the Diaspora (such as in thirteenth-century Spain, where the *Zohar* was composed), not in the land of Israel (the purported setting of the *Zohar*).

153. This may be compared to a king... Similarly, King Sabbath transfers his third meal to the festival guest, turning it into the evening meal of the second day of the festival. Since the evening meal is eaten after Sabbath has departed, “the king does not eat with him.”

154. In the house of Rav Hamnuna Sava... This sage followed a different custom, first eating the third Sabbath meal and then eating again later that evening in honor of the second day of the festival.

Cf. BT *Pesaḥim* 105a; Yisraeli, “Dilemmot Hilkhatiyyot be-Sefer ha-Zohar,” 216. Historically, Rav Hamnuna Sava (the Elder) was a Babylonian teacher who lived in the midthird century. Generally in the *Zohar*, Rav Hamnuna Sava appears as a contemporary of Rabbi Shim’on son of Yoḥai (who lived in the second century). In the Talmud, Rav Hamnuna occasionally transmits teachings of Rabbi Shim’on (e.g., BT *Hullin* 21a, *Temurah* 15a), and several prayers are attributed to him (BT *Berakhot* 11b, 17a, 58a). In the *Zohar*, roles are reversed and Rabbi Shim’on cites Rav Hamnuna. Throughout the *Zohar*, Hamnuna is greatly revered, and several original ritual acts are attributed to him; the Book of Rav Hamnuna Sava is cited frequently as well.

155. On this day speaking is forbidden... Due to the sanctity of Sabbath, profane speech is forbidden (even with a guest). Given the extreme holiness of the day, Rav Hamnuna Sava refused to cancel or postpone the third Sabbath meal even in honor of the festival guest.

See the interpretation of the verse from Isaiah in BT *Shabbat* 113a-b: “*If you honor it by not going your own ways. If you honor it—that your Sabbath garments should not resemble your weekday garments.... By not going your own ways—that your Sabbath walking should not resemble your weekday walking. Pursuing your affairs—your affairs are forbidden, the affairs of heaven are permitted. Or speaking a word—that your Sabbath speech should not resemble your weekday speech.*”

As mentioned above ([note 150](#)), the biblical phrase *speaking a word* may refer to idle, mundane, or excessive talk, discussing business, or legal proceedings. On speaking during Sabbath, see also JT *Shabbat* 15:3, 15a-b; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 34:16; BT *Shabbat* 150a; *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 2; *Tosafot, Shabbat* 113b, s.v. *she-lo*; *Zohar* 1:32a; 2:47b, 207a; 3:105a-b. Cf. 3:31b.

For various explanations of how this paragraph fits into the context of the whole passage, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Ateret Tsevi*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

156. How can we not transfer the King’s meal... Rabbi El’azar asks his father how Rav Hamnuna Sava can justify not postponing the third Sabbath meal in honor of the festival. After all, when the day before Passover (the fourteenth of Nisan) falls on Sabbath, the third Sabbath is not eaten at its normal time; rather, one waits to eat until the seder. In that situation, even though *Pesaḥ* “is not (yet) a guest”—that is, the festival has not yet begun on Sabbath afternoon—the third Sabbath meal is still “transferred.” If so, then when the first day of a festival falls on Sabbath itself, one should certainly “transfer” the third meal to the festival guest.

157. if he is His guest that whole day... Rabbi Shim'on explains that generally the third Sabbath meal is postponed only if the festival has already begun on Sabbath. However, when *Pesaḥ* begins on Saturday night, the situation is different. First of all, in order to have a strong appetite for the symbolic foods eaten at the seder—such as *matsah* and bitter herbs—it is important not to eat a meal late Sabbath afternoon. Secondly, all bread and leaven must be eliminated by approximately noon on the fourteenth of Nisan, and a meal without bread is not a real meal.

Rabbi Shim'on concedes that technically one could make the third meal out of wine, which stimulates the appetite. See BT *Pesaḥim* 107b: “Rava used to drink wine throughout the eve of *Pesaḥ* [the fourteenth of Nisan] so as to whet his appetite to eat more *matsah* in the evening.”

Cf. BT *Berakhot* 35b: “Mar Zutra said, ‘Wine nourishes....’ ... Wine sustains.... But does wine sustain? Did not Rava use to drink wine throughout the eve of *Pesaḥ* so as to whet his appetite and eat more *matsah*? Well, a large quantity whets the appetite, a small quantity sustains. But does it sustain at all?... It is bread that sustains, not wine. Well, wine both sustains and delights a person, whereas bread sustains but does not delight.... [However,] people do not make it the basis of a meal.”

On the question of whether or not a third Sabbath meal should be eaten on the fourteenth of Nisan, see BT *Pesaḥim* 13a; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 65. On not eating on the afternoon of the fourteenth of Nisan, see M *Pesaḥim* 10:1; JT *Pesaḥim* 10:1, 37b; BT *Pesaḥim* 99b-100a, 107a-b; Yisraeli, “Dilemmot Hilkhatiyyot be-Sefer ha-Zohar,” 217, n. 61. On eliminating leaven by approximately noon on the fourteenth of Nisan, see M *Pesaḥim* 1:4.

158. I have endeavored not to nullify a Sabbath meal... Previously, Rabbi Shim'on indicated that when a festival falls on Sabbath, the third meal is transferred to

the imminent evening meal of the second day of the festival. (See above, [notes 152–53](#).) But now he states that he himself tried to never nullify such a third meal, because on Sabbath *Shekhinah* (known as the Holy Apple Orchard) is blessed. “The bond of Torah” may allude to the Sabbath union of *Tif’eret* and *Shekhinah*, who are known respectively as Written Torah and Oral Torah.

Rabbi Shim’on was able to enact the third Sabbath meal on a festival by a creative stratagem explained below. On his lifelong devotion to all three Sabbath meals, see *Zohar* 3:288b (IZ). Cf. BT *Shabbat* 118b; *Sha’arei Teshuvah* (*Teshuvot ha-Ge’onim*), 178. On *Shekhinah* as the Holy Apple Orchard, see above, [p. 23, n. 66](#).

159. when a Sabbath meal was transferred... To Saturday night in honor of the festival. In such a case, Rabbi Shim’on conducted a symbolic third meal on Sabbath afternoon; instead of eating, he engaged in contemplative study of Ezekiel’s account of the Divine Chariot, as described in the first chapter of that prophetic book. (In this paragraph Rabbi Abba assumes an editorial role, speaking about Rabbi Shim’on in the past tense.)

160. So Sabbath is entirely worthier... Rabbi Shim’on resumes speaking. He explains that Sabbath is intrinsically holy and intimately linked with *Hokhmah* (who is known as *holiness*), whereas the festivals are *called* [or: *invited*] by *Hokhmah* (*holiness*).

The phrase *מקרא קודש* (*miqra qodesh*) or its plural form *קדשי מקראי* (*miqra’ei qodesh*) means *holy convocation(s)*, but it is construed here as *called by holiness*. See above, [notes 130–31, 133–35](#). Actually, like the festivals, Sabbath is described as *מקרא קודש* (*miqra qodesh*), *a sacred convocation* [or: *called by holiness*]. See above, [notes 139, 141](#).

161. Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are exceptions... In fact, these holy days are included (in Leviticus 23) in the list of festivals described as *מקראי קודש* (*miqra’ei qodesh*), *sacred convocations*—or: *called by holiness*.

But Rabbi Yehudah indicates that Rosh Ha-shanah and Yom Kippur are different than all the others, since they are Days of Awe, Days of Judgment, and are thus not characterized by joy. On the other hand, “these three [namely *Pesah*, *Shavu’ot*, and *Sukkot*] are invited by *holiness* [that is, *Hokhmah*] for the joy of all.”

162. the King’s wedding celebration... When King *Tif’eret* unites with *Shekhinah*. In honor of their wedding, each person observing Sabbath is endowed with an additional soul, which provides a foretaste of the world that is coming, a time that is completely Sabbath.

See BT *Beitsah* 16a, in the name of Rabbi Shim’on son of Lakish: “On Sabbath eve the blessed Holy One imparts an additional soul to a human being. When Sabbath departs it is taken from him, as is said: שבת וינפש (*shavat va-yinnafash*), *He ceased and was refreshed* (Exodus 31:17)—once *shavat*, it [the Sabbath] has *ceased*, ווי אבדה נפש (*vai avedah nefesh*), ‘Woe, the soul is lost!’”

See *Zohar* 1:48a, 81b (*ST*); 2:88b, 98a, 135b, 136b, 204a-205b, 207a-b, 208b-209a, 256a (*Heikh*); 3:35a, 79b, 173a, 288b (*IZ*); *ZH* 17a (*MhN*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1222, 1230-33; Ginsburg, *The Sabbath in the Classical Kabbalah*, 121-36.

On the relation between Sabbath and the world that is coming, see *Mekhilta, Shabbeta (Ki Tissa)* 1; *Bereshit Rabbah* 17:5; BT *Berakhot* 57b; *Otiyyot de-Rabbi Aqiva (Battei Midrashot, 2:346)*; *Zohar* 1:1b, 48a-b; 2:208b-209a; *ZH* 16d (*MhN*). Cf. M *Tamid* 7:4; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan A*, 1; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 31a, *Sanhedrin* 97a; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 2, p. 7; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:1; *Pirquei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 19; *Soferim* 18:2.

163. Remember it over wine... As taught in BT *Pesahim* 106a, one should sanctify and “remember” Sabbath by reciting *Qiddush* over wine.

164. Because wine is joy of Torah... Wine symbolizes the flow of emanation from the Divine Mother, *Binah*, which

delights King *Tif'eret* (symbolized by Written Torah), who conveys this joy to His beloved, *Shekhinah*, and to all those below.

Similarly, the verse in Song of Songs now alludes to *Binah* crowning King *Tif'eret* on the Sabbath day when He weds *Shekhinah*.

On the verse in Song of Songs, see M *Ta'anit* 4:8; *Sifra, Millu'im (Shemini)* 1:15, 44c; *Eikhah Rabbah, Petihta* 33; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 1:3; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:11; Naḥmanides on Genesis 24:1; *Zohar* 1:29b, 218a, 246a, 248b; 2:22a, 58a, 84a, 100b, 134a; 3:4b, 34b, 61b, 77b, 98a, 102b, 148b.

On the supernal wine flowing into Torah, see *Zohar* 1:240a. On the phrase “wine of Torah,” see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 30:1; BT *Avodah Zarah* 35a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:1; 27:1; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 1:33 (on 1:4); *Qohelet Rabbah* on 2:3; *Tanḥuma, Vayhi* 10; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:4; *Zohar* 2:124b; 3:39a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 319.

On Torah being compared to wine, see also *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 13, p. 250; BT *Ta'anit* 7a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:2; *Midrash Mishlei* 20:1; *Devarim Rabbah* 7:3; *Tanḥuma, Aḥarei Mot* 10; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Aḥarei Mot* 16.

165. In all things one must demonstrate action... Imitating sefirotic action and stimulating it further. By sanctifying Sabbath with wine, one ensures that the flow of holiness will issue from *Binah* to *Tif'eret* and be conveyed below.

The verse in Song of Songs reads: *For your caresses are better* יין (mi-yayin), *than wine*. Here, Rabbi Yehudah construes this as: *For your caresses are fine, deriving from wine*—that is, divine love is stimulated *from wine*, by Israel reciting *Qiddush* over wine. See above, [note 132](#).

On the need to manifest action—and the principle “By an action below is aroused an action above”—see above, [pp. 41–42](#), [n. 122](#). On the requirement to recite *Qiddush* over

wine, see BT *Pesaḥim* 107a: “One should recite *Qiddush* only over wine.”

166. *I was asleep...* In the Midrash on Song of Songs, the female beloved represents the earthly Assembly of Israel. In the *Zohar*, Assembly of Israel usually designates *Shekhinah*, who here acknowledges that during Israel’s enslavement in Egypt She was, as it were, *asleep*, and did not redeem Her people, whose suffering She shared.

On the verse in Song of Songs, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:6; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15, 70a-b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Toledot* 18. On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, [p. 11](#), [n. 32](#).

167. *The voice of my lover, knocking...* *Shekhinah*’s beloved, *Tif’eret* (known as the blessed Holy One), tells Her that He has remembered His covenant with Israel. *My covenant* may allude to *Yesod*, through whom *Tif’eret* and *Shekhinah* unite.

The context in Exodus (6:5–6) reads: *I have also heard the groaning of the Children of Israel, whom the Egyptians are enslaving, and I have remembered My covenant. Therefore say to the Children of Israel: “I am YHVH. I will take you out from under the burdens of Egypt and I will rescue you from their bondage and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great retributions.”* See Genesis 15:13–14.

168. *But my heart was awake...* Although *Shekhinah* could not redeem Israel, She protected them.

169. *Open to me an opening...* See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:6, in the name of Rabbi Yassa: “*Open to me...* The blessed Holy One said, ‘*Open to me an opening* כַּחֲרִירָה (*ka-ḥarirah*), the size of the eye, of a needle, and I will open to you an opening through which camps of soldiers and siege engines can enter.’”

Cf. the parallel passage in *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:2: “The blessed Holy One said to Israel, ‘My children, *open to Me* one opening of repentance כַּחֲדוּדָה (*ke-ḥuddah*), the

size of the point, of a needle, and I will open to you openings through which wagons and carriages can enter.” The reading כחודה (*ke-ḥuddah*), “the size of the point,” is a corruption of (or variation on) כחרידה (*ka-ḥarirah*), “the size of the eye.” Here, similarly, the *Zohar* reads כחודא (*ke-ḥidduda*), “the size of the point.”

See M *Kelim* 13:5; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15, 70a; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Toledot* 18; *Zohar* 1:21a; ZH 23d (*MhN*).

170. Open to me, my sister... *Shekhinah*, last of the *sefirot*, is the opening from below to the divine realm. Rabbi Hiyya now reads פתחי לי (*Pithi li*), *Open to me*, as: *Open for me*. *Tif'eret* asks *Shekhinah* to open Herself so that Israel may enter and approach Him. On *Open to me, my sister...*, see *Zohar* 1:112a, 140b; 2:12a, 46a; 3:233a-b.

171. Open for me the gates of righteousness... Alluding to *Shekhinah*, who is pictured as an opening or gate and is also known as *righteousness*. She is *the gate to YHVH*—namely to King *Tif'eret*, who is known as *YHVH*. The *dew* mentioned in the verse from Song of Songs symbolizes holy sperm, which originates in the divine head.

According to one ancient theory (attributed to Pythagoras and taught by Alcmaeon of Croton), sperm derives from the brain. See Vol. 5, p. 469, n. 795. The verse in Psalms reads: *This is the gate ליהוה (la-YHVH), of YHVH [or: to YHVH]*.

172. When the blessed Holy One slew the Egyptians... When God killed the Egyptian firstborn in the last of ten plagues, He first cast down the heavenly power controlling Egypt and then the Egyptians themselves below. At that time, the people of Israel were circumcised, thereby becoming partners with *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel). They marked their doors with both the blood of the paschal lamb and the blood of circumcision. The three markings of blood—*on the two doorposts and on the lintel*—may allude to three *yods*, which sometimes represent the name *YHVH*.

According to rabbinic tradition, God first punishes or defeats a nation's heavenly prince and then deals with the earthly nation itself. This notion is often linked with Isaiah 24:21: *YHVH will punish the host of the heights on high and the kings of the earth upon the earth*. See below, [p. 476, n. 52](#); [p. 492, n. 9](#).

According to various rabbinic sources, the Israelites circumcised themselves before leaving Egypt. See above, [note 81](#). On the Israelites' marking their doors with both the blood of the paschal lamb and the blood of circumcision, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 12:13; *Pirquei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 29; *Zohar* 2:35b; 3:149a.

On the significance of the three marks, see *Zohar* 2:35b-36a, 41a (*Piq*); 3:147b (below, [p. 478, n. 62](#)), 149a. The full verse in Exodus (pertaining to the paschal lamb) reads: *They shall take from the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel, on the houses in which they will eat it*.

[173. On the fourteenth...](#) Rabbi Ḥiyya now turns to the verse in Leviticus, which reads in full: *In the first month, on the fourteenth of the month at twilight, a Passover offering to YHVH*. (See above before [note 166](#).) According to rabbinic tradition, all bread and leaven must be eliminated by approximately noon on the fourteenth of Nisan. In Kabbalah, leaven symbolizes demonic forces, which must be removed before the festival holiness can prevail.

On the night of the fifteenth of Nisan, Israel left the alien domain of Egypt and united with *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by *matsah*. Having been circumcised, they entered the realm of *Shekhinah*. However, circumcision involves two stages. First, the foreskin is cut and removed, disclosing the mucous membrane. This step corresponds to *Shekhinah*. Then, the membrane is torn down the middle and pulled back, revealing the corona. This act is called פריעה (*peri'ah*), "uncovering [the corona]," and it corresponds to

Yesod, the divine phallus. Israel first performed *peri'ah* only later, after they had crossed the Red Sea and arrived at Marah. Thereby they were linked with the Divine Male (including *Yesod* and *Tif'eret*). Soon afterward they received the manna—*bread from heaven*—symbolizing *Tif'eret* (who is known as *heaven*).

On eliminating leaven by approximately noon on the fourteenth of Nisan, see M *Pesahim* 1:4; above, [note 157](#). On the negative association of leaven, see below, [note 208](#). On the sefirotic significance of *matsah* and manna, see *Zohar* 1:157a-b; 2:40a-b, 61b-63a, 183a; Hecker, *Mystical Bodies, Mystical Meals*, 82-115. On the two stages of circumcision, see above, [note 81](#). On the enactment of *peri'ah* at Marah, see *Zohar* 2:40a, 60b-61a, 125b.

[174.](#) On the fourteenth—in time of coupling... The new moon symbolizes the incomplete state of *Shekhinah*, when She is not yet illumined by *Tif'eret* (symbolized by the sun), and thus demonic forces (“lower crowns”) can roam the world. The full waxing of the moon in the middle of the month symbolizes *Shekhinah*’s union with Her beloved, when all the threatening forces “gather to one place” far away and *Tif'eret* watches over Her.

On demonic forces operating at the time of the new moon, see *Zohar* 3:77a. The full verse in Exodus reads: *It is a night of watch for YHVH, for bringing them out of the land of Egypt; this night, is YHVH’s, a watch for all the Children of Israel throughout their generations.*

[175.](#) total adornment of the Bride... The preparations for *Pesah* on the fourteenth of Nisan (by the Israelites in Egypt and by Jews ever since) constitute adornments of *Shekhinah*, the Divine Bride. At night, as *Pesah* begins, *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah* (pictured as lions) enter and unite. All those who have helped adorn the Bride are considered “members of the household.” “The house” often symbolizes *Shekhinah*.

On the image of lions uniting, see BT *Sanhedrin* 106a, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: “Woe to the nation that may be found [attempting to hinder or interfere] when the blessed Holy One enacts the redemption of His children! Who would cast his garment between a lion and a lioness when they are copulating?” In this Talmudic passage, the lion and lioness represent respectively the blessed Holy One and the earthly Assembly of Israel, with whom God reunites at the time of redemption. Here in the *Zohar*, the two lions represent the blessed Holy One and *Shekhinah* (who is known as Assembly of Israel); their union is stimulated by the earthly people of Israel.

See *Zohar* 3:270a. On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, [p. 11](#), [n. 32](#). The phrase “total adornment of the Bride” renders תקונא דבלא (*tiqquna de-khola*), “total adornment.” The word כלא (*khola*), “all, total,” is apparently a play on כלה (*khallah*), “bride.”

176. Why should we go to all this trouble?... Trying to show that the divine couple unites on the first night of *Pesah*. After all, there is a proof-text for this right in the book of Exodus: *It is a night of שמורים* (*shimmurim*), *watch* [literally: *watches*], *for YHVH, for bringing them out of the land of Egypt; this night, is YHVH's, shimmurim, a watch* [literally: *watches*], *for all the Children of Israel throughout their generations*. The wording *a night for YHVH* alludes to the union of *Shekhinah* (symbolized by *night*) with *Tif'eret* (known as *YHVH*), and the plural form *shimmurim, watches*, alludes to the two divine lovers (symbolized by moon and sun).

177. they were joined and bound... From the time of the Exodus onward, the people of Israel were joined to the Divine Name, having emerged from the alien and demonic domain of Egypt. When the divine couple unite, they are adorned with crowns of Mother *Binah*, the source of liberation. Fittingly, at the seder each person must reenact the Exodus and demonstrate that he personally has been liberated from slavery.

See the wording in the Passover Haggadah: “In every single generation a person must see himself as if he personally came forth from Egypt.” Instead of לראות את עצמו (*lir’ot et atsmo*), “see himself,” many textual witnesses read להראות את עצמו (*lehar’ot et atsmo*), “show himself,” which harmonizes with the formulation here: “one must show that he is free.” See *Zohar* 2:40a.

On *Binah* and liberation, see above, [note 107](#). On *Binah*’s crowns, see above, [note 164](#).

[178](#). Why these four cups... Of wine traditionally drunk during the course of the seder. See M *Pesaḥim* 10:1.

[179](#). corresponding to four redemptions... In Exodus 6:6–7, God describes the redemption from Egypt with four verbs: *I will take you out from under the burdens of Egypt and I will rescue you from their bondage and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great retributions. And I will take you to Me as a people.* These four verbs became known as “four redemptions,” by which God assured Israel that He would redeem them from four kingdoms destined to subjugate them, namely Babylonia, Persia, Greece, and Rome.

According to Rav Yeisa Sava, the four cups of wine correspond to four sefirotic rungs, apparently *Netsaḥ*, *Hod*, *Yesod*, and *Shekhinah* (or *Ḥesed*, *Gevurah*, *Tif’eret*, and *Shekhinah*), which all unite on this first night of *Pesaḥ*. (*Netsaḥ*, *Hod*, and *Yesod* represent respectively the divine testicles and penis; *Ḥesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif’eret* represent respectively the divine right and left arms and the trunk of the body.)

By drinking the four cups of wine, Israel stimulates and shares the joy of divine union. By being linked “with this” (*Shekhinah*), Israel attains all four rungs. The unique holy joy of this night is reflected in the many unique features of the seder, during which “we... change everything.” Of course, the wording “this night is different from all other nights” is based on the central question of the seder.

On the four redemptions in Exodus, see JT *Pesahim* 10:1, 37b-c; *Bereshit Rabbah* 88:5; *Shemot Rabbah* 6:4; *Zohar* 2:24b-25a, 216b-217a. On the four kingdoms, see Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, 5:223, n. 82.

180. He also said... Rav Yeisa Sava said that the four *sefirot* are called “four redemptions.” *Shekhinah* is called Redeemer because of *Yesod* (or *Tif’eret*), who illumines, activates, and “redeems” Her. This higher *sefirah*, in turn, conveys redemptive light from even higher rungs: *Netsah* and *Hod* (or *Hesed* and *Gevurah*).

On *Shekhinah* as Redeemer, see *Zohar* 1:228b, 230a, 232a; 3:187a, 270a. On *Shekhinah* and *Yesod* sharing the quality of redemption, see *Zohar* 2:156a (Vol. 5, p. 412, n. 640).

181. Seeing that it is written... Since according to the Torah, *Pesah* is to be celebrated for seven days, why is the complete *Hallel* (consisting of Psalms 113-18) recited only at the seder and on the first day (or in the Diaspora at both seders and on the first two days), whereas on the intermediate and last days of *Pesah* the *Hallel* is recited in an abbreviated form (omitting the first parts of Psalm 115 and Psalm 116)? On the festival of *Shavu’ot* and throughout the entire festival of *Sukkot*, the complete *Hallel* is recited.

The reference to “nine days” includes *Sukkot*, *Shemini Atseret*, and *Simhat Torah*, which in the Diaspora extend over nine days. Cf. above, end of [note 152](#). On the complete and incomplete *Hallel*, see BT *Ta’anit* 28b, *Arakhin* 10a-b; *Zohar* 2:182b-183a, 277b (*Tosafot*); 3:97a (*Piq*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 136; *TZ* 13, 28b; and the following note.

182. here Israel was not linked... On the original *Pesah*, when the Israelites left Egypt, they were not yet completely linked with all seven *sefirot* (from *Hesed* to *Shekhinah*)—not until later, when they completed the second stage of circumcision (known as *peri’ah*, “uncovering” the corona) and soon afterward received the Torah at Mount Sinai on the original *Shavu’ot*.

On the first night of *Pesah*, when *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah* unite and Israel participates in their joy, the complete *Hallel* is fittingly recited. However, on the intermediate and last days of *Pesah*, “although all seven [lower *sefirot*] are present, they are not revealed.” Since Israel was not yet linked with all those sefirotic rungs, on these days only the incomplete form of *Hallel* is recited.

On the contrast between *Pesah* and the other festivals in regard to *Hallel*, see *Zohar* 2:182b-183a, 277b (*Tosafot*); 3:97a (*Piq*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 136. On the two stages of circumcision, see above, [note 173](#).

According to one midrashic tradition, the complete *Hallel* is not recited on the intermediate and last days of *Pesah* because so many Egyptians drowned in the Red Sea—based on the principle *When your enemy falls, do not rejoice* (Proverbs 24:17). See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana*, add. 2, p. 458; *Yalqut Shim'oni*, Leviticus 654, Proverbs 960; Zedekiah Anav, *Shibbolei ha-Leqet*, 174.

Cf. BT *Megillah* 10b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: “What is the meaning of the verse: *One did not draw near the other all night* (Exodus 14:20)? The ministering angels [referred to as *one* and *the other* in Isaiah 6:3] wanted to sing, but the blessed Holy One said, ‘My handiwork is drowning in the sea, and you are singing?’” See Vol. 5, p. 493, n. 858; below, [p. 493](#), [n. 11](#).

[183](#). total joy and completion of *Hallel*... On the first night of *Pesah*, Israel was linked with *Shekhinah* and the divine couple unites, so fittingly the complete *Hallel* is recited. The entire sefirotic bond is manifested, “though not in the aspect of Israel”—that is, Israel was not yet linked with all the lower *sefirot*. On the wording “though not in the aspect of Israel,” see Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 136, lines 4-5.

When the Divine Male unites with *Shekhinah*, the “three rungs situated above Her appear,” namely *Netsah*, *Hod*, and *Yesod* (or *Hesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*). See above, [note 179](#).

When these appear, the entire sefirotic Body appears. The moon symbolizes *Shekhinah*.

184. We see on Pesah seven... Seven is the number of completion and perfection. Rabbi Yehudah wonders why, according to the Torah, there are seven days of *Pesah* and seven days of *Sukkot* (plus “another day,” *Shemini Atseret*), whereas *Shavu’ot* consists of only one day. Since the name *Shavu’ot* means “weeks”—signifying that it occurs seven weeks after the beginning of *Pesah*—it would seem most fitting for *Shavu’ot* to be celebrated for seven days. Alternatively, the perfect number seven is appropriate for *Shavu’ot* because this festival commemorates the giving of the Torah.

185. Your people Israel, one nation on earth... Israel’s greatness is that they are *one*—that is, united with *Tif’eret*, whose full name is *Tif’eret Yisra’el* (Beauty of Israel). *Tif’eret* Himself is *one*, uniting heavenly and earthly realms. Further, He is linked with the upper *sefirot*, with the lower *sefirot* from *Hesed* to *Yesod*, and with *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel).

186. So this day is bond of faith... *Shavu’ot* celebrates the union of the *sefirot*, whose core is *Tif’eret Yisra’el* (Beauty of Israel), and this festival is associated with Him. *Tif’eret* is identified with the Tree of Life—the symbol of Torah (given on *Shavu’ot*)—which is called *one* because of all those who are linked to it: various *sefirot* above and Israel below. Since *Shavu’ot* is the day of the unified realm of *Tif’eret* (the Tree of Life), it is fittingly celebrated for *one* day “and no more.”

The verse in Genesis now implies that *Tif’eret* (*the Tree of Life*) is *in the midst*—or middle—*of the sefirotic garden*. *Pesah* symbolizes *Hesed* on the right, *Sukkot* symbolizes *Gevurah* on the left, and *Shavu’ot* symbolizes *Tif’eret* in the middle.

On the sefirotic correspondences of the festivals, see above, [note 112](#). Cf. above, [note 140](#). On *Shavu’ot* symbolizing *Tif’eret*, see *Zohar* 1:226b; *ZH* 27b; and Moses

de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 336 (which links the one day of *Shavu'ot* with the oneness of *Tif'eret*).

The full verse in Proverbs reads: *A tree of life is she to those who grasp her, and those who hold her are deemed happy.* This verse describes Wisdom, traditionally identified with Torah. On the phrase *in the midst of the garden*, see David Kimḥi and Naḥmanides on Genesis 2:9; *Zohar* 1:35a, 37b, 81a (*ST*); 2:2a; 3:34b.

187. when a festival is hallowed, precisely... Rabbi Yitshak is apparently playing on *התקדש* (*hitqaddesh*), *is hallowed* [or: *is sanctified*], and *קדושין* (*qiddushin*), “sanctification [of marriage],” namely the marital union of the blessed Holy One and *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel).

188. Then the trees of the forest will sing... Rabbi Shim'on quotes this verse in connection with the festival of *Shavu'ot* (Weeks), which is described in the verse from Numbers 28 (quoted in the preceding sentence) as *the Day of Firstfruits*.

In Kabbalah, Torah is often depicted as God's Name. (See above, [p. 7](#), [n. 23](#).) Here Rabbi Shim'on indicates that one who attains Torah in this world continues to utter its words in the afterlife.

See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 7:10: “Rabbi Yoḥanan said, ‘Even when a Torah scholar has died, his lips move in the grave. Why? *Stirring the lips of sleepers*’... Rabbi Ḥanina son of Papa and Rabbi Simon. One said, ‘Like one who drinks spiced wine.’ The other said, ‘Like one who drinks aged wine: even though he has drunk it, the taste and aroma are still in his mouth.’”

In numerous rabbinic parallels, the first part of this teaching reads differently. See, e.g., BT *Sanhedrin* 90b: “Rabbi Yoḥanan said in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yehotsadak, ‘If a law is quoted in a person's name in this world, his lips stir in the grave, as is said: *stirring the lips of sleepers*.’”

See JT *Berakhot* 2:1, 4b; *Sheqalim* 2:4, 47a; *Mo'ed Qatan* 3:7, 83c; BT *Yevamot* 97a, *Bekhorot* 31b; *Midrash Shemu'el* 19:4; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 3; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 2, 5b; *Midrash Tehillim* 30:3; *Zohar* 2:134b (*Piq*); 3:39a-b, 135a (*IR*); *ZH* 85c (*MhN, Rut*). In the passage from *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah*, the phrase “a Torah scholar” renders בן תורה (*ben torah*), “a son of Torah,” a reading that I have adopted instead of בן תורתה (*ben tortah*), “[Rabbi Yoḥanan] son of Tortah.”

The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *Your palate is like fine wine—flowing to my beloved smoothly, gliding over [or: trickling over, stirring] the lips of sleepers.*

189. Until now Israel offered *the yield of the land*...

Until *Shavu'ot*. According to the rabbinic interpretation of Leviticus 23:9-11, on the second day of *Pesaḥ* an omer of barley was brought to the priest as a springtime firstfruits offering. The biblical term עמר (*omer*) means “sheaf,” but (based on Exodus 16:36) the rabbis understood it as a unit of dry measure (about two quarts) equal to one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour, which was produced from the barley grain and then offered on the altar. Here, the once-a-year offering of an omer of barley is assimilated to the seven-week period between *Pesaḥ* and *Shavu'ot*, which is also known as the Omer, or Counting of the Omer.

Thus, “until now”—that is, from *Pesaḥ* to *Shavu'ot*—“Israel offered” the omer, referred to as *the yield of the land*, symbolizing *Shekhinah*, who is known as *land*. Thereby, they were linked with *Shekhinah*. Although She is characterized by Judgment, this is tempered Judgment, appropriate to conducting the world, not harsh Judgment.

On the omer offering, see M *Menahot* 10:1-4; Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1:192-93; 3:1983-85; *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 15:419-20. On the omer offering as consisting of barley, see M *Sotah* 2:1; *Sifra, Nedavah* 13:4, 12c; JT *Sotah* 3:1, 18c; BT *Menahot* 68b, 84a.

190. Barley was offered... Being the first grain harvested—symbolizing *Shekhinah*, the first *sefirah* from below to above. See *Zohar* 3:188b.

191. I gave you manna... Which comes *from heaven*, symbolizing *Tif'eret*. Why, then, is Israel offering barley, symbolizing *Shekhinah*? On the sefirotic symbolism of manna, see above, end of [note 173](#).

192. תורת הקנאות (*torat ha-qena'ot*), the teaching of jealousy... According to Numbers 5:11-31, a wife suspected of adultery is to be tested by being made to drink a potion; if she is guilty, *her belly will swell and her thigh sag* (ibid., 27). Before the potion is prepared, the jealous husband brings an offering for his wife, which is called a *grain offering of jealousy* and consists of *one-tenth of an ephah of barley flour* (ibid., 15). This offering is equivalent to (the rabbinic interpretation of) the omer offering brought on the second day of *Pesah*.

In Numbers 5:29, the word הקנאות (*ha-qena'ot*), *jealousy*, is spelled without a ם (*vav*) following the א (*alef*). According to Rabbi Shim'on, this “deficient” spelling alludes to *Shekhinah*, who lacks illumination until She is united with *Tif'eret*. Any woman who strays from her husband will be punished by *Shekhinah* (as explained below) and will have to bring an offering of barley flour, symbolizing *Shekhinah*.

On the parallel between the *grain offering of jealousy* and the omer offering on the second day of *Pesah*, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 28:6; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 8:3; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 18, 92b; *Zohar* 3:97a (*Piq*), 189a. The full verse in Numbers reads: *This is תורת הקנאות (*torat ha-qena'ot*), the teaching [or: the regulation, ritual, procedure] of jealousy [or: suspicion], if a woman strays under her husband's authority and becomes defiled.*

193. Assembly of Israel has never been unfaithful... *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel) has never strayed from Her husband, *Tif'eret* (known as the blessed Holy One), and She is shocked that any Jewish

woman could possibly stray from her mate. If she does, then her punishment “comes from her place,” that is, from her divine feminine source, *Shekhinah* Herself, who is described in Proverbs as *a woman of strength*.

194. a grain offering... The suspected adulteress brings an offering of barley flour, which is called *a grain offering of קנאות* (*qena'ot*), *jealousy*. Here, too, the word קנאות (*qena'ot*), *jealousy*, is spelled without a ו (*vav*) following the א (*alef*), and this “deficient” spelling alludes to *Shekhinah*. (See above, [note 192](#).) Characterized by righteous zeal and *jealousy*, She attacks anyone who betrays the covenant with God by sinning sexually.

Similarly, Phinehas acted zealously at Shittim (as described in Numbers 25). There the tribal chieftain Zimri son of Salu had sexual relations with a Midianite woman named Cozbi daughter of Zur. God was incensed and inflicted a plague upon the people, but immediately Phinehas, fueled by the righteous *jealousy* of *Shekhinah*, killed the sinning couple and the plague ceased, whereupon Phinehas inherited the priesthood.

The closing quotation derives from M *Sanhedrin* 9:6: “If a man copulates with an Aramean [i.e., a heathen] woman, zealots can attack him.” The context in Numbers 25 (12–13) reads: *I hereby grant him My covenant of peace. And it shall be for him and for his seed after him a covenant of perpetual priesthood in recompense for his acting zealously for his God and atoning for the Children of Israel.*

195. This omer was barley flour... Following the rabbinic interpretation, Rabbi Shim'on explains that the omer offering on the second day of *Pesah* consisted of fine barley flour. This was produced by grinding barley groats (i.e., hulled barley) into coarse flour and then sifting it through thirteen sieves, each finer than the preceding one, yielding finally an omer (one-tenth of an ephah) of fine flour, which was offered on the altar.

See above, [note 189](#). On the grinding and sifting of the barley, see M *Menaḥot* 10:4. In M *Sotah* 2:1, a distinction is made between the fine quality of the omer offering and the coarse, unsifted flour (apparently including the hulls) offered for the suspected adulteress. This inferior coarse flour is referred to as קמח (*qemaḥ*), “(coarse) flour,” as opposed to the גרש (*geresh*), “groats,” of the omer offering (which was turned into fine flour). See Emden, *Mitpaḥat Sefarim*, 28; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:57.

196. This is seven perfect weeks... As mentioned above ([note 189](#)), Rabbi Shim’on assimilates the offering of an omer of barley (on the second day of *Pesaḥ*) to the seven-week Counting of the Omer between *Pesaḥ* (commemorating the Exodus) and *Shavu’ot* (commemorating the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai). After these *seven perfect weeks*—associated with the pure, sifted flour—King *Tif’eret* unites with *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel).

Leviticus 23:15 reads in full: *You shall count from the morrow of the sabbath, from the day you bring the sheaf of elevation, seven שבֹּתוֹת תְּמִימֹת (shabbatot temimot), complete [or: perfect] sabbaths [or: weeks], shall they be.*

197. all those trees... *Shavu’ot* commemorates the giving of the Torah and also marks the beginning of the wheat harvest, when firstfruits are offered. Fittingly, the ripening trees offer song.

On the trees opening in song, see the verse in Chronicles with which Rabbi Shim’on opened (above at [note 188](#)): *Then the trees of the forest will sing for joy before YHVH...* See also *Pereq Shirah*, 2:57, 80; JT *Ḥagigah* 2:1, 77a; BT *Ḥagigah* 14b; *Zohar* 1:7a, 77a, 231b; 3:22b; Moses de León, *Seder Gan Eden*, 138.

198. They open again... The trees sing further praise. Their *new song* matches the *new grain offering* (of wheat) brought on *Shavu’ot*. This *new grain offering* symbolizes a cosmic renewal, and it contrasts with the omer of barley

brought on *Pesah*, which corresponds to the offering of barley brought on behalf of the suspected adulteress, described as *a grain offering of jealousy*. (See above, [note 192](#).) Now, on *Shavu'ot*, *Tif'eret* (symbolized by Jacob) is completely adorned.

The full verse in Numbers 28 reads: *On the Day of Firstfruits, when you bring an offering of new grain [or: a new grain offering] to YHVH in your Festival of Weeks, a sacred convocation shall you have: no laborious work shall you do*. See above at [note 188](#).

[199](#). When the firstfruits reached the priest... According to Deuteronomy 26:5-10, when an Israelite brings the offering of firstfruits to the priest, he recites a brief account of the people's history, beginning: ארמי אובד אבי (*Arami oved avi*), *An Aramean astray [or: wandering, fugitive, perishing] was my father*, probably referring to Jacob or Abraham. Later, the clause was interpreted to mean: *An Aramean was destroying my father*, referring to Laban the Aramean's attempt to destroy Jacob (Genesis 29-31). (See the Passover Haggadah, and Septuagint, *Targum Onqelos*, *Targum Yerushalmi* on this verse.)

Here Rabbi Shim'on alludes to Jacob as "that tree on earth that was perfected." Jacob symbolizes the cosmic Tree, *Tif'eret*. Jacob's descendants, the twelve tribes, parallel *Tif'eret's* twelve potencies (or "boundaries"), while the seventy people who traditionally accompanied Jacob when he went to Egypt parallel *Tif'eret's* seventy branches (corresponding to the seven *sefirot* from *Hesed* to *Shekhinah*). If Laban had succeeded in destroying Jacob, he would have damaged the world, since through Jacob *Tif'eret* was manifested in the world.

"Boundaries" renders תחומין (*teḥumin*), "boundaries, limits, dominions." The phrase "twelve boundaries" recalls the twelve גבולי אלכסון (*gevulei alakhsan*), "diagonal borders" (edges of a cube), mentioned in *Sefer Yetsirah* 5:1. See *Bahir* 64 (95); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*,

511-12; *Zohar* 1:76b (ST), 199a; 2:2a, 58b, 62b, 64b, 66b, 104b-105a, 229b; 3:78a, 118b, 134b (IR), 148b, 209a; ZH 2a (SO), 55a, 62a (ShS), 63d (ShS); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:917. On the seventy people accompanying Jacob to Egypt, see Exodus 1:5. Cf. Genesis 46:27; Deuteronomy 10:22.

200. a new grain offering... The firstfruits offering of wheat on *Shavu'ot* represents cosmic renewal and specifically the renewal of *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by the moon. Her renewal inheres in every kind of renewal, and She benefits from each one.

The festival of *Shavu'ot* occurs on the sixth day (or in the Diaspora, on the sixth and seventh days) of the lunar month of Sivan, soon after the new moon.

201. Similarly, Assembly of Israel... She is the Daughter of King *Hokhmah* and possesses nothing of Her own, but the six Sons (*Hesed* to *Yesod*) are each directed to give Her some of their own emanation. On offering gifts to the bride, see *Kallah Rabbati* 1:9. Cf. *Zohar* 1:149a.

202. When the Holy King appears... When King *Tif'eret* (the cosmic Tree) is fully adorned, *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel) rejoices in anticipation of what She will receive and of uniting with Her partner. When the Torah is given on *Shavu'ot*, *Shekhinah* is adorned. *Tif'eret* represents the core of the *sefirot*, who constitute “the entire bond of faith”; the phrase *one day* alludes to His oneness with the *sefirot* around and above Him—and with *Shekhinah*.

The full verse in Zechariah reads: *There will be one day—known to YHVH—neither day nor night, and in the evening there will be light.*

203. The bond above... The divine head consists of head, skull, and brain, encompassing *Keter*, *Hokhmah*, and *Binah*. The two arms, on each side of *Tif'eret*, are *Hesed* and *Gevurah*, which (according to Rav Hamnuna Sava) are symbolized respectively by the patriarchs Abraham and Isaac. The divine legs are *Netsah* and *Hod*, pictured as two pillars and

also as two testicles conveying semen to *Yesod*, the divine phallus.

For various interpretations of “head, skull, and brain,” see *Or Yaqar*; *Haggahot Maharḥu*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On Rav Hamnuna Sava, see above, [note 154](#).

204. This Tree is the body... *Tif'eret*, the cosmic Tree, represents the trunk of the divine body, to which all these limbs are attached. On *Matronita* as a title of *Shekhinah*, see the Glossary.

205. ביום השמיני (Ba-yom ha-shemini), On the eighth day... Rabbi Shim'on moves momentarily to another period of the festival calendar. Immediately following the seven days of *Sukkot* comes *Shemini Atseret*, whose name derives from this verse: ביום השמיני (Ba-yom ha-shemini), *On the eighth day, you shall have* עֲצֵרֶת (*atseret*), *a convocation* [or: *assembly, gathering*]. For Rabbi Shim'on, the term *atseret* alludes to *Shekhinah*, who “gathers” the flow of all the *sefirot*.

On *atseret* as *gathering*, see *Zohar* 1:64a; 3:104b, 197a, 259b. Cf. *Targum Onqelos* and *Targum Yerushalmi*, Numbers 29:35.

206. Why is it called atseret here?... How does the sense of “gathering” pertain to *Shemini Atseret*? Rabbi Shim'on explains, based on the tradition that during the seven days of *Sukkot* a total of seventy bulls were sacrificed on the altar. According to rabbinic tradition, these benefited the seventy nations of the world, whose heavenly princes are pictured here as outer branches of the cosmic Tree of *Tif'eret*. On the eighth day, the trunk of the Tree and of the divine body, *Tif'eret* Himself—together with the *sefirot* surrounding Him from *Hesed* to *Yesod*—delights in union with *Shekhinah*, and their “gathering” is fittingly called *Atseret*. Furthermore, this holiday of oneness is appropriately celebrated for one day.

Tif'eret is symbolized by Written Torah, and in the land of Israel *Shemini Atseret* is also celebrated as *Simḥat Torah* (Joy of Torah), when the reading of the Torah scroll is completed

and then immediately begun again. (In the Diaspora, *Simḥat Torah* is celebrated on the second day of *Shemini Atseret*.)

The expression *הדוותא דאורייתא* (*hedveta de-oraita*), Joy of Torah, is the Aramaic equivalent of *שמחת תורה* (*Simḥat Torah*), the Hebrew name of the holiday. The celebration of *Simḥat Torah* developed in Babylonia in Geonic times. See *Zohar* 3:214b, 256b (*RM*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1253–54; Scholem.

On the phrase “one day,” cf. above, [notes 186, 202](#). On the seventy bulls offered on *Sukkot*, see above, [note 91](#). On the seventy heavenly princes, see Daniel 10:13, 20–21; Septuagint, Deuteronomy 32:8–9; Jubilees 15:31–32; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 11:8, Deuteronomy 32:8–9; *Pirgei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 24; *Tanḥuma, Re’eh* 8; *Leqaḥ Tov*, Genesis 9:19; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:204–5, n. 91.

[207](#). only the blessed Holy One and Israel... Whereas all seventy nations of the world benefit from the sacrificial offerings of the seven days of *Sukkot*, on *Shemini Atseret* God and Israel delight alone. King *Tif’eret* includes all the blessings of emanation, which He bestows upon His people.

Rabbi Shim’on plays here with two referents of *Atseret*, which can apply to two different festivals: *Shemini Atseret* and *Shavu’ot*. *Atseret* appears as a name for *Shavu’ot* in M *Rosh ha-Shanah* 1:2: “At four periods in the year, the world is judged. At *Pesah*, concerning harvest; at *Atseret*, concerning fruit of the tree; on Rosh Hashanah all who come into the world pass before Him in single file; and at *Ḥag* (the Festival, i.e., *Sukkot*) they are judged concerning water.” At *Pesah*, as the crops begin to ripen, God determines whether the harvest will be rich or not. At *Shavu’ot* (called here *Atseret*), when fruit begins to ripen, God determines how abundant it will be. On Rosh Hashanah the whole world is judged. At *Sukkot*, the start of the rainy season, God determines how much rain will fall. On the day following *Sukkot* prayers are offered for rain, and in the Temple during

Sukkot water was drawn and poured as a libation on the altar.

Here Rabbi Shim'on applies the line "At *Atseret*, concerning fruit of the tree" not to *Shavu'ot* (as in the Mishnah), but to *Shemini Atseret*. The fruit of the cosmic Tree of *Tif'eret* consists of souls, and on *Shemini Atseret* God determines how souls will descend into the world.

On *Tif'eret* being called *one day*, see above, [note 202](#). Cf. above at [note 206](#). On the passage in M *Rosh ha-Shanah*, see *Zohar* 1:226b; *ZH* 14b (*MhN*).

On souls as fruit, see *Bahir* 14 (22); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 489, 504; *Zohar* 1:15b, 19a, 33a, 59b-60a, 82b, 85b, 90b, 115a-b, 226b, 238a, 249a; 2:166b-167a, 186b, 223b; 3:43b, 168a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 51; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 56 (69). Cf. Ibn Ezra on Psalms 1:3.

[208](#). ***From your dwelling places...*** This verse describes the firstfruits offering of wheat, which was brought as two loaves of bread on *Shavu'ot* (known as *Atseret*). Since the term *Atseret* alludes to *Shekhinah* (as explained above, [note 205](#), in relation to *Shemini Atseret*), Rabbi Shim'on wonders why Scripture mentions leaven here, given that leaven symbolizes the evil impulse.

He explains that all powers are linked with *Shekhinah* and with the cosmic Tree of *Tif'eret*, including powers of Judgment, the source of the evil impulse. Furthermore, *Tif'eret* grants atonement for sins stimulated by the evil impulse. The verse now implies: *From your dwelling places*—that is, on account of the evil impulse, which "dwells" in your heart—you shall bring two loaves of elevation bread... leavened they shall be, symbolizing that impulse, in order to seek forgiveness and atonement for its harmful effects.

On leaven as representing the evil impulse, see the prayer attributed to Rabbi Tanḥum in JT *Berakhot* 4:2, 7d: "May it be Your will, *YHVH* my God and God of my fathers, that You break and destroy the yoke of the evil impulse

from our heart. For You created us to do Your will, and we must do Your will; You desire it and we desire it. So who prevents it? The leaven in the dough.”

See BT *Berakhot* 17a, and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *se'or she-ba-issah*; *Mekhilta*, *Beshallah* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Noah* 4; *Zohar* 1:142a-b, 226b; 2:40a, 40b-41a (*Piq*), 182a, 183a-b; 3:12b, 95a-b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 132 (and Wolfson's note); Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1:189. Cf. Naḥmanides on Leviticus 23:17.

The full verse in Leviticus read: *From your dwelling places you shall bring two loaves of elevation bread, two-tenths of a measure of semolina they shall be, leavened they shall be baked, firstfruits to YHVH.*

209. From this Tree... The cosmic Tree of *Tif'eret* nourishes all the lower forces, and it is rooted by the deep river of *Binah*. *Tif'eret* is symbolized by Written Torah, which is fittingly described in the verse from Proverbs as *a tree of life*.

The conclusion of this verse describes *those who hold the Tree*, apparently alluding to *Netsah* and *Hod*, the pillars supporting *Tif'eret*. The word *מְאוֹשָׁר* (*me'ushar*), *are deemed happy*, can be read *מְאוֹשֶׁר* (*me-osher*), *from happiness*, implying that *Netsah* and *Hod* issue from *Binah* who is associated with *osher*, *happiness*, and with *אֲשֶׁר* (*asher*), “Asher.” This association is demonstrated by the verse in Genesis, which is uttered by Leah, upon giving birth: “בְּאוֹשְׁרִי (Be-oshri), *Happy am I! For daughters אִשְׁרוֹנֵי* (*isheruni*), *will call me happy.*” And she named him *אֲשֶׁר* (*Asher*), *Asher*. In Kabbalah, Leah symbolizes *Binah*, and here the *daughters* may represent the lower *sefirot*, who issue from *Binah* and celebrate Her joy.

The full verse in Jeremiah reads: *He will be like a tree planted by water, spreading its roots by יוֹבֵל* (*yuval*), *a stream; it does not fear when heat comes, and its leaves are fresh; in a year of drought it is not anxious and does not cease yielding fruit.* On יוֹבֵל (*yuval*), *stream*, as the name of the

primordial river (often in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai), see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 22:10; BT *Bekhorot* 55b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 6:1; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 16, 81a; *Tanḥuma, Pinḥas* 12; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 21:18; *Zohar* 2:83a, 98b; 3:58a, 290b (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 335; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 106; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 56 (69).

The full verse in Proverbs describes Wisdom, traditionally identified with Torah. On *those who hold her are deemed happy*, see *Zohar* 3:53b. For various interpretations of this clause here, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

On the verse in Genesis, see *Zohar* 1:158a, 245b; 3:65b. Cf. the passage by Azriel of Gerona, published by Scholem in *Madda'ei ha-Yahadut* 2 (1927): 232.

210. You shall count for yourselves... The verse concludes: *seven complete sabbaths [or: weeks] shall they be*.

211. When the people of Israel were in Egypt... Their enslavement represented demonic control, and they were in a state of impurity similar to that of a menstruant. Once they were circumcised (before leaving Egypt), they entered the realm of holiness, specifically the domain of Covenant (here apparently symbolizing *Shekhinah*, who sometimes shares this designation with *Yesod*).

Just as a menstruant counts seven days after her menstrual blood disappears, so Israel counted seven weeks from the Exodus on *Pesaḥ* to *Shavu'ot*—which became instituted as the Counting of the Omer.

According to various rabbinic sources, the Israelites circumcised themselves before the Exodus. See above, [note 81](#). On the parallel between the menstruant's counting and the Counting of the Omer, see *Zohar* 3:97a–b (*Piq*). On the *Zohar's* attitude toward menstruation, see Koren, *Forsaken: The Menstruant in Medieval Jewish Mysticism*.

The full verse in Leviticus reads: *When she becomes purified from her flux, she shall count for herself seven days and afterward she will be pure.* Actually, in the biblical context this verse applies not to normal menstruation but to an abnormal discharge of blood. On menstruation itself, see earlier in the same chapter of Leviticus (15:19-24). On the application of Leviticus 15:28 to the menstruant, see Israel Ta-Shma's discussion in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 15:254-55.

212. for yourselves, precisely... Rabbi Abba takes this to mean "for your own benefit." Just as the menstruant's counting benefits her (by enabling her to be purified and then reunite with her husband), so Israel's Counting of the Omer enables them to be purified by the stream of emanation and then join King *Tif'eret* and receive the Torah on *Shavu'ot*.

The interpretation "*She shall count for herself*—for her own self" derives from rabbinic sources, where it means "*She shall count for herself*—by herself." See *Sifra, Metsora* 9:1, 79b; BT *Ketubbot* 72a.

213. Why seven weeks?... Because these symbolize the seven *sefirot* from *Hesed* to *Shekhinah*, which issue from the gushing river of *Binah*.

214. Just as a woman's purity takes effect at night... After her count is completed, she immerses herself in a *miqveh* that evening and can then resume sexual relations with her husband.

The full verse in Numbers reads: *When the dew would descend on the camp at night, the manna would come down upon it.* Here Rabbi Abba applies this verse to the night preceding the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai. The wording *on the camp* indicates that the entire camp of Israel was purified by the dew, enabling the people to join King *Tif'eret* and receive the Torah and the glory of *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel). Then all the sefirotic

streams flowed into the sea of Shekhinah, purifying Her and Her people below, in preparation for the union with Tif'eret.

On the link between manna and Torah, see the statement attributed to Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai in *Mekhilta, Vayassa 2*: “Only to those who eat manna is it given to expound the Torah.” See *Mekhilta, Beshallah, Petihta; Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 16:4. In several medieval citations of this statement, the wording is “Only to those who eat manna was the Torah given.” See Rashi on 2 Chronicles 31:4; Joshua ibn Shuaib, *Derashot, Tsav*. Cf. *Zohar 2:62b, 183a*.

On Israel's “filth ceasing” at Sinai, see BT *Yevamot 103b*, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: “When the serpent copulated with Eve, he injected her with זחמא (zohama), filth [or: slime, lust]. Israel, who stood at Mount Sinai—their filth ceased. Star-worshippers, who did not stand at Mount Sinai—their filth did not cease.”

See *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 4:1 (per British Library MS 27031, ed. Clark); BT *Shabbat 145b-146a, Avodah Zarah 22b; Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer 21* (and Luria's nn. 7-8); *Midrash Aggadah*, Genesis 3:12; *Zohar 1:36b-37a, 52a, 54a-55a, 63b, 70b, 122b, 126a-b, 145b, 228a; 2:94a, 167b, 193b, 231a, 236b; 3:14b, 19b, 24a, 76b, 79a, 87a, 125a, 143a (IR), 161a; ZH 8c-9b, 63c (ShS), 83b (MhN, Rut); Moses de León, Sefer ha-Rimmon, 139; Stroumsa, Another Seed, 38-53; Koren, Forsaken, 89-92.*

The full verse in Ecclesiastes reads: *All the streams flow into the sea, yet the sea is not full. To the place that the streams flow, there they flow again.*

215. If anyone does not reckon this count... Anyone who fails to complete the Counting of the Omer does not attain purity. But if one reaches the festival of *Shavu'ot* without having missed counting a single day, he should maintain his purity by studying Torah the entire night of *Shavu'ot*, since this festival commemorates the revelation of Torah.

This all-night study ritual became known as *tiqqun leil shavu'ot*, “the *tiqqun* (perfection, preparation, adornment) of the night of *Shavu'ot*.” See *Zohar* 1:8a; Moses de León, *Sod Haḡ ha-Shavu'ot*, 87a-b; Y. D. Wilhelm, “Sidrei Tiqqunim,” 125-30; Scholem, *On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism*, 138-39; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1258-59; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 74-82. Philo (*On the Contemplative Life*, 10:75-90) describes a similar night vigil of study and song practiced by the Therapeutae.

216. the Torah that is required on this night... On the night of *Shavu'ot*, Rabbi Abba recommends studying Oral Torah (which includes Mishnah, Talmud, and Midrash). This aspect of Torah symbolizes *Shekhinah*, and its devotional learning ensures that Israel will be purified along with *Shekhinah* by the flow of emanation issuing from *Binah* above. During the ensuing day, *Tif'eret* (symbolized by Written Torah) unites with *Shekhinah*.

According to various rabbinic sources, night is the appropriate time for studying Mishnah (the core of Oral Torah), whereas daytime is appropriate for studying Written Torah. See *Targum*, Lamentations 2:19; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 46; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 2, p. 10; *Tanḡuma*, *Ki Tissa* 36; *Midrash Tehillim* 19:7; *Zohar* 3:23a; Recanati on Exodus 19:13, 45a-b.

According to *Zohar* 1:8a, on the night of *Shavu'ot* one should study various elements of Torah: “from Torah to Prophets, from Prophets to Writings, midrashic renderings of verses and mysteries of wisdom.” See Vol. 1, p. 52, n. 367. For several lists of what should be studied on the night of *Shavu'ot*, see *Or Yaḡar* on this passage and on *Zohar* 1:8a; Vital's list in *Sha'ar ha-Kavvanot*, 2:202a-203b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1280, n. 453. It became customary to read this passage from the *Zohar* as part of the *tiqqun*.

In the line introducing the verse from Isaiah, “concerning him” means “concerning one who studies Torah on the night of *Shavu'ot*.” See BT *Bava Metsi'a* 85a, in

the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: “Whoever is a scholar, and his son a scholar, and his grandson a scholar—Torah will never cease from his seed, as is said: *As for Me, this is My covenant with them, says YHVH: My spirit that is upon you, and My words that I have put in your mouth, will not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your children, nor from the mouth of your children’s children—says YHVH—from now and forever.*” See *Zohar* 1:240b; 3:60b.

217. in two worlds... Both in this world and in the world that is coming.

Shekhinah (known as Assembly of Israel) is crowned above the devotees engaged in studying Oral Torah, and She comes to unite with King *Tif’eret*.

218. Let us come and array the jewels of the Bride... The various elements of Torah become jewels adorning *Shekhinah*, preparing Her for union with *Tif’eret*.

See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:11, in the name of Rabbi Shim’on son of Lakish: “Just as a bride is adorned with twenty-four ornaments [see Isaiah 3:18–24] and lacking one of them, she is considered worthless, so a disciple must be fluent in twenty-four books [of the Bible]—lacking in one of them, he is worthless.” See *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 18; *Zohar* 1:4b–5a, 8a; *ZH* 63d–64a (*ShS*).

219. But who prepares the King... Who prepares and adorns *Tif’eret* for His wedding with *Shekhinah* (known as *Matronita*) on the next day? This role is played by the Divine Mother, *Binah*. On the verse in Song of Songs, see above, [note 164](#).

220. noble lady... This renders מטרוניתא (*matronita*), an aramaized form of Latin *matrona*, “matron, married woman, noble lady.” The “mother” here is the queen, who prepares her son, the groom, for his wedding.

221. my son's matronita... His bride, his “noble lady.” See the preceding note.

222. So it is with the Holy King... The Companions adorn *Shekhinah* by studying Torah through the night of *Shavu'ot*, while *Binah* prepares Her royal son, *Tif'eret*.

Shekhinah is known as צדק (*tsedeq*), *righteousness*, and each person who arrays Her by engaging in Torah becomes פועל צדק (*po'el tsedeq*), *one who activates righteousness*—enabling *Shekhinah* to unite with Her Beloved.

See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 377. The context in Psalms reads: *YHVH, who will abide in Your tent, who will dwell on Your holy mountain? He who walks blameless צדק ופועל (u-pho'el tsedeq), and does righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart.*

223. If I am privileged... just to hear these words... Similar exclamations appear in rabbinic literature and often in the *Zohar*. See BT *Berakhot* 16a, 24b; *Shabbat* 41a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 1:3; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:11; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 6:2; *Qohelet Zuta* 5:17; *Zohar* 1:2a, 129b (*MhN*), 148b, 164b, 235b, 240a; 2:99a, 121b-122a, 193b; 3:26a, 115b, 121a, 169a, 203a, 204b, 221b; *ZH* 77c (*MhN, Rut*), 86c (*MhN, Rut*).

The context in Psalms reads: *Because he desires Me, I will deliver him. I will raise him high, for he knows My name. He calls Me and I answer him, I am with him in distress. I will rescue him and honor him.* On Torah as God's name, see above, [p. 7](#), [n. 23](#).

224. In the seventh month... The month of Tishrei, whose first two days are celebrated as Rosh Hashanah, which is marked by the sounding of the shofar.

225. Blast the shofar on the new moon... The verse continues: בכסה (*ba-keseh*) *for our festival day*. The rare word *ba-keseh* is often understood as referring to the full moon, but in rabbinic literature it is derived from the root כסה (*ksh*), “to cover,” and applies to the new moon (specifically,

the new moon of Tishrei), when the moon is almost totally concealed.

The context in Joshua (24:2-4) reads: *Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says YHVH, God of Israel: Beyond the River [Euphrates] your fathers dwelt of old—Terah, father of Abraham and father of Nahor—and they worshiped other gods. And I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through the whole land of Canaan and multiplied his seed. I gave him Isaac, and to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. I gave Esau the hill country of Seir as his possession, while Jacob and his children went down to Egypt."*

Here Rabbi Yitshak wonders why this account of Israel's origins is presented by Joshua as a divine declaration—*Thus says YHVH*—given that it was certainly known by the whole people, especially Joshua.

On the word *ba-keseh*, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:6; *BT Rosh ha-Shanah* 8a-b, 34a; *Beitsah* 16a; *Sanhedrin* 11b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 23:6; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 7; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 39, 166a; *Midrash Tehillim* 81:5; *Zohar* 1:114b; 2:184a; 3:98b-99a (*Piq*), 100b, 231b, 275a. Cf. Proverbs 7:20.

226. the entire Torah is concealed and revealed... Its simple, explicit sense hides deeper meaning. Similarly, God's Name is concealed and revealed. For example, the name יהוה (YHVH) is "concealed" in the sense that it represents a more hidden *sefirah* (*Tif'eret*), and in the sense that it is not pronounced as it is written, but rather as the more "revealed" name אדני (*Adonai*), "My Lord," which refers to a more revealed *sefirah* (*Shekhinah*). Furthermore, Torah is not just similar to the Divine Name; it is actually pictured as one continuous name of God.

Based on the idea that Torah (and all of Scripture) includes a profound concealed meaning, Rabbi Yitshak discloses the hidden sense of the verse in Joshua. *Your fathers* refers (somewhat imprecisely) to the three

patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), symbolizing respectively the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, who serve as a chariot-throne for the highest levels of divinity. The souls of the patriarchs and their three corresponding *sefirot* originated in *Binah*, the *Divine River*, who is also described as Lamp of all Lamps—that is, the source of all the lower sefirotic lights from *Ḥesed* to *Shekhinah*.

On both Torah and God's Name being concealed and revealed, see *Zohar* 2:230b; 3:71b, 75a, 159a. On God's name being concealed and revealed, see also *Zohar* 1:39b (*Heikh*); 2:178a (*SdTs*); 3:65b, 72a–b, 146b, 289a (*IZ*); cf. 3:11a. On Torah as God's Name, see above, [p. 7](#), [n. 23](#). On the Torah being revealed and concealed, see also *Zohar* 1:234b; 2:95a, 98b–99b; 3:72a–73a, 152a; Scholem, *On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism*, 50–65; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1077–89.

On the patriarchs as the Divine Chariot-Throne, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 47:6 (in the name of Resh Lakish): “The patriarchs themselves constitute the Chariot.” See above, [p. 49](#), [n. 139](#).

[227.](#) **מעולם (*Me-olam*), *Of old...*** In biblical Hebrew, the word *olam* has a temporal sense (“eternity, antiquity, long duration”), whereas in later Hebrew it acquires a spatial sense (“world”). Here Rabbi Yitshak plays on both senses. The *River* of *Binah* is also called *World*, a realm in which the souls of the patriarchs and their corresponding *sefirot* *dwelt*. God displayed immense kindness in emanating the *fathers* from such a lofty place.

[228.](#) ***I took your father Abraham...*** *Ḥesed* (symbolized by Abraham) issued from the *River* of *Binah* (who is on the left side of the *sefirot*) and occupied the right side. In this sense, God *took your father Abraham from... the River* and placed him on the right side. *Gevurah* (symbolized by Isaac) also issued from *the River*, but remained on the left side.

[229.](#) **Although this *River* is not Judgment...** *Binah* Herself is not tainted by harsh Judgment, but from Her

issues *Gevurah*—also known as *Din* (Judgment)—and numerous powers of Judgment derive from Her. When *Din* (symbolized by Isaac) is empowered—especially on Rosh Hashanah—the world is judged. Then it is vital to *blast the shofar*, whose sound has the power to replace the Throne of Judgment with the Throne of Compassion.

In the Masoretic text, the verse in Psalms reads: *Blast the shofar on the new moon, בכסה (ba-keseh), on the covering, for our festival day.* In some biblical manuscripts and rabbinic quotations, the word בכסה (*ba-keseh*) is spelled בכסא (*ba-kese*), and here Rabbi Yitshak is probably interpreting this as *at the throne*, based on כסא (*kisse*), “throne.” See Proverbs 7:20; *Minḥat Shai* on Psalms 81:4; above, [note 225](#); below, [note 245](#).

On the transformative power of the shofar, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:3, in the name of Shim'on son of Lakish: “*Elohim has gone up with a blast, YHVH with a sound of the shofar* (Psalms 47:6). When the blessed Holy One ascends to sit upon the Throne of Judgment on Rosh Hashanah, He ascends for Judgment, as is written: *Elohim* [signifying Judgment] *has gone up with a blast.* But as soon as the people of Israel take their shofars and blow them, immediately, *YHVH* [signifying Compassion] *with a sound of the shofar.* What does the blessed Holy One do? He rises from the Throne of Judgment and sits upon the Throne of Compassion, and He is filled with Compassion for them, turning for them the Attribute of Judgment into the Attribute of Compassion.”

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:4; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 23:3, 11; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 40, 168b; *Midrash Tehillim* 47:2; *Zohar* 3:18b, 99b (*Piq*), 100a-101a, 149a. On God's moving from the Throne of Judgment to the Throne of Compassion, see also BT *Avodah Zarah* 3b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 23:8; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 39; *Tanḥuma, Va'ethannan* 6; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'ethannan* 6; *Ester Rabbah* 9:4; *Zohar* 3:130a (*IR*).

Cf. BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 16a-b: “Why do we sound a plain [shofar] blast and a tremolo blast while sitting and then again while standing? In order to confound Satan.” On the dual nature of *Binah* (and Her being characterized by Compassion yet also generating Judgment), see *Zohar* 1:151a; 2:64a-b; 3:10b, 39b, 65a, 262b.

There are various associations between Isaac and Rosh Hashanah. According to certain rabbinic traditions, Sarah conceived Isaac on Rosh Hashanah, and years later he was bound on the altar on the same holiday. The Torah reading for the two days of Rosh Hashanah describes Isaac’s conception, birth, and binding (Genesis 21-22). See Vol. 7, pp. 112-13, n. 343.

230. Israel needs a shofar... The shofar symbolizes *Binah*, who transcends the realm of *Din* (Judgment), whereas any other type of horn symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is influenced by Judgment. On Rosh Hashanah, the Day of Judgment, Israel must utter words of prayer and sound the shofar in order to overcome Judgment and arouse Compassion.

On the earthly and sefirotic shofars, and on the distinction between a shofar and other horns, see above, [note 107](#). On the need for both word and action, see *Zohar* 1:75b, 99b-100a, 115a, 220b (standard editions); 3:105a, 112b, 149a, 184a, 285a. On the principle “By an action below is aroused an action above,” see above, [pp. 41-42](#), [n. 122](#).

231. When that supernal Shofar... When the Divine Mother (*Binah*) withdraws, no longer illumining Her children (the lower *sefirot*: *Hesed* through *Shekhinah*), then powers of Judgment are aroused. The shofar (ram’s horn) recalls the ram that was sacrificed in place of Isaac, and fittingly the supernal Shofar (*Binah*) empowers Isaac, who symbolizes *Gevurah* (Power)—along with the other two patriarchs (Abraham and Jacob) who symbolize respectively *Hesed* and *Tif’eret*. However, when *Binah* withdraws from the lower *sefirot*,

then *Gevurah*—also known as *Din* (Judgment)—is “empowered” in a different sense: His Judgment turns harsh, threatening to punish humanity for its misdeeds. Rabbi Shim’on is playing with the word לֵא (ayil), “ram,” and לֵא (el), “power.”

232. When this Shofar is aroused... When people turn back to God on Rosh Ha-shanah, they must sound the shofar, thereby stimulating *Binah* (the supernal Shofar). The various sounds issuing from the shofar correspond to the inner essences of the lower *sefirot*, which are contained within *Binah*. On the transformative power of the shofar, see above, [note 229](#).

233. for sounds are contained within it... Alluding to the sefirotic sounds contained within *Binah* (the Great Shofar).

234. First arrangement... Rabbi Shim’on begins to expound the inner meaning of the various sounds of the shofar on Rosh Hashanah. The main blowing consists of three sets, each of which repeats a particular order of sounds three times. The order of the first set is: *teqi’ah* (a single long “blast”), *shevarim* (three “broken sounds”), followed immediately by *teru’ah* (“alarm,” a tremolo of nine staccato notes), and *teqi’ah*. The order of the second set is *teqi’ah*, *shevarim*, *teqi’ah*. The order of the third set is *teqi’ah*, *teru’ah*, *teqi’ah*, concluding finally with *teqi’ah gedolah* (a great [that is, long] blast).

The phrase “first arrangement” apparently refers simply to the opening *teqi’ah* (a single long “blast”) of the first set. According to Rabbi Shim’on, this sound reaches *Hesed* (symbolized by Abraham), who is aroused and prepared as a throne for the highest levels of divinity.

On the sequence of shofar sounds, see M *Rosh ha-Shanah* 4:9; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 33b–34a; *Zohar* 3:18a. For various interpretations of the sequence here, see Or *Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; Scholem; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

On the image of Abraham (and the other patriarchs) as a throne, see above, [note 226](#). On the role of the patriarchs' merit on Rosh Hashanah, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:7; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 23:7; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 40, 169a.

[235. In the Book of Aggadta...](#) According to this legendary source, when *Ḥesed* (symbolized by Abraham) is roused, the Divine Parents (*Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*) attend to Him. On the term *Aggadta*, see the Glossary.

[236. the second one ascends...](#) The second sound of the first set of shofar blasts is *shevarim* (three “broken sounds”), followed immediately by *teru'ah* (“alarm,” a tremolo of nine staccato notes). Rabbi Shim'on explains that the purpose of *shevarim* is to “break” or smash the harsh powers of Judgment. This sound reaches the realm of *Gevurah* (Power), or *Din* (Judgment), symbolized by Isaac.

The full verse in Psalms reads: *Happy the people who know תרועה (teru'ah), the shout of joy [or: the (horn's) blast]. O YHVH, they walk in the light of Your presence.* Here, Rabbi Shim'on apparently associates *teru'ah, blast*, with the root רעע (*r' '*), “to smash.” Alternatively, he is emphasizing that one must *know* the deep significance and effect of the shofar blasts.

On this verse, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:4; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 23:4; *Midrash Tehillim* 81:4; *Zohar* 2:250b–251a (*Heikh*); 3:18b, 100b, 149b, 231b.

[237. Third arrangement...](#) The final sound of the first set of shofar blasts is another *teqi'ah* (a single long “blast”). This sound reaches *Tif'eret*—also known as *Raḥamim* (Compassion)—who is symbolized by Jacob. Together, *Ḥesed* (symbolized by Abraham) and *Tif'eret* restrain *Din* (symbolized by Isaac), so that His harsh Judgment cannot harm the world. Cf. *Zohar* 99b–100a (*Piq*).

[238. Another sequence...](#) The second set of shofar blasts, consisting of *teqi'ah, shevarim, teqi'ah*. First the sound of *teqi'ah* ascends, conveying *Ḥesed* (symbolized by Abraham) to the place where the forces of *Din* (symbolized by Isaac)

dwell, so that their harshness may be mollified. On the three sets of shofar blasts, see above, [note 234](#).

239. Second arrangement... The second sound of the second set of shofar blasts is *shevarim* (three “broken sounds”), though it is not as powerful as the *shevarim* of the first set—not because the divine voice blowing through the supernal Shofar is weak, but because it is now directed not toward *Gevurah* (or *Din*), symbolized by Isaac, but rather toward lower forces administering Judgment, who are themselves weaker. These lower forces are subdued by the power of *Hesed* (symbolized by Abraham).

240. third arrangement... The final sound of the second set of shofar blasts is another *teqi'ah*, which ascends and reaches *Tif'eret*—or *Rahamim* (Compassion)—symbolized by Jacob. This *teqi'ah* draws *Tif'eret* down to where the harsh powers of Judgment dwell, so that they are now flanked by *Tif'eret* on one side and *Hesed* (symbolized by Abraham) on the other.

241. The final sequence... The third set of shofar blasts is *teqi'ah, teru'ah, teqi'ah*, which restores *Hesed* and *Tif'eret*—symbolized respectively by Abraham and Jacob—to their places. Each of these *sefirot* corresponds to one *teqi'ah*, whereas *Din* corresponds to *teru'ah*, which is sounded in between the two *teqi'ot*. This placement signifies that Judgment is restrained and subdued by the loving, compassionate power of *Hesed* and *Tif'eret*. On the three sets of shofar blasts, see above, [note 234](#).

242. that supernal Shofar returns... Stimulated by Israel's devotion and the shofar blasts, *Binah* resumes illumining the lower *sefirot* and crowns *Tif'eret* (symbolized by Jacob). The Throne of Judgment is cast down, and God sits upon the Throne of Compassion.

On Israel's ability to move God from the Throne of Judgment to the Throne of Compassion, see above, [note 229](#). The image of a throne being “cast down” derives from Daniel 7:9: *As I watched, thrones רמינן (remiv), were placed*

[or: were cast], and the Ancient of Days sat—His garment like white snow, the hair of His head like clean fleece, His throne flames of fire, its wheels blazing fire. See *Tanḥuma*, *Qedoshim* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Qedoshim* 1; *Sekhel Tov*, Exodus 15:21; *Zohar* 3:15b, 18b, 130a (*IR*).

243. Three books are opened on this day... See BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 16b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: “Three books are opened on Rosh Hashanah: one of the completely wicked, one of the completely righteous, and one of those in-between. The completely righteous are immediately inscribed and sealed for life. The completely wicked are immediately inscribed and sealed for death. Those in-between remain pending from Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur. If they prove worthy, they are inscribed for life; if not, for death.”

Just as harsh powers of Judgment are subdued above, so on earth the completely wicked—who embody, or deserve, harsh Judgment—are subdued and condemned. On the passage in *Rosh ha-Shanah*, see *Zohar* 1:37a-b, 139b-140a (*MhN*); 3:149b; *ZḤ* 14b (*MhN*), 20c.

244. זכרון תרועה (*zikhron teru'ah*), a reminder by horn blast... The verse reads: *In the seventh month, on the first of the month, you shall have a Sabbath, זכרון תרועה (*zikhron teru'ah*), a commemoration with horn blast [literally: a reminder by horn blast], a sacred convocation.* Rabbi Yehudah focuses on the literal meaning of *zikhron teru'ah*, indicating that the shofar “reminds” one to devote himself to *teshuvah*. Furthermore, the act of sounding the shofar stimulates the supernal Shofar. See above, [notes 230-32, 242](#).

245. בכסא (*ba-kese*), on the covering... In the Masoretic text, this verse reads: *Blast the shofar on the new moon, בכסה (*ba-keseh*), on the covering, for our festival day.* In some biblical manuscripts and rabbinic quotations, the word בכסה (*ba-keseh*) is spelled בכסא (*ba-kese*). Here Rabbi El'azar records both spellings.

This rare word is often understood as referring to the full moon, but in rabbinic literature it is derived from the root כסה (*ksh*), “to cover,” and applies to the new moon (specifically, the new moon of Tishrei), when the moon is almost totally concealed. Rabbi El’azar adopts this interpretation, but for him the moon symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is concealed and unilluminated when the cloud of harsh Judgment blocks the light of *Tif’eret* (symbolized by the sun). This applies particularly to Rosh Hashanah, the Day of Judgment. The spelling בכסה (*ba-keseh*) alludes to the covering of *Shekhinah*, both because of the root meaning of כסה (*ksh*) and because the letter ה (*he*) symbolizes *Shekhinah*.

See above, [notes 225, 229](#). The verse in Psalm 89 reads: *Happy the people who know תרועה (teru’ah), the shout of joy [or: the (horn’s) blast]. O YHVH, they walk [or: will walk] in the light of Your presence.* See above, [note 236](#).

[246](#). On this day the moon is covered... On the first day of Rosh Hashanah (the first of Tishrei), the moon (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) is covered. By Yom Kippur (the tenth of Tishrei), when Israel turns back to God in *teshuvah*, the moon is well lit, signifying that the Divine Mother, *Binah*, has illumined *Shekhinah*. This flowing light issuing from *Binah* is described as a journey.

[247](#). יום הכפורים הוא (Yom ha-kippurim hu), It is the Day of Atonement... Rabbi El’azar wonders why the name of the festival combines the singular noun *yom*, *Day*, with the plural noun *kippurim*, literally *Atonements*. He explains that this is a *Day of (Two) Atonements*—that is, of two lights: the Upper Lamp (*Binah*) and the Lower Lamp (*Shekhinah*). On Yom Kippur, *Shekhinah* is illumined directly by *Binah*, not by *Tif’eret* (symbolized by the sun).

Rabbi El’azar apparently interprets the verse in Psalms as בכסה ליום הגגו (*ba-keseh le-yom ḡagenu*), *on the covering*—alluding to *Shekhinah* as concealed and unilluminated—*until our festival day*, when *Binah* pours light upon Her. On this verse, see above, [note 245](#).

On *Binah* illumining *Shekhinah* on Yom Kippur, see *Zohar* 2:184b-185b; 3:102a-b, 214b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 163. The full verse in Leviticus reads: *Yet on the tenth of this seventh month, יום הכפורים הוא (Yom ha-kippurim hu), it is the Day of Purging [or: Atonement], a sacred assembly it shall be for you, and you shall afflict yourselves [or: your souls] and bring a fire offering to YHVH.*

248. coupling of Assembly of Israel... Of *Shekhinah* with King *Tif'eret*.

249. Besides, she really is my sister... In the biblical context, Abraham and Sarah journey from Hebron to the Canaanite city-state of Gerar in the western Negeb. Fearing that he might be killed and his wife stolen, Abraham claims that Sarah is his sister—and she is promptly seized by Abimelech, the king of Gerar. In a dream, God reveals to the king that Sarah is, in fact, Abraham's wife. When the frightened king returns Sarah to Abraham, the patriarch tries to justify himself: *For I thought, there is surely no fear of God in this place and they will kill me because of my wife. Besides, she really is my sister—my father's daughter, though not my mother's daughter—and she became my wife* (Genesis 20:11-12). Cf. Genesis 12:10-20; *Zohar* 1:111b-112a.

250. Rabbi Shim'on, my Master, Holy Lamp... Rabbi Abba (unlike the reader) immediately understands how the verse from Genesis answers his question about the union of the divine couple.

בוצינא קדישא (Botsina Qaddisha)—OR בוסינא קדישא (Bosina Qaddisha) —“the Holy Lamp,” is the honorific title of Rabbi Shim'on in the *Zohar*. Cf. 2 Samuel 21:17; *Bereshit Rabbah* 85:4; BT *Ketubbot* 17a, where Rabbi Abbahu is called בוצינא דנהורא (Botsina di-Nhora), “Lamp of Light”; and *Berakhot* 28b, where Rabban Yoḥanan son of Zakkai is called נר ישראל (Ner Yisra'el), “Lamp of Israel.”

On being “orphaned,” see Rabbi Akiva's exclamation at the death of Rabbi Eli'ezer son of Hyrcanus (*Avot de-Rabbi*

Natan A, 25): “Woe unto me, my master, because of you! Woe unto me, my teacher, because of you! For you have left the whole generation orphaned!”

See *Mekhilta, Pisha* 16; *Zohar* 1:99a (*MhN*); 2:23b, 68a, 100b; 3:232b, 236a; *ZH* 7a (*MhN*), 19c (*MhN*).

251. coupling of the King with *Matronita*... King *Tif'eret* can unite with *Shekhinah* (known as *Matronita*) only when She is illumined by the Divine Father, *Hokhmah*, who is known as Holiness. *Shekhinah* absorbs the quality of Holiness from Her Father and thus shares this title. Then King *Tif'eret* can unite with Her, for He is also called Holiness, as demonstrated by the verse in Jeremiah—*Holiness is Israel to YHVH*—which alludes to *Tif'eret*, whose full name is *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel).

Consequently, *Tif'eret* can say concerning *Shekhinah*, “*She is my sister—my father’s daughter, though not my mother’s*,” because the name Holiness derives from Father *Hokhmah*, not from Mother *Binah*. In this situation, the divine couple can unite, and the continuation of the verse applies: *she became my wife*. On Yom Kippur, however, *Shekhinah* is illumined directly by *Binah*, not by *Hokhmah* (or *Tif'eret*), so on that day divine union does not occur. Fittingly, on Yom Kippur human couples are forbidden to engage in sexual intercourse.

See *M Yoma* 8:1: “On Yom Kippur, eating, drinking, washing, anointing, wearing sandals, and sexual relations are forbidden.” See *Zohar* 2:116b, 185b; 3:101a (*Piq*). Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 25–26 (30).

On the illumination of *Shekhinah* by *Binah* on Yom Kippur, see above, [notes 246–47](#). According to *Zohar* 3:214b, there is at least the beginning of divine coupling on Yom Kippur. See *Nitsotsei Orot*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1271–72, n. 267.

252. On Rosh Hashanah, Adam was created... And when he sinned by eating from the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, he was judged by God and then repented

successfully. God declared that Adam's descendants would also be judged on Rosh Hashanah, and if they would engage in *teshuvah*, God would be compassionate toward them.

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:1: "Rabbi Eli'ezer taught, 'The world was created on the twenty-fifth of Elul.'... You thus find that Adam was created on Rosh Hashanah [the sixth day from the twenty-fifth of Elul]. ... [After Adam sinned and was judged by God and then released], the blessed Holy One said to him, 'Behold, you are a sign for your descendants. Just as you stood before Me in judgment and I released you, so will your descendants stand before Me in judgment and I will release them.' When? On Rosh Hashanah: *in the seventh month, on the first of the month* (Leviticus 23:24)."

See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 23:1: *Pesiqta Rabbati* 46, 186b; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 11. On the date of Adam's creation, see also *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 8, and David Luria, ad loc., n. 1; Asher ben Yehiel on *Rosh ha-Shanah* 8a; Nissim Gerondi on Alfasi, *Rosh ha-Shanah* 3a; *Tosefot Yom Tov, Rosh ha-Shanah* 1:2; *Zohar* 1:37a. On Israel stimulating God to move from the Throne of Judgment to the Throne of Compassion, see above, [note 229](#).

[253](#). **David said...** In Psalms, which are traditionally attributed to him.

[254](#). **On the tenth of this seventh month...** The full verse reads: *Yet on the tenth of this seventh month is the Day of Purging [or: Atonement], a sacred assembly it shall be for you, and you shall afflict yourselves [or: your souls] and bring a fire offering to YHVH.*

[255](#). **לדוד משכיל (Le-David maskil), Of David. Maskil...** In Psalms the word *משכיל* (*maskil*) is a literary or musical term whose precise meaning is unclear. Here Rabbi Hiyya paraphrases a teaching ascribed to Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi in BT *Pesaḥim* 117a: "The book of Psalms was uttered

with ten expressions of praise: with נצוה (*nitsuah*), leading; with נגון (*niggun*), melody; with משכיל (*maskil*), insight; with מזמור (*mizmor*), psalm; with שיר (*shir*), song; with אשרי (*ashrei*), happiness; with תהלה (*tehillah*), praise; with תפלה (*tefillah*), prayer; with הודאה (*hoda'ah*), thanksgiving; with הללויה (*haleluyah*), hallelujah. The greatest of them all is *haleluyah*, which includes name and praise simultaneously.”

The concluding sentence of this Talmudic teaching refers to the fact that הללויה (*haleluyah*) includes the Divine Name *Yah* and the imperative *halelu*, “praise.” In Rabbi Ḥiyya’s list of ten, *tehillah*, “praise,” is replaced by *mikhtam*, “inscription.”

On the passage in BT *Pesaḥim*, see JT *Sukkah* 3:10, 54a; *Megillah* 1:8, 72a; *Midrash Tehillim* 1:6; *Zohar* 1:71a, 178b, 232b; 2:173b; 3:120a; TZ 12–13, 27a–29b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 62, 64, 378.

256. Here, maskil... This term, which can mean “enlightens,” signifies *Yesod*, who conveys the enlightening stream from *Binah*. The superscription of this Psalm—משכיל לדוד (*Le-David maskil*), *Of [or: To] David. Maskil*—alludes to the union of *Yesod* and *Shekhinah* (who is symbolized by King David).

The word משכיל (*maskil*) can be pictured as an anagram of מי שכל (*mei sekhel*), “waters of intellect,” or (as Rabbi Ḥiyya puts it): “waters enlightening those who drink them.” The verse in Proverbs now implies that *Yesod* (known as *maskil*, *one who gains insight*) unites with *Shekhinah*, who is known as דבר (*davar*), *a matter [or: a word, thing]*.

The term *maskil* embraces the entire stream of emanation from *Binah* to *Yesod*. The former is characterized by freedom, including forgiveness, which liberates a person from guilt.

For various interpretations of this paragraph, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1475; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the significance of *maskil*, see *Zohar* 1:71a; 2:110a–b. On enlightening waters,

see *Midrash Tehillim* 5:1; *Zohar* 1:125a (*MhN*); 2:30b. On *Binah* and freedom, see above, [note 107](#).

257. כְּסוּי הַטְּאָה (*kesui ḥata'ah*), **whose sin is covered...** Rabbi Hiyya refers to a Talmudic tradition, according to which a sin committed against God (and not known publicly) need not be confessed publicly, only to God Himself. Such a sin *is covered*—or concealed from other people—and can remain so.

See BT *Yoma* 86b: “Rav raised a contradiction. ‘It is written: *Happy is one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered* (Psalms 32:1), and it is written: *One who covers his transgressions will not prosper* (Proverbs 28:13)! There is no difficulty. The latter applies to a sin that is known [publicly and should be confessed openly]; the former, to a sin that is not known [and should be confessed only to God].’

“Rav Zutra son of Toviyah said in the name of Rav Naḥman, ‘The latter applies to a sin committed by someone against his fellow; the former, to a sin committed by someone against the Omnipresent.’”

258. transgressing once, twice, and three times... Once a person has sinned three times, his sin is no longer *covered*, but rather exposed above and below, because he has tainted his soul, which reflects divine being. In the verse from Job (as read kabbalistically), *heaven and earth* can symbolize respectively *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*. Alternatively, *heaven* refers to God, and *earth* to humans.

Cf. BT *Yoma* 86b (the continuation of the passage quoted in the preceding note), in the name of Rabbi Yose son of Yehudah: “If a person commits a transgression once, he is forgiven; twice, he is forgiven; a third time, he is forgiven; a fourth time, he is not forgiven, as is said: *Thus says YHVH: For three transgressions of Israel; for four, I will not reverse it* (Amos 2:6).”

259. the verse should read... Rabbi Abba wonders why the verse in Psalms doesn't read מְכוּסָה הַטְּאָה (*mekhusseh*

ḥata'ah), which would mean unequivocally *whose sin is covered*. The actual reading כסוי חטאה (*kesui ḥata'ah*) could also mean *a covering of sin*, which sounds quite puzzling. For *kesui* as a construct noun meaning “a covering of,” see Numbers 4:6, 14.

260. The good deeds that a person performs... To enter and experience higher dimensions in the afterlife (“in that world”), the soul is enveloped in a radiant garment woven out of the good deeds performed by that person in this world. However, if one becomes dominated by evil—and sinks so low that he regrets his former good deeds—he is condemned to die in this world and his soul is excluded from the future heavenly bliss.

Parallels to the garment of good deeds appear in Islamic and Iranian eschatology—and in Mahayana Buddhism, according to which the Buddha enjoys *sambhogakaya* (“a body of bliss”), generated by merit accrued over aeons.

See *Zohar* 1:66a, 82b, 224a–b, 226b, 233b; 2:2a, 98b, 150a, 210a, 229b, 231a, 247a (*Heikh*); 3:92a–b, 174b–175a, 214a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 404; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 56; Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*, 61; Scholem, *Shedim Ruḥot u-Nshamot*, 215–45; idem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead*, 264–65; Nakamura Hajime, in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Eliade, 2:458. Cf. Matthew 22:1–14; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 36; *Bereshit Rabbah* 19:6; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:35; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 14.

On regretting one's former good deeds, see the remark by Resh Lakish in JT *Pe'ah* 1:1, 16b; BT *Qiddushin* 40b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 6:1 (on 5:16).

261. What does the blessed Holy One do... The inveterate sinner perishes, but the good deeds that he previously performed endure: they complete the garment of a righteous person. Thus, the wording כסוי חטאה (*kesui ḥata'ah*) connotes *a covering of a sinner*—referring to a righteous

person's garment (or *covering*) when completed by the former good deeds of *a sinner*. (In Aramaic, חטאה [ḥatta'ah] means "a sinner.")

Cf. the teaching attributed to Rabbi Akiva by Elisha son of Avuyah in BT *Ḥagigah* 15a: "He created righteous and He created wicked; He created the Garden of Eden and He created Hell. Everyone has two portions: one in the Garden of Eden, and one in Hell. Once a righteous person has been declared innocent [by the Heavenly Court], he obtains his own portion and his fellow's portion in the Garden of Eden. Once a wicked person has been declared guilty, he obtains his own portion and his fellow's portion in Hell."

In the Masoretic text, the verse from Job reads: *What he prepares, the righteous will wear*. The reading here (*What the wicked prepares...*) matches the quotation in BT *Bava Qamma* 119a, *Bava Metsi'a* 61b; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 18, p. 109; *Zohar* 2:108b. On the phrase *kesui ḥata'ah*, see above, [note 259](#).

262. And another [element]... Rabbi Abba proceeds to offer a second interpretation of כסוי חטאה (*kesui ḥata'ah*), *whose sin is covered*. When a virtuous person turns back to God in *teshuvah*, his sin is covered by *the depths of the sea*.

263. Who are the depths of the sea?... *The sea* symbolizes *Shekhinah*, in whose depths lie dregs or harsh powers of Judgment. Just as the refining of silver leaves behind dross, so the process of emanation leaves behind a demonic residue. The demonic forces represent "lower crowns," as opposed to the *sefirot*, which are "higher crowns." These demonic powers are concentrated in Azazel (identified with Samael or the Other Side), to whom the scapegoat bearing Israel's sins is sent on Yom Kippur. Embodying all the dregs, he is called *the depths of the sea*. He absorbs sin and is known as חטאה (*ḥata'ah*), *sin*—a word whose root חטא (*ḥt'*) can mean "to bear the loss." The Other Side is characterized by loss (or deficiency or defect), and

on Yom Kippur he bears human deficiency (or sin), which is stimulated by the evil impulse.

Now the phrase כסוי חטאה (*kesui ḥata'ah*) implies that the sins of one who has repented are concealed in *a covering of the Other Side*, who is known as *ḥata'ah, sin*.

On the evil impulse as “repulsive one,” see BT *Sukkah* 52b: “A scholar from the school of Rabbi Yishma’el taught, ‘If this repulsive one [i.e., the evil impulse] attacks you, drag him to the house of study. If he is of stone, he will dissolve; if of iron, he will shatter.’” See BT *Qiddushin* 30b; *Zohar* 1:137a (*MhN*); 2:151b.

On the symbolic meaning of the refining process, see Scholem, *Alchemy*, 38–40. “Dross” (in the phrase “dross of silver”) renders זיפתא (*zifta*), “tar.” The full verse in Proverbs reads: *Remove the dross from silver, and for the refiner a vessel emerges.*

On *the depths of the sea*, see Psalms 68:23; *Zohar* 2:185b–186a; 3:63b, 102a, 134a (*IR*), 163b, 197a. On the root *ḥt'* as meaning “to bear the loss,” see Genesis 31:39.

264. Aaron shall cast lots... As determined by lots, one goat is to be sacrificed as a purification offering to God, while the second goat—the scapegoat—will bear the sins of Israel and be sent off into the desert for the demon Azazel.

Azazel represents the Other Side (or Samael)—sometimes pictured as God’s servant, whose role is to test and tempt human beings and to punish them. Rabbi Yose wonders how Scripture can “honor” Azazel by letting him participate equally with God in the casting of lots, the outcome of which is pure chance. The verse in Leviticus reads: *Aaron shall place lots upon the two goats, one lot for YHVH and one lot for Azazel.*

265. Samael is ready this day with defamation... On Yom Kippur, the demonic Other Side (known as Samael or Azazel) is ready to defame Israel by proclaiming their sins and demanding punishment. According to Rabbi Yose, the lot determining which goat would be sent to Samael was

not a matter of chance. Rather, his lot and his goat were meant specifically for him; on its own, the lot leapt from the priest's hand and settled on the appropriate goat. Since this lot and goat were intended for him, Samael had no pretext to complain about the outcome, just as a servant must not complain about what he receives.

This resembles the miraculous procedure of the lots that determined which territories in the land of Canaan would be apportioned to which tribes. See *Tanḥuma, Pinḥas* 6: "Miraculous acts occurred in connection with the lot.... As it came up, the lot would cry out, 'I am the lot of such-and-such a tribe, and I have come up to assign him such-and-such a territory!' How do we know that the lot spoke? Because it is written: עַל פִּי (Al pi), *By the mouth of, the lot [shall its inheritance be apportioned].*" Thus none of the tribes could complain about the outcome.

See *Bemidbar Rabbah* 21:9; Rashi on Numbers 26:54, 56; *Zohar* 3:239b-240a, 284b. Cf. *Sifrei*, Numbers 132; *BT Bava Batra* 122a. The full verse in Numbers reads: עַל פִּי (Al pi), *According to [literally: By the mouth of], the lot shall its [namely each tribe's] inheritance be apportioned, whether many or few.* The full verse in Leviticus reads: *The goat for which the lot "for Azazel" comes up shall be set live before YHVH to atone upon it, to send it off to Azazel into the desert.*

266. whenever the Denouncer is ready... By providing a portion to the Other Side, Israel ensures that the demonic force will be occupied, assuaged, and deterred from accusing Israel or interfering in the realm of holiness.

On Yom Kippur, the demonic Accuser is poised to spy out the earth, searching for sins. Rabbi Yose interprets the verse in Job as alluding to this.

According to *Pirgei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 46, the scapegoat of Yom Kippur is intended to preoccupy Satan: "They gave him a bribe on Yom Kippur so that he would not nullify Israel's sacrifice." On the theme of assuaging demonic powers, see also *Sifra, Millu'im (Shemini)* 1:3, 43c;

Nahmanides on Leviticus 16:8; Moses of Burgos, *Ammud ha-Semali*, 158-59; *Zohar* 1:11a, 64a-65a, 89b (*ST*), 113b-114b, 138b, 145b, 174b, 190a, 210b, 247b; 2:33a, 111b, 130a, 141a, 152b, 154b, 157a-b, 169a, 181b, 184b-185a, 203b, 227a-b, 237b-239b, 242b, 266b, 269a, 271b (*Piq*); 3:60b, 63a-64a, 63a-b (*Piq*), 79b, 202b-203a, 224a-b, 258b-259a; *ZH* 20c, 46c, 86b-c (*MhN, Rut*), 87b-c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 165-67; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 124-27; idem, *She'elot u-Tshuvot*, 49; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:453-54, 3:890-95, 959.

On the passage in Job, see *Zohar* 2:32b-33b; and the following note. The biblical context (Job 1:6-12) reads: *One day the sons of Elohim came to stand before YHVH, וַיָּשׁוּבוּ (ve-ha-satan), and the Adversary, too, came among them. YHVH said to the Adversary, "From where have you come?" The Adversary answered YHVH, saying, "From roaming the earth and walking about upon it." YHVH said to the Adversary, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is none like him on earth, a man blameless and upright, revering God and shunning evil." The Adversary answered YHVH, saying, "Is it for nothing that Job reveres God? Have You not hedged him about and his household and all that he has all around? The work of his hands You have blessed, and his flocks have spread over the land. But please reach out Your hand and strike all that he has. Will he not curse You to Your face?" YHVH said to the Adversary, "Here, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not reach out your hand." And the Adversary departed from the presence of YHVH.*

267. Israel was about to cross the [Red] Sea... At that moment, Satan argued that the people of Israel were not worthy of being saved and of entering the Holy Land. Furthermore, they had been enslaved in Israel for only 210 years, only about half the total time decreed by God to Abraham.

See *Shemot Rabbah* 21:7: “[YHVH said to Moses,] ‘Why are you crying out to Me? [Speak to the Children of Israel and have them journey forward!]’ (Exodus 14:15)... Rabbi Hama son of Hanina said, ‘When Israel came out of Egypt, the angel Samael arose to accuse them.’ And Rabbi Hama son of Hanina explained this in the name of his father: ‘This can be compared to a shepherd who was bringing his sheep across a river. A wolf came to attack the sheep. The shepherd, who was experienced—what did he do? He took a large billy goat and gave it to the wolf, thinking, “Let him wrestle with this until we cross the river, and afterward I will bring it across.” Similarly, when Israel came out of Egypt, the angel Samael arose to accuse them, saying before the blessed Holy One, “Master of the World! Until now, they were worshiping idols, and now You are splitting the sea for them?” What did the blessed Holy One do? He handed over to him Job, who was one of Pharaoh’s advisers, of whom is written *a man blameless and upright* (Job 1:8); and He said to him, *Here, he is in your hand* (ibid. 2:6). The blessed Holy One thought, “While he occupies himself with Job, Israel will go through the sea, and afterward I will deliver Job.”... Job said... “He handed me over to Satan. In order that Israel would not emerge guilty in judgment, He wrung me out through his hand.”... At that moment, the blessed Holy One said to Moses, “Moses! Look, I have handed Job over to Satan. What should you do? *Speak to the Children of Israel and have them journey forward!*””

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 57:4; *Zohar* 2:32b–33b; 3:218a–b (RM); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 125–27. On the challenge to God at the sea, see *Midrash Avkir*, 42, 44, 46; *Midrash Va-Yosha* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:39–40, 46–47); *Yalqut Shim’oni*, Exodus 234, 241, 243; *Zohar* 2:56a, 170b; *ZH* 39d; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 6:7–9, nn. 40–42.

On the claim that Israel had not yet fulfilled their term of enslavement, see *Midrash Avkir*, 44; *Yalqut Shim’oni*, Exodus 241. On the total of 210 years of enslavement, see

Vol. 3, p. 212, n. 197. The context in Genesis (15:13-14) reads: *He said to Abram, "Know well that your seed will be strangers in a land not theirs, and they will be enslaved and afflicted four hundred years. But upon the nation that they serve I will bring judgment, and afterward they will go forth with great substance."* On the verse in Job 2, cf. *ibid.* 1:12 (quoted at the end of preceding note): *Here, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not reach out your hand.*

268. Here, too, on this day... On Yom Kippur, Israel sends the scapegoat to Samael to occupy him and deter him from accusing Israel.

See above, [note 266](#). Cf. BT *Yoma* 20a: "On Yom Kippur, Satan has no permission to accuse. How do we know? Rami son of Hama said, 'השטן (*Ha-satan*), Satan, equals 364 in numerical value—implying that on 364 days he has permission to accuse, while on Yom Kippur he does not.'"

The resemblance of the goat to Satan is likely based on the fact that שְׂעִיר (*sa'ir*) means not only "goat" but also "demon, satyr." On the goat-demons, see Leviticus 17:7; *Sifra, Aḥarei Mot* 9:8, 84a; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 22:8; Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 2:1462. Cf. *Targum Yerushalmi*, Leviticus 9:3. On the proverbial saying, see Moses de León, *Ha-Nefesh ha-Hakhamah*, P2c.

269. a fool who stands before the king... Namely, the royal jester or fool. See Moses de León, *Ha-Nefesh ha-Hakhamah*, P2c, where this parable is combined with the proverbial saying in the preceding paragraph.

270. The people of Israel present him this gift... That is, the scapegoat bearing all of their sins. Accepting this gift, Samael turns into Israel's Defender, and their guilt and punishment is transferred to Samael's people: the nations of the world (or specifically the people of Esau). See below.

The context in Proverbs (25:21-22) reads: *If your enemy is hungry, feed him bread; if he is thirsty, give him*

water to drink. For you are heaping live coals on his head, and YHVH will reward you. The biblical meaning is that treating one's enemy well actually ensures his subsequent torment or puts him to shame. See *Zohar* 1:174b; 2:185a, 262b (*Heikh*); 3:259a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 167. Cf. *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 45; *Bereshit Rabbah* 54:1; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:1; and parallels.

On the gift given to the demonic Denouncer, see above, [note 266](#). On the transformation of the Denouncer into the Defender, see *Zohar* 2:60b; 3:63a-b, 63a-b (*Piq*), 123a (*RM*), 202b-203a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 126-27. Cf. *Zohar* 2:185a (Vol. 6, p. 40, n. 104).

[271. the people of Esau...](#) In rabbinic literature, Esau often represents the Roman Empire, and in medieval Jewish literature, he often represents Christianity. On Samael as Esau's heavenly prince, see *Tanḥuma, Va-yishlah* 8.

The description *a speaker of lies* refers to the demonic Denouncer, who praises Israel falsely because he has been bribed with the goat, not on account of their actual deeds. See *Or Yaqar; Matoq mi-Devash*. Cf. *Zohar* 1:192b.

[272. If the nations of the world knew...](#) If they realized how much they suffer on account of the scapegoat, they would never cease attacking Israel.

[273. All that day he is occupied...](#) Throughout Yom Kippur, Samael is occupied with the scapegoat and abandons his role of Accuser.

See above, [note 266](#); and the passage from BT *Yoma* 20a quoted in [note 268](#). On the verse in Job, see above at [note 266](#).

[274. the seventy surrounding His throne...](#) Seventy angelic ministers serving in the Heavenly Court.

[275. All those sins and transgressions...](#) The previous speakers said that Israel's sins are transferred to Samael's people, but Rabbi Abba indicates that first the

sins cling to Samael himself, who is identified with *the depths of the sea*.

On *the depths of the sea*, see above, [note 263](#). The verse in Leviticus reads: *The goat shall bear upon it all their iniquities to ארץ גזרה (erets gezerah), a cutoff land [or: a remote region, a barren land]*.

[276](#). On this day, the priest is adorned... On Yom Kippur, the high priest mediates between the divine and earthly realms. He atones for all of Israel and for the sanctuary itself, which has been polluted by sin. Entering the Holy of Holies, he concentrates on the highest three *sefirot* (*Keter*, *Hokhmah*, and *Binah*), which symbolize the Divine Head, and he sprinkles some of the blood of the purification offering *on the purging cover and in front of the purging cover*.

The high priest stirs the blood with the tip of his finger so that it will not congeal, and then he sprinkles droplets with a swinging motion toward the purging cover. According to rabbinic tradition, he sprinkles the blood once upward and seven times downward, keeping careful count: “One, one and one, one and two, one and three, one and four, one and five, one and six, one and seven” (M *Yoma* 5:3-4). The repetition of *one* in each subsequent phrase refers to the initial upward sprinkling.

Rabbi Abba indicates that the initial *one* alludes to *Keter*, also known as the Holy Ancient One, who is unique and includes all the following stages of emanation.

On the high priest’s ritual on Yom Kippur, see *Zohar* 3:66a-67a; *ZH* 19a, 21a (both *MhN*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:887-88. On the high priest bridging divine and earthly realms, see Philo, *De Somniis* 2:231-33. The context in Leviticus (16:14-16) reads: *He shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle with his finger on the surface of the purging cover on the east side, and in front of the purging cover he shall sprinkle some of the blood seven times with his finger. He shall slaughter the people’s*

goat of purification offering, bring its blood within the curtain, and treat its blood as he treated the blood of the bull: he shall sprinkle it on the purging cover and in front of the purging cover. He shall purge the Sanctuary of the impurities of the Children of Israel and of their transgressions, whatever their sins, and he shall do the same for the Tent of Meeting, which dwells with them in the midst of their impurities.

As this biblical passage indicates, there are two purification offerings: a bull and a goat (namely the goat designated *for YHVH*, as opposed to the scapegoat designated *for Azazel*). The verse quoted here by Rabbi Abba refers (in Leviticus) to the sacrificed goat. According to M *Yoma* 4:3 (and 5:3), a regular priest (not the high priest) stirred the blood of the sacrificed bull so that it would not congeal. Here, Rabbi Abba describes the high priest himself as stirring the blood (apparently of the sacrificed goat). This is assuming that the correct reading in the *Zohar* is בַּחֵיס (baḥeis), “he stirs” (apparently extended from the root שָׁחַשׁ [shāsh], “to stir”), as recorded by Judah Ḥayyat, who quotes this *Zohar* passage in his commentary to *Ma’arekhet ha-Elohut*, 176b. See Scholem. The *Zohar* manuscripts and printed editions read here בָּסִים (baseim), “he sweetens, perfumes,” which *Or Yaqar* explains as “sweetening the matter.” Based merely on the context, several commentators interpret *baseim* as “he dips.” See *Derekh Emet*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; Luria, *Va-Ye’esof David*, s.v. *baseim*.

The description of sprinkling the blood with a motion “like wielding a whip” also derives from M *Yoma* 5:3. The wording “the tip” renders קִיפְטָא (*qifta*), based on Latin *caput*, “head.” See *Ma’arikh*, s.v. *qft*. “Droplets” renders טִיצְפִין (*titspin*), a playful variation on טִיפִין (*tippin*), “drops.”

“The purging cover” (in the clause “sprinkles droplets from his finger toward the purging cover”) renders קַפְטוּרָא (*qaftora*), a playful variation on the biblical term כַּפֹּרֶת

(*kapporet*). The precise meaning of the latter term is unclear. In the Torah it refers to a slab of pure gold, placed atop the ark. At each end of this gold cover stood the figure of a cherub, made of hammered gold. The two cherubim faced each other, with their heads bent slightly downward and their fully outstretched wings turned upward, sheltering the rest of the *kapporet* and the ark beneath. The divine voice was thought to issue from the space above the *kapporet* and between the two cherubim. On Yom Kippur the *kapporet* was the focal point of the purgation rite. See Exodus 25:17-22; Leviticus 16:13-15; Sarna, *Exodus*, 161; Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1:1014.

277. Then, 'one and one'... On the high priest's formula of counting the sprinklings of blood, see the second paragraph of the preceding note. According to Rabbi Abba, the phrase "one and one" alludes to *Hokhmah* and *Binah*, the Divine Father and Mother, who dwell in constant union.

On the perpetual union of *Hokhmah* and *Binah*, see *Zohar* 2:11b, 50b, 55a, 56a; 3:4a, 11a, 61b, 65a-b, 77b-78a, 120a, 267b, 290b (*IZ*).

278. Having reached this 'and one'... Then the high priest proceeds with his count, alluding to the seven *sefirot* who issue from the Divine Mother, *Binah*. "Two" may refer to *Hesed*; and "three... four... five... six... and seven," to the following *sefirot*: *Gevurah*, *Tif'eret*, *Netsah*, *Hod*, and *Yesod*, the last of which conducts the flow to *Shekhinah*. Alternatively, "two" refers to the pair of *Hesed* and *Gevurah*; "three," to the third of the lower *sefirot*, *Tif'eret*; and "four... five... six... and seven," to the following *sefirot*: *Netsah*, *Hod*, *Yesod*, and *Shekhinah*. By reciting this formula with pure intention, the high priest conveys the flow of emanation from Supernal Mother (*Binah*) to the Lower Mother (*Shekhinah*) by means of the intermediate sefirotic rungs. *Shekhinah* is also known as Assembly of Israel.

On Yom Kippur *Binah* illumines *Shekhinah*, and their double radiance is reflected by the plural element of the term

יום הכפורים (*Yom ha-Kippurim*), literally *Day of the Atonements*. See above, [note 247](#).

For various interpretations of the precise sefirotic significance of the numerical sequence, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, [p. 11](#), [n. 32](#).

[279](#). **A braided rope was tied to the leg of the priest...** So that if he died in the Holy of Holies—on account of being unworthy or of performing his ritual improperly—his fellow priests could drag him out without having to enter themselves (which was normally forbidden).

The success or failure of the high priest's dangerous entry into the inner sanctum, and of Israel's fervent prayers, was signaled by the color of the strip of crimson wool in the Temple. If it turned white, this indicated that atonement had been granted, corresponding to the biblical verse: *If your sins are like crimson, they will become white as snow* (Isaiah 1:18). If it remained crimson, this showed that the high priest had not gained atonement for the people and that their prayers had not been accepted in heaven.

In *Zohar* 3:67a, the high priest's rope is described as follows: "A golden knotted cord hangs from his leg." According to Exodus 28:13-14, 22-24, the high priest's breastpiece was attached to his ephod by two golden chains (or cords). In fact, gold figured prominently in his entire wardrobe, including golden bells worn all around the hem of his robe and a gold medallion on his forehead (*ibid.*, 33-38). However, there is no reference in biblical or rabbinic literature to a golden cord—or any type of cord or rope—attached to the high priest's leg on Yom Kippur. In fact, according to biblical and rabbinic tradition, the high priest wore simple linen garments when he entered the Holy of Holies and no golden items.

See Leviticus 16:4, 23-24; M *Yoma* 7:4; *Sifra, Millu'im* (*Tsav*) 1:7, 41a; *Aḥarei Mot* 1:5-9, 80c; *Targum Yerushalmi*,

Leviticus 16:4; JT *Yoma* 7:5, 44b; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 21:10; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 26a; Rashi and Baḥya ben Asher on Leviticus 16:4. Cf., however, Josephus, *Wars of the Jews* 5:5:7; Ibn Ezra on Leviticus 16:4; Rashbam on Exodus 28:35. See the discussion by Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, 23:185–86.

The motif of the rope, or cord, is probably based on a story about the burial of Rav Huna in the tomb of the venerated Rabbi Ḥiyya Rabbah. Rav Huna's colleagues wonder who will dare to enter the sacred tomb and perform the burial. Bravely, Rabbi Ḥaggai volunteers, and says to them, "Do this for me. Bring a rope and tie it to my leg. If I come out, fine; if not, drag me out by my leg."

See *Qohelet Rabbah* on 9:10. Cf. JT *Kil'ayim* 9:4, 32b–c; *Ketubbot* 12:3, 35a–b. See also *Sifra, Millu'im (Shemini)* 1:35, 45d, where Rabbi Akiva explains that when Nadab and Abihu died in the sanctuary, their cousins Mishael and Elzaphan "thrust an iron spear [into each of them] and dragged them out." Cf. *Sifrei*, Numbers 44.

The transformation of the crimson strip is mentioned in rabbinic sources, where, however, its change of color is not linked explicitly to the high priest or Israel. See BT *Yoma* 67a: "Originally they would tie the strip of crimson wool outside the entrance of the Hall [leading to the interior of the Temple]. If it turned white [indicating atonement], they rejoiced; if it did not turn white, they were sad and ashamed. So they ordained that it would be tied inside the entrance of the Hall. But still [the people] peeped in, and if it turned white, they rejoiced; if it did not turn white, they were sad. So they ordained that half of it would be tied to the rock [from which the scapegoat was pushed off the mountain], and the other half between [the scapegoat's] horns. Rabbi Naḥum son of Papa said in the name of Rabbi El'azar ha-Kappar, 'Originally they would tie the strip of crimson wool inside the entrance of the Hall, and as soon as the goat reached the desert, it turned white, and they

knew that the commandment concerning it had been fulfilled, as is said: *If your sins are like crimson, they will become white as snow* (Isaiah 1:18).”

See M *Shabbat* 9:3; *Yoma* 4:2; 6:6, 8; JT *Shabbat* 9:3, 12a; *Yoma* 6:3, 43c; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 31b, *Yoma* 39a-b. (The conclusion of M *Yoma* 6:8, which matches the teaching transmitted by Rabbi Naḥum, does not appear in most manuscripts of the Mishnah, including the Kaufmann manuscript.) On the custom of tying the strip of crimson wool, see Goldstein, “Meḥqarim be-Hagutam shel Ḥazal al ha-Avodah be-Veit ha-Miqdash,” 109-23.

The *Zohar*'s linking of the change in color to the high priest, as well as to Israel's prayers, may be based, in part, on *Midrash Tehillim* 86:8, where this change depends on the efficacy of Israel's prayers: “When the strip of crimson wool hung at the entrance of the Sanctuary, if it turned white, they knew that their prayer had been heard.”

As for the motif of the high priest's rope or cord (for which the *Zohar* is the earliest extant source), it entered Jewish folklore and also found its way into Christian art. Based on the narrative in Luke 1:5-25, the fifteenth-century Aragonese painter Domingo Ram depicts the priest Zechariah (or Zacharias) entering the Holy of Holies with a gold chain attached to his right ankle. There he is informed by the angel Gabriel that he will father a son to be named John, who will become John the Baptist. Ram's “Annunciation to Zacharias” is preserved in the Cloisters (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/25.120.929) and reproduced in Mann, *Uneasy Communion*, 101. Mann suggests that Ram may have come from a *converso* background or had a Jewish assistant.

“A braided rope” renders קפטרָא (*qaftera*). The use of this neologism here likely alludes to the “newness” of this motif. Notice the two similar neologisms that appear earlier in this passage: קיפּטָא (*qifta*) and קפּטוּרָא (*qaftora*), discussed

above, [note 276](#). In the parallel *Zohar* passage (3:67a), the high priest's rope is described as קטרא (*qitra*), "a knotted cord," literally "knot," based on the root קטר (*qtr*), "to tie, bind." Similarly, the invented root used here, קפטר (*qftr*), is also based on *qtr* and conveys the sense of "tying, binding." On the connection between *qftr* and "rope," see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 4:2 (and Margulies's n. 3, pp. 81-82); *Qohelet Rabbah* on 6:6; *Tanḥuma, Miqqets* 10; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Miqqets* 15 (and Buber's n. 116); *Arukh* and *Arukh ha-Shalem*, s.v. *pi turei*; Rashi on *Berakhot* 8a, s.v. *ke-figurei*; *Zohar* 2:183b (Vol. 6, p. 31, n. 79); 3:59b, 111a; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 350.

On the motif of the high priest's rope, see Zivotofsky, "What's the Truth About... the Kohen Gadol's Rope?" On the potential death of the high priest in the Holy of Holies, see Leviticus 16:2; M *Yoma* 5:1; *Tosefta Yoma* 2:13; JT *Yoma* 5:1, 42c; BT *Yoma* 53b; Maimonides, Commentary on the Mishnah, *Yoma* 5:1, s.v. *she-lo le-hav'it*; Israel Lipschutz, *Tif'eret Yisra'el, Yoma* 5:1; par. 22; ZH 19a, 21a (both *MhN*). Cf. M *Yoma* 7:4; BT *Yoma* 19b.

On the connection between the high priest's golden bells and his potential death, see Exodus 28:35; Naḥmanides, ad loc.; cf. Rashi. Despite the evidence that the high priest did not wear any golden items when he entered the Holy of Holies (see above), according to several commentators the bells indicated whether the high priest had survived within; if they ceased tinkling, the stark silence announced his death. See Kasher, *Torah Shelemaḥ*, 23:186, quoting Netanel ben Isaiah and Moses ben Gershon Gentili (Hefets).

[280](#). **As soon as he entered...** When the high priest entered the Holy of Holies, he closed his eyes so as not to gaze upon the cherubim, or the Divine Presence abiding there. From the melody of the cherubim and the sweet sound of their wings, he perceived that atonement was

granted. Furthermore, if his prayer issued fluently from his mouth, he knew that his words had been accepted by God.

See M *Berakhot* 5:5: “It was told of Rabbi Ḥanina son of Dosa that he used to pray for the sick and say, ‘This one will live’ or ‘This one will die.’ They said to him, ‘How do you know?’ He replied, ‘If my prayer is fluent in my mouth, I know that he is accepted; and if not, I know that he is rejected.’”

281. Why does this day depend on this place... Rabbi El’azar wonders why Yom Kippur depends upon *Binah*—and upon *Shekhinah*, who is illumined by Her on this day—rather than upon King *Tif’eret*.

See above, [note 278](#). For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

282. it is certainly so... That *Binah*, or *Shekhinah*, is the focus.

283. The Holy King has left His temple... King *Tif’eret* has entrusted *Shekhinah* (known as *Matronita*) with conducting the world and training the people of Israel. If they act virtuously, they stimulate the joyous union of the divine couple. If not, they bring exile upon themselves and upon *Shekhinah*.

On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see above, [note 49](#). On the verse in Isaiah, see Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 60; *Zohar* 1:237a; 2:189b; 3:8a, 74b-75a, 115a. The full verse reads: *Thus says YHVH: Where is your mother’s bill of divorce by which I sent her away? Or which of My creditors was it to whom I sold you off? Behold, it is for your sins that you were sold, and for your crimes your mother was sent away.* The full verse in Proverbs reads: *He who plunders his father and puts his mother to flight is a shameful, disgraceful son.*

284. there is one day a year... On Yom Kippur, *Binah* (the Supernal Mother) examines Israel. If they engage genuinely in *teshuvah*, *Binah* liberates them from guilt by the

agency of *Shekhinah*. Their virtue stimulates the union of *Shekhinah* and King *Tif'eret*.

On *Binah* as the source of freedom on Yom Kippur, see *Zohar* 1:220b (standard editions); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 167, 169. On *Binah* and liberation, see also above, [note 107](#). On the various self-afflictions on Yom Kippur, see M *Yoma* 8:1: “On Yom Kippur, eating, drinking, washing, anointing, wearing sandals, and sexual relations are forbidden.”

[285.](#) **their emissary...** The high priest.

[286.](#) **For on this day...** The full verse, describing Yom Kippur, reads: *For on this day purgation [or: atonement] will be effected for you, to purify you of all your sins; before YHVH you will become pure.*

[287.](#) **On the fifteenth day of this seventh month...** On the fifteenth day of the month of Tishrei, the Festival of *Sukkot* (Booths) begins.

[288.](#) **Whether above or below...** The sefirotic “days” above and the earthly days below each function uniquely.

[289.](#) **This עשור (*asor*), decade...** The word *asor* (meaning “tenth” or “group of ten, decade”) appears earlier in this chapter of Leviticus (23:27), describing Yom Kippur: *Yet בעשור (be-asor), on the tenth, of this seventh month is the Day of Purging [or: Atonement], a sacred assembly it shall be for you, and you shall afflict yourselves [or: your souls] and bring a fire offering to YHVH.* Rabbi Abba indicates that *asor* alludes to ten potencies of *Shekhinah*, the tenth *sefirah* (who is known as Assembly of Israel). Yom Kippur (“the tenth day” of Tishrei) “abides in the tenth,” that is, this uniquely holy day represents *Shekhinah*, who is illumined then by *Binah*.

Similarly, in the description of the original paschal lamb, *asor* (*the tenth* of Nisan) alludes to *Shekhinah*. The day of Yom Kippur belongs to *Shekhinah*, and the five other days—from the tenth of Tishrei to the fifteenth—belong to King

Tif'eret, who is situated on the fifth sefirotic rung, counting from below. *Tif'eret* sits upon the Throne of *Shekhinah*.

On the association of *Shekhinah* (and *Binah*) with Yom Kippur, see above, [notes 246-47](#). On the verses in Exodus and Leviticus, cf. *Zohar* 2:39b. The verse in Exodus reads in full: *Speak to all the community of Israel, saying, "On the tenth of this month, let every man take a lamb for a father's house, a lamb for a household."*

290. Everywhere, on the tenth belongs to Matronita... Whether in Exodus or Leviticus, this phrase pertains to the ten potencies of *Shekhinah* (who is known as *Matronita*). "The five above them"—that is, the five *sefirot* from *Shekhinah* to *Tif'eret*, counting upward—all "belong to" King *Tif'eret*, the sefirotic day who unites with *Shekhinah*. Corresponding to these five *sefirot*, there are five days from the new moon of Sivan to *Shavu'ot*, the festival commemorating the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai.

291. Now, you might say, 'Seventh'... Although *Tif'eret* can be pictured as the fifth *sefirah*, counting from below, He can also be called Seventh, including *Hesed* and *Gevurah* (symbolized respectively by Abraham and Isaac), who adorn Him. The reference to "seventh" may be influenced by the wording in the verse from Leviticus: *On the fifteenth day of this seventh month.*

292. The fifth is surely His... The fifth sefirotic rung (counting from below) is surely the site of *Tif'eret*, and this number corresponds to the five days from Yom Kippur to the beginning of *Sukkot*. Then, at the full moon, Father *Hokhmah* illumines Mother *Binah* and Her fifty gates. to shine upon *Tif'eret*.

The designation Seventh also applies to *Tif'eret*, not only because of the two additional patriarchal *sefirot* (*Hesed* and *Gevurah*), who complete Him, but also because *Tif'eret* is crowned by *Binah*, who is "the seventh" *sefirah* above *Shekhinah*.

The verse in Song of Songs alludes here to Mother *Binah* crowning King *Tif'eret* when He weds *Shekhinah*. See above,

[note 164](#). The phrase “on the seventh” probably refers to Sabbath. The concluding sentence probably means that whether *Tif'eret* is pictured as “fifth” or “seventh,” “all depends on one” and the same process of emanation.

The image of *Binah*'s fifty gates derives from a statement attributed to Rav and Shemu'el (BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b, *Nedarim* 38a): “Fifty gates of בִּינָה (*binah*), understanding, were created in the world, all of which were given to Moses except for one, as is said: *You made him little less than God* (Psalms 8:6).”

[293](#). **On the fifteenth day** Of the month of Tishrei, when *Sukkot* begins. See above at [note 287](#).

[294](#). **The Canaanite, king of Arad...** The immediately preceding verses (Numbers 20:22-29) describe the death of Aaron.

See BT *Ta'anit* 9a: “Rabbi Yose son of Rabbi Yehudah says, ‘Three fine leaders arose for Israel, namely Moses, Aaron, and Miriam; and through them were given three fine presents, namely the well [that miraculously accompanied Israel through the desert], the cloud [of glory shielding them], and manna. The well, by the merit of Miriam; the pillar of cloud, by the merit of Aaron; manna, by the merit of Moses. When Miriam died, the well disappeared, as is said: *Miriam died there* (Numbers 20:1), and immediately afterward is written *There was no water for the community* (ibid., 2); and it returned by the merit of the two [others, Moses and Aaron]. When Aaron died, the clouds of glory disappeared, as is said: *The Canaanite, king of Arad, heard* (ibid. 21:1). What news did he hear? He heard that Aaron had died and that the clouds of glory had disappeared; and he thought that he was permitted to make war against Israel.’ This corresponds to what is written: *All the community saw that Aaron had expired* (ibid. 20:29)—[with reference to which] Rabbi Abbahu said, ‘Do not read וַיִּרְאוּ (*va-yir'u*), *they saw*, but rather וַיִּרְאוּ (*va-yera'u*), *they were seen* [because with the disappearance of the clouds of glory,

Israel became visible and exposed].’... Both of them [the well and the cloud] returned by the merit of Moses. When Moses died, all of them disappeared.”

On this passage in *Ta’anit*, see *Tosefta Sotah* 11:1-2, 8; *Midrash Tanna’im*, Deuteronomy 34:8; *Seder Olam Rabbah* 10; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 27:6; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:5; *Tanḥuma, Bemidbar* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bemidbar* 2; *Midrash Mishlei* 14:1; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 1:2; 13:20; *Zohar* 2:190b; 3:283b; *ZH* 14d (*MhN*).

Cf. *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 5; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 16:35; *Sifrei*, Numbers 82; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 305; *Seder Olam Rabbah* 9; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Numbers 20:2; 21:1; Deuteronomy 10:6; *JT Yoma* 1:1, 38b; *Sotah* 1:9, 17c; *Bereshit Rabbah* 62:4; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:56; *Eikhah Rabbah* (Buber) 1:21; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 19:2; *BT Rosh ha-Shanah* 3a; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 25; *Tanḥuma, Huqqat* 18; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Huqqat* 42; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 19:20; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 13, 55a; *ZH* 12d (*MhN*).

295. bread from heaven... The manna came from heaven, which represents *Tif’eret*, the *sefirah* attained (and symbolized) by Moses. See *Zohar* 3:156a; above, [note 173](#).

296. Clouds of glory, by the merit of אהרן (Aharon), Aaron... Whose name appears as an anagram in the verse from Numbers: *For eye-to-eye You נראה (nir’ah), are seen, YHVH, and Your cloud stands over them.*

Just as when Aaron offered incense on Yom Kippur, its cloud consisted of seven clouds, so there were seven clouds of glory shielding Israel in the desert. The seven clouds of glory represent the seven lower *sefirot* (*Hesed* to *Shekhinah*), of which the first is symbolized by Aaron.

The *Zohar* often associates the word קטר (qetoret), “incense,” with the Aramaic root קטר (qtr), “to tie, bind.” On the clouds of glory numbering seven, see, e.g., *Tosefta Sotah* 4:2; *Mekhilta, Beshallah, Petihta*; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 13:21; *Sifrei*, Numbers 106; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 1:2. The full verse in Leviticus reads: *He shall put*

the incense on the fire before YHVH, and the cloud of incense shall envelop the purging covering that is over [the Ark of] Testimony, lest he die.

297. The well, on account of Miriam... Who symbolizes *Shekhinah*, one of whose many names is Well, signifying that She contains the entire flow of emanation.

The verse in Exodus describes how Miriam waited by the Nile to see what would happen to her baby brother, Moses: *His sister stationed herself afar, to know what would be done to him.* According to the Book of *Aggadta*, *his sister* alludes to *Shekhinah*, who is the sister (or partner) of *Tif'eret* (symbolized by Moses). The concluding sentence apparently means that “Miriam,” “well,” and “sister” all refer to *Shekhinah*.

On the spiritual sense of this verse, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 10; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:20; JT *Sotah* 1:9, 17b; BT *Sotah* 11a (where Rabbi Yitshak interprets *his sister* as referring to *Shekhinah*); *Shemot Rabbah* 1:22; *Zohar* 1:6a, 219a; 2:12a, 125b; 3:59b, 174b. On the term *Aggadta*, see the Glossary.

298. When Miriam died, the well disappeared... See BT *Ta'anit* 9a (quoted above, [note 294](#)): “When Miriam died, the well disappeared, as is said: *Miriam died there* (Numbers 20:1), and immediately afterward is written *There was no water for the community* (ibid., 2).” Here, Rabbi Yehudah adds that when Miriam’s well disappeared at her death, the divine well (*Shekhinah*) wished to depart too. However, seeing the “clouds joined to Her from above”—namely the *sefirot* from *Hesed* to *Yesod*—She remained joined to them and continued accompanying Israel through the desert.

On the passage in *Ta'anit*, see the parallels included above, [note 294](#); *Zohar* 1:124b; 3:181b. The context in Numbers (20:1-2) reads: *The Children of Israel, the whole community, came to the Desert of Zin, in the first month, and the people stayed in Kadesh. Miriam died there and*

she was buried there. And there was no water for the community, and they assembled against Moses and Aaron.

299. When Aaron died, those clouds disappeared...

The clouds of glory (symbolizing the lower *sefirot*) disappeared, along with “the cloud of the well,” symbolizing *Shekhinah*. Moses, however, restored both the clouds and the well. See above, [note 294](#).

According to its simple sense, the obscure verse in Psalms refers to God: *You ascended the heights, You seized captives, You took [or: received] gifts from [or: among, for] humans*. In rabbinic literature, this verse is frequently applied to Moses, who *ascended the heights* of Mount Sinai and “captured” the Torah or received it as a gift.

See BT *Shabbat* 89a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 8:11; *Rut Rabbah* 2:3; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 2; *Pirgei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 46; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 126; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 17, *Vayiqra* 4, *Ha’azinu* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayiqra* 6, *Ha’azinu* 3; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20, 98a; 47, 191b; *Shemot Rabbah* 28:1; 30:5; 33:2; *Midrash Tehillim* 68:11; *Zohar* 3:148a, 193a.

300. The well—Isaac’s well... The well symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is influenced by *Gevurah* (symbolized by Isaac). On Isaac’s well, see Genesis 25:11; 26:25; *Zohar* 1:60b, 135b–136a; 3:24b, 115a, 150b, 183b, 284b.

The clouds of glory accompanied Israel by the merit of Aaron, who symbolizes *Ḥesed*. See above, [note 294](#).

301. Because he was joined with clouds... Because he represents *Ḥesed*, which is joined with all the other lower *sefirot* (symbolized by clouds).

302. To Assembly of Israel... *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel) is the seventh sefirotic cloud, to which are bound the six others (from *Ḥesed* to *Yesod*). All the *sefirot* together constitute the realm of faith.

303. בסכות (Ba-sukkot), In booths, you shall dwell... The biblical context (Leviticus 23:42–43) reads: בסכות (Ba-sukkot), *In booths, you shall dwell seven days; all natives* [or:

citizens] in Israel shall dwell in booths, so that your generations may know that I made the Children of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt. I am YHVH your God.

According to various sources, Rabbi Akiva interpreted *sukkot*, *booths*, as implying “clouds of glory.” Here, Rabbi Yitshak indicates that when a person dwells in the sukkah he is “sitting in the shade of faith,” sheltered by *Shekhinah* and the other sefirotic clouds.

The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest, so is my beloved among the young men. In his shade I delighted to sit, and his fruit is sweet to my mouth.* According to midrashic tradition, *his shade* refers to the divine shade, beneath which Israel delights to sit. See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on the verse.

On the sukkah as shade, cf. the Talmudic term מטללתא (*matlalta*), “sukkah, cover,” based on the root טלל (*tl*), “to provide shade.” See BT *Sukkah* 14b, 28b–29a; *Zohar* 2:184a, 186b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 180. On *sukkot* as “clouds of glory,” see *Mekhilta, Pisha* 14; *Mekhilta, Beshallah, Petihta*; *Sifra, Emor* 17:11, 103b; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 12:37; 13:20; BT *Sukkah* 11b; *Tanḥuma, Bo* 9; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 12:37; 13:20; Leviticus 23:43; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana*, add. 2, p. 457.

304. After Aaron died... See BT *Ta’anit* 9a: “When Aaron died, the clouds of glory disappeared, as is said: *The Canaanite, king of Arad, heard* (Numbers 21:1). What news did he hear? He heard that Aaron had died and that the clouds of glory had disappeared; and he thought that he was permitted to make war against Israel.’ This corresponds to what is written: *All the community saw that Aaron had expired* (ibid. 20:29)—[with reference to which] Rabbi Abbahu said, ‘Do not read וַיִּרְאוּ (*va-yir’u*), *they saw*, but rather וַיִּרְאוּ (*va-yera’u*), *they were seen* [because with the disappearance of the clouds of glory, Israel became visible and exposed to the enemy].”

Here Rabbi Yitshak indicates that when Aaron died, the cloud representing his *sefirah* (*Ḥesed* on the right) disappeared, followed by the other six clouds. According to rabbinic sources, the place name האתרִים (*ha-Atarim*), *Atharim*, alludes to Aaron, who was Israel's great תייר (*tayyar*)—or, in Aramaic, תיירא (*tayyara*), “guide.”

On the passage in *Ta'anit*, see above, [note 294](#). On *va-yir'u* and *va-yera'u*, see (in addition to the parallels cited there) *Targum Onqelos* and Rashi on Numbers 20:29. On *Atarim* and *tayyar*, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 82; JT *Yoma* 1:1, 38b; *Sotah* 1:9, 17c; *Eikhah Rabbah* (Buber) 1:21; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 19:2; *Tanḥuma, Ḥuqqat* 18; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ḥuqqat* 42; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 19:20; Rashi on Numbers 21:1. Cf. *Seder Olam Rabbah* 9; *Tosefta Sotah* 11:1.

The full verse in Numbers 20 reads: *All the community saw that Aaron had expired, and all the house of Israel wept for Aaron thirty days.* The full verse in Numbers 21 reads: *The Canaanite, king of Arad, who dwelled in the Negeb, heard that Israel was coming by way of Atharim, and he battled against Israel and took some of them captive.*

[305.](#) who dwelled in the Negeb, surely... *The Negeb* (also meaning “the south”) symbolizes the warmth of *Ḥesed*, which is Aaron's *sefirah*, corresponding to the first cloud that disappeared upon Aaron's death. Then all the clouds disappeared, leaving Israel exposed to attack.

The spies sent by Moses to scout out the land of Canaan reported back that *Amalek dwells in the land of the Negeb*, intending thereby to frighten the Israelites, who had been mercilessly attacked by Amalek soon after crossing the Red Sea. See *Tanḥuma, Shelaḥ* 9; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shelaḥ* 18; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 16:18; Rashi on Numbers 13:29; *Zohar* 3:161a.

[306.](#) The Canaanite heard... After the protective clouds had disappeared, *the Canaanite heard* and attacked. According to Rabbi Abba, this verse implies that anyone

who leaves the protective shade of faith (or, specifically, who fails to dwell in the sukkah during *Sukkot*) deserves to be a slave to slaves of slaves—namely to descendants of Canaan, who was cursed to be *slave of slaves*. According to Genesis, after Noah's son Ham *saw his father's nakedness* (Genesis 9:22), Noah pronounced this curse on Ham's son, Canaan.

307. everyone who is from the holy root... See *Zohar* 3:103b (*Piq*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 180.

308. A Canaanite, in whose hand are false balances... According to rabbinic tradition, Abraham's servant, Eliezer, was a Canaanite, and this verse is applied to him. Although Canaan had been cursed, Eliezer escaped this curse by serving Abraham loyally; so when Laban (Rebekah's brother) greeted Eliezer, he called him *blessed of YHVH*. Similarly, anyone who serves God faithfully—specifically, by dwelling beneath the shade of the sukkah—will attain blessing.

Abraham's servant, Eliezer, is mentioned only once in the Bible (Genesis 15:2), though traditionally he is identified with the servant who finds a wife for Isaac (in Genesis 24). The verse in Hosea reads: כְּנֹעַן (*Kena'an*), *A merchant, in whose hands are false balances; he loves to cheat*. In midrashic sources, this reference to *kena'an* is understood as *A Canaanite* and is applied to Eliezer, Abraham's (supposedly) Canaanite servant. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 59:9; *Pirquei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 16; *Zohar* 3:158a. On Eliezer escaping Canaan's curse, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 60:7; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 17:5; *Zohar* 3:158a.

309. בסכה (Ba-sukkot), In booths... spelled deficiently... The word is spelled בַּסֻּכּוֹת (*ba-sukkot*), *in booths*—without the letter ו (*vav*)—and to Rabbi Abba this deficient spelling implies the singular sense: *in a booth*. (He may be construing this spelling as the singular form בַּסֻּכָּה [*be-sukkat*], *in the booth of*.) The single sukkah represents the first of the seven clouds of glory—Aaron's cloud, corresponding to

Hesed, first of the seven lower *sefirot*—to which the other six clouds are bound.

The verses in Numbers refer to this singular cloud, which accompanied Israel *by day*, and the verse in Psalms links *by day* with *Hesed*. In the concluding sentence, the phrase “another cloud” refers to *Shekhinah*, last of the seven clouds of glory, who is also described as *a pillar of fire by night*.

On the spelling of בסכת (*ba-sukkot*), see BT *Sukkah* 6b, 9b; *Sanhedrin* 4a; *Zevahim* 37b–38a; *Zohar* 2:186b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 123; *Minḥat Shai* on Leviticus 23:42.

The full verse in Numbers 10 reads: *The cloud of YHVH was over them by day as they journeyed on from the camp*. The verse in Numbers 14 reads: *In a pillar of cloud You go before them by day and in a pillar of fire by night*. See *Zohar* 2:203a–b. The verse in Psalms reads: *By day YHVH ordains His love, and in the night His song is with me*.

310. *I remember the devotion of your youth...* This divine recollection of Israel’s devotion is applied here to *Shekhinah*, known as Assembly of Israel, who accompanied Her people through the desert. On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, [p. 11](#), [n. 32](#).

311. חסד (*hesed*), *the devotion—cloud of Aaron...* According to rabbinic sources, the verse *I made the Children of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt* alludes to clouds of glory that accompanied Israel through the desert, shielding them. Traditionally, there were seven such clouds; and here these seven symbolize the seven lower *sefirot* (from *Hesed* to *Shekhinah*). The first cloud is called “cloud of Aaron” because Aaron represents *Hesed*. The first six clouds are bound to the seventh, symbolizing *Shekhinah*. See above, [notes 294](#), [296](#), [303](#).

312. *Your love כלולותיך (kelulotayikh), as a bride...* Rabbi El’azar associates כלולותיך (*kelulotayikh*), *as a bride*, with

אִשְׁתַּכְּלִלּוּ (*ishtakhlalu*), “adorning.” All the lower *sefirot* array and complete *Shekhinah*, in recognition of Her guiding Israel faithfully through the desert out of love for Her spouse, YHVH.

313. When a person dwells in this abode... When one dwells in the sukkah—described as “shade of faith”—*Shekhinah* hovers over him. She includes all of the *sefirot*, the entire realm of faith. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, and Joseph all appear in the sukkah, representing the *sefirot* from *Hesed* to *Yesod*.

314. Abraham, five righteous ones, and King David... Rabbi Abba adds a seventh figure: David, the ideal king, representing *Malkhut* (Kingdom), or *Shekhinah*. The phrase *seven days* is now understood not as a description of how long one should dwell in *sukkot* (*for seven days*), but rather as referring to the seven primordial Days of Creation (the seven *sefirot* from *Hesed* to *Shekhinah*), who are being invited: *In sukkot you shall dwell, O seven days*. Their presence in the sukkah is symbolized by the appearance of the seven biblical heroes, their historical manifestations.

Similarly with the verse from Exodus: although the simple sense is, of course, *In six days YHVH made heaven and earth*, Rabbi Abba construes it to mean: *With six days*—namely with the six *sefirot* from *Hesed* to *Yesod*—*YHVH made heaven and earth*. On each day of the primordial week of Creation, one of these cosmic days performed its work.

On each day of *Sukkot*, one of the sublime guests is featured, accompanied by the others, and a person should greet them joyously.

“Guests” renders אֲשַׁפִּיזִין (*ushpizin*), which derives from Persian *aspinj*, “hospitality, inn.” The sense of “guest” appears in the Latin cognates *hospes* and Castilian *huésped*, which both originally meant “host,” and subsequently “guest.” In rabbinic usage, the singular form אֲשַׁפִּיזָא (*ushpiza*) means “inn, lodging, hospitality, landlord.” The related form אֲשַׁפִּיזְכָּנָא (*ushpizkana*) means “landlord,

host.” The *Zohar* seems to be the first Jewish text to use *ushpizin* in the sense of “guests,” apparently influenced by Castilian. See Corominas, *Diccionario*, 3:420–22, s.v. *huésped*; Talmage, “Apples of Gold,” 339.

On the verse in Leviticus as being addressed to the sefirotic days, see *Zohar* 2:186b. On the verse in Exodus, see above, [note 145](#).

315. In sukkot you shall dwell... The full verse reads: בסכת (*Ba-sukkot*), *In booths, you shall dwell seven days; all natives [or: citizens] in Israel shall dwell in booths.*

316. Rav Hamnuna Sava... He would explicitly invite the sublime guests into his sukkah. The blessing referred to here is: “Blessed are You, *YHVH* our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us by His commandments and commanded us to dwell [or: sit] in the sukkah.” This blessing is recited after the *qiddush* over wine.

The *Zohar*’s innovation of inviting the sublime *ushpizin* (guests) into the sukkah spread to wider circles under the influence of Lurianic Kabbalah and has become an integral part of the celebration of *Sukkot*. See Moses de León, *Ha-Nefesh ha-Hakhamah*, M1c; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1249; Hallamish, *Ha-Qabbalah*, 323–24. On the term *ushpizin*, see above, [note 314](#).

On Rav Hamnuna Sava, see above, [note 154](#). On the custom of reciting the blessing “... to dwell [or: sit] in the sukkah,” and then sitting down, see Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Sukkah* 6:12; Abraham ben David, *Hassagot*, ad loc.; Twersky, *Introduction to the Code of Maimonides*, 120.

317. The second, for inhabitants of the world... The second half of the verse refers not to the sublime guests but to Israel: *all natives in Israel shall dwell in booths.*

318. Nevertheless, he must gladden the poor... By dwelling in the sukkah and inviting the sublime *ushpizin* (guests), one attains joy and fulfillment both in this world and in the world that is coming. Yet, this is not sufficient;

one must also welcome the poor into his sukkah. In fact, the portion of those sefirotic guests is intended for the poor. By providing for the needy, one serves the *ushpizin*; if one selfishly fails to do so, those heavenly guests abandon his table.

The verse in Malachi reads: *I will spread dung upon your faces, the dung of your festal offerings* [or: *festivals, feasts*]. Here, Rabbi Abba interprets *the dung of your festivals* as “the excrement of your selfish holiday feasting.” His use of the verse here is based on Maimonides, who applies it to those who feast on the holidays without providing anything to the poor. See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhhot Yom Tov* 6:18: “When one eats and drinks [on a festival], he must feed the stranger, the orphan, and the widow, along with the other poor and unfortunate ones. But he who locks the doors of his courtyard and eats and drinks alone with his children and his wife, without giving food and drink to the poor and the embittered—this is not the joy of *mitsvah* but rather the joy of his belly.... This kind of joy is a disgrace to them, as is said: *I will spread dung upon your faces, the dung of your festivals.*”

See *Zohar* 2:88b, 199b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 140. Cf. BT *Shabbat* 151b: “*I will spread dung upon your faces, the dung of your feasts.* Rav Huna—others say Rav H̄aga—said, ‘This refers to people who abandon words of Torah and make all their days like feasts.’ Rabbi Levi said in the name of Rav Pappi in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu’a, ‘After three days [in the grave], his belly bursts and it [i.e., its contents] falls upon his face, exclaiming to him, “Take what you put into me!”’” See JT *Mo’ed Qatan* 3:5, 82b; *Yevamot* 16:3, 15c; *Bereshit Rabbah* 100:7; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 18:1; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 12:6.

On providing for the poor (on the festivals) as giving God His share, see *Zohar* 1:10b. Cf. ZH 87b (*MhN, Rut*). The verse in Proverbs reads: *Do not eat the bread of רע עין (ra ayin), a stingy one* [literally: *one with an evil eye*], nor

desire his delicacies. On this verse, see BT *Sotah* 38b; *Zohar* 1:144a; 2:3a; 3:147b, 206b.

319. Abraham used to stand at the cross-roads...

He embodied *Hesed* and epitomized hospitality, so he is particularly offended by selfishness in the sukkah.

In its original context, the verse in Numbers is spoken by Moses regarding Korah and his band of rebels. On Abraham's extreme hospitality and his efforts to spread the awareness of God, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 48:9; 54:6; BT *Sotah* 10a-b; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 7; *Tanḥuma, Lekh Lekha* 12; *Midrash Tehillim* 37:1; 110:1; *Zohar* 1:230b; 2:133a. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1307.

320. All the other righteous ones... Moses, Aaron, and Joseph. See above, [note 313](#).

The verse in Isaiah reads: *Surely all tables are full of filthy vomit, with no מקום (maqom), place [or: space].* In rabbinic sources, this last clause is construed as: *without the Omnipresent*, reflecting the use of *maqom* as a designation of God, apparently denoting immanence.

See M *Avot* 3:3, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on: "If three have eaten at one table without speaking over it words of Torah, it is as though they have eaten of sacrifices to the dead, as is said: *Surely all tables are full of filthy vomit, without the Omnipresent* (Isaiah 28:8) [i.e., without discussing God's words]. But if three have eaten at one table and have spoken over it words of Torah, it is as if they have eaten from the table of the Omnipresent, as is said: *He said to me, 'This is the table that is before YHVH'* (Ezekiel 41:22)."

321. King David speaks and exacts punishment...

He represents *Shekhinah*, who executes divine judgment.

In the biblical context in Samuel, David sends messengers to Nabal, asking him to provide for David's band, as a reward for their having safeguarded Nabal's flock. The boorish Nabal refuses contemptuously, and is subsequently killed by God. According to Rabbi Abba, if a

person is stingy in his sukkah and does not provide for the poor, he thereby neglects to give a portion to David, the sublime guest whom he has invited. Such behavior is even worse than Nabal's, since the latter never welcomed David, whereas this stingy person invited him into the sukkah and then refused to serve him anything.

According to midrashic tradition, the *ten days* mentioned in Samuel allude to the Ten Days of *Teshuvah*, from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur, during which God gave Nabal the opportunity to repent, but he failed to do so. Here, Rabbi Abba indicates that if a person is stingy in his sukkah and provides nothing for the poor, then at the beginning of the following year during the Ten Days of *Teshuvah*, when *Shekhinah* (symbolized by King David) judges the world, She will punish him.

Rabbi Abba seems to be implying that King David proclaims the verse from 1 Samuel, threatening the stingy sukkah-dweller. See the reading preserved in *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

On the midrashic interpretation of *after ten days*, see JT *Bikkurim* 2:1, 64d; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 18a; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 18, p. 109; *Midrash Shemu'el* 23:13; *Midrash Tehillim* 26:7; Rashi on 1 Samuel 25:38. For various interpretations of the opening sentence here ("King David speaks..."), see *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

322. Torah does not impose... A person is not obligated to provide for the poor more than he can manage, but, on the other hand, one should not give them just leftovers. Since their portion represents that of the sublime *ushpizin*, it should be the finest one.

The context of the verse spoken here by Abraham (Isaiah 58:13-14) reads: *If you refrain from trampling the Sabbath, from engaging in your affairs on My holy day, and call the Sabbath "delight," the holy of YHVH "honored"; if you honor it by not going your own ways, pursuing your affairs, or speaking a word, then you will delight* נַעַל (*al*),

upon [or: in], *YHVH*, and I will cause you to ride upon the heights of the earth, and feed you the inheritance of your father Jacob—for the mouth of *YHVH* has spoken. Rabbi El'azar may be interpreting the phrase על יהוה (*al YHVH*), upon [or: in] *YHVH*, hyperliterally: *above YHVH*—referring to Abraham's *sefirah*, *Hesed*, or to *Binah*, both of which are *above Tif'eret* (known as *YHVH*). See above, [note 150](#). For other sefirotic allusions in the verse, see *Zohar* 2:83a, 88a-b.

Isaac symbolizes *Gevurah* (Power), and the verse spoken here by him fittingly mentions weapons.

The context in Deuteronomy (16:16-17) describes the three pilgrimage festival: *Three times a year all your males shall appear in the presence of the YHVH your God in the place that He chooses: on the Festival of Unleavened Bread and on the Festival of Weeks and on the Festival of Booths, and he shall not appear in the presence of YHVH empty-handed. Each according to the gift of his hand, according to the blessing of YHVH your God that He has given you.* On God not demanding more than a person can manage, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 2:10; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 16, 84b; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 10, *Pinḥas* 14; *Shemot Rabbah* 34:1; *Zohar* 3:8b. Cf. *BT Avodah Zarah* 3a.

On giving the finest portion to the poor, see Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhoh Issurei Mizbe'ah* 7:11; *ZH* 87b (*MhN, Rut*). Cf. *Zohar* 2:198a.

323. This is spoken by King David... Rabbi Shim'on corrects his son, Rabbi El'azar, and then continues the list of verses himself. He insists that the verse *No weapon formed against you will succeed*, etc. is actually spoken by King David the warrior, who symbolizes *Shekhinah*, because She is entrusted with all divine weapons and conducts the divine battles.

Isaac, who symbolizes *Gevurah*, speaks a verse beginning: גבור (*Gibbor*), *Mighty*, etc. His second verse mentions *wealth and riches*, often associated with *Gevurah* (the *sefirah* that is symbolized by gold).

On David speaking the verse *No weapon formed against you will succeed*, etc., see *Sha'arei Teshuvah* (*Teshuvot ha-Ge'onim*), 340; David Luria's notes, ad loc., xiv. On *Shekhinah* controlling the divine weapons, see *Zohar* 2:51a-b; 3:10b, 34b, 42b, 106a, 150a, 269b; *ZH* 7b.

324. יַעֲקֹב (Ya'aqov), **Jacob, says...** His verse fittingly includes an anagram of his name: יִבְבֵּאָה (yibbaqa), *will burst through*. The other *ushpizin* (Moses, Aaron, and Joseph) proclaim a verse that appears shortly afterward in the same chapter of Isaiah.

Isaiah 58:8 reads: *Then your light will burst through like the dawn and your healing quickly sprout. Your righteousness [or: vindicator] will march before you, the glory of YHVH will gather you in [or: will be your rear guard]*. The beginning of the preceding verse is quite apt here: *To share your bread with the hungry, and to bring the wandering poor into your home*.

Isaiah 58:11 reads: *YHVH will guide you always; He will satisfy נַפְשְׁךָ (nafshekha), your thirst [or: soul], בְּצַחְצְחוֹת (be-tsaḥtsaḥot), in parched regions, and invigorate your bones. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters do not fail*. The simple meaning of the rare word צַחְצְחוֹת (tsaḥtsaḥot) is *parched places* (which could fit the context), but Rabbi Shim'on likely understands it as "radiancies," based on the root צַחַח (tshḥ), "to gleam." See *Zohar* 1:113b-114a (*MhN*), 141a, 224b; 2:97a, 142b, 209a, 210b; 3:67b.

325. You shall take for yourselves... The verse reads: *You shall take for yourselves on the first day fruit of a majestic tree, fronds of palms, and a branch of a thickly-leaved tree [or: branches of thickly-leaved trees] and willows of the stream etc.* These four species became identified as the *etrog* (citron), *lulav* (palm branch), *hadas* (three sprigs of myrtle), and *aravah* (two willow twigs).

326. Everyone who is called by My name... Rabbi Shim'on understands *called* as "called forth, called into

existence.” The phrase *by My name* now alludes to the name *Elohim*, and Rabbi Shim’on apparently construes *in the image of Elohim He created him* as: *by the name of Elohim He created him*.

Furthermore, the term אֱלֹהִים (*elohim*) can be applied to a human judge, as in the midrashic reading of the verse in Exodus: *Elohim, Judges, you shall not vilify; a chief among your people you shall not curse*.

On the midrashic reading of the verse in Exodus, see *Mekhilta, Neziqin* 5; *Kaspa* 19; *Targum Onqelos* and *Targum Yerushalmi*, ad loc.; *JT Sanhedrin* 7:5, 25a; *Bereshit Rabbah* 16:6; *BT Sanhedrin* 66a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:1; *Rut Rabbah, Petihta* 1; *Tanḥuma, Mishpatim* 10, 12; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va’era* 4, *Aḥarei Mot* 12; *Shemot Rabbah* 31:8, 16. Cf. *Sifra, Qedoshim* 9:7, 91d; *Mekhilta, Neziqin* 2 (on Exodus 21:6); *Targum Onqelos* and *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 21:6; 22:7–8; above, [p. 37, n. 108](#).

On God’s calling creation into existence, cf. Isaiah 48:13. The full verse in Genesis reads: *God created the human in His image; in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them*. As suggested by Elijah ben Solomon (Gaon) of Vilna, Rabbi Shim’on’s association of this verse with the verse in Leviticus describing the four species may be based on the tradition that each of these species resembles part of the human body: the palm branch resembling the spine, the myrtle leaf resembling the eye, the willow leaf resembling the mouth, and the *etrog* resembling the heart. See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 30:14; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli’ezer* 5, p. 101; *Tanḥuma, Emor* 19; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Emor* 28; *Yahel Or*.

[327](#). *in our image, according to our likeness...* According to the *Zohar*, *image* alludes to *Tif’eret* and *likeness* to *Shekhinah*. The plural wording *Let us make* applies to the divine couple, whose union generated the original human soul.

On *image* and *likeness* as referring respectively to *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:13b; 2:55a; 3:35b, 117a; *ZH* 73b (*ShS*). On the sefirotic significance of the plural wording in Genesis, see *Zohar* 1:13b, 34b, 47a; 2:55a, 173b; 3:35b. Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:3.

328. In the Book of King Solomon... This ancient source describes an ethereal body, in which each soul is clothed before entering a new human being. Though it precedes the moment of conception, this צלם (*tselem*), “image,” resembles a person’s future physical body. As one moves through life, this צלם (*tselem*), “image,” surrounds him as an aura, departing shortly before death. Based on this notion, the verse in Genesis now implies that *God created the human* בצלמו (*be-tsalmo*), *in his image*—that is, in the person’s primordial image, in the pattern of his ethereal body.

On the ethereal body, see Naḥmanides on Genesis 49:33; *Zohar* 1:7a, 38b (*Heikh*), 81a (*ST*), 90b–91a, 115b (*MhN*), 131a, 217b, 219a, 224a–b, 227a–b, 233b; 2:11a, 13a–b, 96b, 141b, 150a, 156b–157a, 161b; 3:13a–b, 43a–b, 61b, 70b; *ZH* 10b–c (*MhN*), 68d–69a (*ShS*), 90b (*MhN*, *Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 390; idem, *Seder Gan Eden*, 133; Scholem, *Shedim Ruḥot u-Nshamot*, 215–24; idem, *Kabbalah*, 158–59; idem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead*, 251–73; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:770–73. Cf. Rashi on BT *Ḥagigah* 12b, s.v. *ve-ruḥot u-nshamot*; Vol. 6, p. 197, n. 266.

The wording “If the eye were empowered to see” derives from BT *Berakhot* 6a, in the name of Abba Benjamin: “If the eye were empowered to see, no creature could endure the demons.” See *Zohar* 1:55a; 2:142a.

The Book of King Solomon is one of the many volumes housed in the real or imaginary library of the authors of the *Zohar*. For other references to this book, see *Zohar* 1:7b, 13b, 225b; 2:67a, 70a (*RR*), 125a, 139a, 172a, 204b; 3:10b, 65b, 70b, 78b, 151b, 164a, 193b, 263b (*Piq*), 295b (*IZ*); *ZH* 12b (*MhN*). Cf. 1 Kings 11:41. Naḥmanides several times refers to, and quotes from, an Aramaic version of the Apocryphal *Wisdom of Solomon*. See the introduction to his Commentary on the Torah, 5–6; idem, *Kitvei Ramban*, 1:163, 182; Liebes, *Pulḥan ha-Shaḥar*, 63–65. On the numerous scientific and magical books attributed to King Solomon, see Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:956–57.

See Matt, *Zohar: The Book of Enlightenment*, 25; and the comment by Shim'on Lavi, *Ketem Paz*, on *Zohar* 1:7a: “All such books mentioned in the *Zohar*... have been lost in the wanderings of exile. Nothing is left of them except what is mentioned in the *Zohar*.” For a catalogue of these books, see Neuhausen, *Sifriyyah shel Ma'lah*.

329. That image remains present... The *tselem* accompanies the growing fetus, and once the baby is born, the *tselem* surrounds him as he grows and progresses.

The verse in Psalms reads: אַךְ בְּצֶלֶם (*Akh be-tselem*), *As a mere shadow* [or: *phantom*], *a human goes about*. Here, the verse implies: *Only with a tselem, image, does a human go about*. See *Zohar* 1:217b; 3:43a–b. On the relation between a person's ethereal *tselem* and his shadow, see below, [note 335](#).

330. When those spirits emerge... When the soul issues from her divine source, each one is arrayed splendidly and clothed in a form resembling the physical body that she will eventually assume in this world below. From that form issues the *tselem, image*, which is “third from the spirit”—apparently implying that first comes רוּחַ (*ruah*), “spirit”; then נֶפֶשׁ (*nefesh*), “soul”; and then the *tselem*. (The highest aspect of the soul—נִשְׁמָה [*neshamah*], “breath,

soul, soul-breath”—is bestowed upon a person if he becomes worthy.) The *tselem* appears in the world at the moment of conception, even before any aspect of the soul enters the incipient body.

Because a Jewish *tselem* originates in the divine realm and a non-Jewish *tselem* derives from an impure source, a Jew should not “mingle his image with the image of a Gentile”—probably referring to sexual relations.

On the three aspects of soul, see above, [note 77](#). On the innate distinction between Jews and Gentiles, see Judah Halevi, *Kuzari* 1:27-47, 95, 102-11; 2:35-44. For parallel medieval Christian views of the demonic nature of Jews, see Trachtenberg, *The Devil and the Jews*.

[331](#). **[1:220a]** In the standard editions of the *Zohar* (based on the Mantua edition) this passage (extending below to [p. 182](#) at [n. 369](#)) appears as part of *Parashat Va-Yhi* (1:220a-221a). However, it is out of place there and actually fits the context here in *Parashat Emor*, as evidenced by numerous manuscripts (including M8, V3, V6, V17), as well as the text preserved in *Or Yaqar* and the Cremona edition. See Vol. 3, p. 328, n. 152; Galante on *Zohar* 1:219b.

[332](#). **Come and see the difference...** According to *halakhah*, if a Jew dies, his corpse conveys ritual impurity to any Jew who comes in contact with it or who is present in the house where it lies. Furthermore, various items in the house (unsealed vessels, food, and liquids) are defiled.

The halakhic consensus is that Gentile corpses also convey impurity, but here Rabbi Shim'on insists that they do not. His position may be based on the view attributed to him in BT *Yevamot* 60b-61a: “The graves of Gentiles do not impart impurity by a tent [i.e., one who stands on or bends over such a grave, thereby constituting a tent with his body, is not rendered impure], as is said: *You, My flock, flock of My pasture, are human [and I am Your God]* (Ezekiel 34:31). You are called *human*; Gentiles are not called *human*.” In this Talmudic passage, Rabbi Shim'on assumes

a connection between *human* and “impurity by a tent,” based on the wording of Numbers 19:14: *When a human dies in a tent, anyone entering the tent and anyone in the tent will be impure seven days.*

See BT *Bava Metsi'a* 114b; *Zohar* 1:20b, 131a; 2:25b (*Piq*), 86a; 3:219a; ZH 78d (*MhN*, *Rut*); Moses de León, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 48a. On the complicated question of Gentile ritual impurity, see Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities*.

333. Well, when an Israelite dies... His holy soul departs, and the body becomes impure, contaminated by the demonic Other Side. A Gentile, however, possesses an impure soul, rendering him impure throughout his life; once he dies, his intense impurity vanishes and his body no longer defiles anyone else. See above, [note 330](#).

334. With this holy image... A person's *tselem* (image, ethereal body) accompanies him throughout life and generates a second *tselem*.

On the *tselem*, see above, [notes 328-30](#). On the two *tselamim*, see *Zohar* 3:13b, 43a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:770-71.

335. When his days draw near... When a person is about to die, both of his protective *tselamim* (images) disappear.

The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *Before the day breathes [or: blows, exhales] and הַצְּלָמִים (ha-tselamim), the shadows, flee, turn away, my love, be like a gazelle or a young stag on jagged mountains.* The first part of the verse may refer to the end of night, just before the break of dawn, when darkness flees. Alternatively, the “fleeing shadows” indicate the late afternoon, when shadows lengthen. Here, the latter meaning pertains, with the end of daylight symbolizing the end of one's life on earth.

Rabbi Shim'on identifies the *tselamim* (*shadows*) with the two *tselamim* (images) that accompany a person and *flee* as death approaches, along with his shadow. On the relation

(or identification) between a person's *tselem* (image) and his shadow, see *Zohar* 1:217b; 3:13b, 43a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:771; above, [note 329](#).

The terrifying significance of not seeing one's shadow derives from European folklore and German Hasidism. See Eleazar of Worms, *Hokhmat ha-Nefesh*, 12a; *Sefer Hasidim* (ed. Wistinetzki), par. 1544; *Sefer Hasidim* (ed. Margalio), par. 452; Nahmanides on Numbers 14:9; *Zohar* 1:217b, 257b (*Hash*); 2:142a-b; 3:13b; Bahya ben Asher on Numbers 14:9; Recanati on Numbers 14:9, 74d-75a; *Kolbo*, par. 52; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:108; Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 214-25; Wilhelm, "Sidrei Tiqqunim," 130-43; Weinstock, "Ha-Adam ve-Tsillo"; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:771, 831-32; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 30. Cf. BT *Horayot* 12a.

[336](#). On the day that Judgment is aroused... On Rosh Hashanah, divine decrees are recorded, but if a person turns back to God genuinely, they are annulled.

See *Zohar* 3:99a-b (*Piq*). "Decrees" renders פתקין (*pitqin*), "notes, slips," which derives from Greek *pittakion*, "tablet, written message, note." See *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 185, s.v. *pitqa*; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 120, n. 52.

"An archival ledger" renders אחמתא (*ahmeta*). This word appears in Ezra 6:2 as the name of the ancient capital of the Medes (modern Hamadan), but the context mentions archives and treasures: *Thereupon, at the order of King Darius, they searched the archives [literally: house of the books] where the treasures were stored in Babylon. And in the citadel of Ahmeta in the province of Media, a scroll was found in which a memorandum was written.* Rashi and Ibn Ezra, ad loc., quote an interpretation of *ahmeta* as "a vessel" for letters and scrolls. (Cf. Hebrew חמת (*hemet*), "[goat's] skin" containing water or wine.) In *Targum* to Esther 1:4, אחמיתין (*ahmitin*) means "vessels" containing gold and gems. In the *Zohar*, *ahmeta* can refer to a treasure-house, treasury, archive, or an account book.

See *Pirgei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* (ed. Friedlander) 50; *Zohar* 2:97a; 3:149b, 154b, 156b, 166b, 172a; *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 173, s.v. *aḥmeta*; *Derekh Emet*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; Liebes, "Shimmushan shel Millim," 17-18; idem, *Peraqim*, 346.

337. *teshuvah* wishes to depart... If one fails to repent even on Yom Kippur, then it becomes quite difficult to escape the decree of Judgment because the opportunity for *teshuvah* is nearly lost.

338. If he attains complete *teshuvah*... But even after Yom Kippur, if a person strives and succeeds in repenting completely, his sentence is suspended until *Shemini Atseret*, "the Eighth Day of Assembly," following the seven days of *Sukkot*. If, until then, he maintains a pure state of *teshuvah*, the decrees of Judgment are annulled or at least postponed.

Elsewhere the *Zohar* indicates that divine decrees are finalized not on *Shemini Atseret* but rather on the preceding day, *Hosha'na Rabbah* (the seventh day of *Sukkot*). This latter idea derives from medieval sources. See Simḥah ben Samuel, *Maḥazor Vitri*, pp. 444-45; *Sefer Ḥasidim* (ed. Wistinetzki), par. 1544; *Sefer Ḥasidim* (ed. Margalioṭ), par. 452; Abraham ben Nathan ha-Yarḥi, *Sefer ha-Manhig*, 2:402-3 (and parallels cited there by Raphael); Zedekiah Anav, *Shibbolei ha-Leqet*, 371; *Zohar* 2:142a-b; 3:31b-32a; Wilhelm, "Sidrei Tiqqunim," 130-43; Tamar, "Hosha'na-Rabbah ke-Yom Ḥittum ha-Din"; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 30-31.

339. Then images are withdrawn... If death has been decreed upon a person and he has not succeeded in repenting by *Shemini Atseret*, then his *tselemim* (images, ethereal bodies) disappear, along with his shadow, signifying that he will die sometime during the year. If the images (along with the shadow) are diminished, but have not disappeared completely, then his punishment will be somewhat lessened.

On the relation (or identification) between a person's *tselem* (image) and his shadow, and on the disappearance of

the shadow, see above, [note 335](#).

“Verdict” renders the Zoharic neologism טופסֵקא (tuphseqa), apparently a playful alteration of פסקא (pisqa), “decree.” See David ben Judah he-Ḥasid, *Or Zaru’a*, 275; *Or Yaqar*; *Bei’ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 179, s.v. tuphseqa.

[340. Lacking on the head ...](#) If the shadow of a person’s head has disappeared, while his body’s shadow remains, this indicates that he himself—the head of the household—will die, but his son or wife will endure. This applies if he has not repented even after Yom Kippur until *Shemini Atseret*. If he does repent, then he will fall seriously ill but will recover.

On the disappearance of the shadow of the head, see Naḥmanides and Baḥya ben Asher on Numbers 14:9; and David Abudarham, *Sefer Abudarham*, p. 298.

[341. If the body is lacking...](#) If the body does not cast a shadow but the head does. The concluding clause apparently means “when he has not divorced his wife.”

[342. If his hands are flawed...](#) If the shadow of his hands is missing or defective. The concluding sentence apparently implies that one should check for his shadow in the moonlight when there are not many clouds. On the missing or defective shadow of the hands, see David Abudarham, *Sefer Abudarham*, p. 298.

[343. But virtuous devotees...](#) They do not need to inspect their shadows. Rather, they approach each day as if it were their last one on earth, so they engage constantly in *teshuvah*.

See M *Avot* 2:10, in the name of Rabbi Eli’ezer: “Turn back [to God; or repent] one day before your death.” An expansion of this appears in *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 15: “‘Turn back one day before your death.’ Rabbi Eli’ezer’s disciples asked him, ‘Does a person really know which day he will die, so that he can perform *teshuvah*?’ He replied, ‘All the more so, he should perform *teshuvah* today lest he die

tomorrow; he should perform *teshuvah* tomorrow lest he die the next day. Thereby, all his days will be spent in *teshuvah*.”

See *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 29; BT *Shabbat* 153a; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 9:8; *Midrash Tehillim* 90:16.

344. All that is called by My name... Everything that God has called into existence is linked with heavenly forces and with the *sefirot*. By using material objects, especially with holy intent, a person can affect those higher entities. For example, hyssop and cedar wood (which are used to purify a person suffering from scaly affliction of the skin) allude respectively to *Yesod* and *Tif'eret*.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 10:6 (per Oxford MS 147), in the name of Rabbi Simon: “You cannot find a single blade of grass below that does not have a constellation [or: planet] in the sky, striking it and telling it: ‘Grow!’” See above, [p. 39, n. 115](#).

The theme of “as above, so below” is a cardinal principle of Kabbalah. See *Zohar* 1:38a, 57b–58a, 129a, 145b, 156b, 158b, 172a, 205b; 2:15b (*MhN*), 20a (*MhN*), 48b, 82b, 144a–b, 186b, 195b, 231b, 251a (*Heikh*); 3:40b, 45b, 65b, 119a, 150a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:273. The similar Hermetic formulation reads: “That which is below is like that which is above, and that which is above is like that which is below, to perform the miracles of the one thing.” See *Secretum secretorum*, ed. Robert Steele, *Opera hactenus*, fasc. 5, 262; Antoine Faivre, “Hermetism,” in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Eliade, 6:295. Cf. above, pp. 41–42, n. 122.

On hyssop and cedar wood, see Leviticus 14:4, 49–52; Numbers 19:6; *Zohar* 3:53a–b. The verse in Isaiah reads: *Everyone who* [or: *All that*] *is called by My name, whom I created for My glory, whom I formed and made*. See above at [note 326](#).

345. Some of them are connected with the Holy Name... Such as the four species that a Jew is commanded to hold and shake on *Sukkot*. As explained below, each of

these symbolizes one or more of the *sefirot*, which are associated with individual letters of the name *YHVH*. By holding all four species and shaking them, one stimulates and unifies the Divine Name.

On the sefirotic significance of the letters of *YHVH*, see above, [note 83](#). On the four species, see above, [note 325](#).

The expression “grasp them” renders לֶאֱחֹזֵק לָן (*le-aḥeid lon*), which can also be construed as “unite them.” On the requirement to hold the four species together, see Recanati on Leviticus 23:40, 67d; Baḥya ben Asher on Leviticus 23:40; Joseph Caro, *Beit Yosef, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 651:11; idem, *Shulḥan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 651:11; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 66–67; Hallamish, *Ha-Qabbalah*, 613–18. Cf. *Bahir* 118 (175); Naḥmanides on Leviticus 23:40.

[346.](#) **By word and deed...** One should utter the appropriate blessing and then perform the *mitsvah*, thereby stimulating the *sefirot*, which constitute God’s *glory*. On the need for both word and action, see above, [note 230](#). Cf. above, pp. 41–42, n. 122.

[347.](#) **Alternatively, All that is called by My name...** Rabbi Shim’on matches each of the four clauses of the verse in Isaiah with one of the four species named in Leviticus. The first two correspondences may involve sefirotic symbolism. The *fruit of a majestic tree* (the *etrog*) represents *Shekhinah*, who is often described as God’s name (*My name*). *Fronds of palms* (the *lulav*) represents *Yesod*, who unites with *Shekhinah* (known as God’s *glory*); so this species was *created for My glory*.

See *Or Yaqar*; Galante; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1309. The full verse in Leviticus reads: *You shall take for yourselves on the first day fruit of a majestic tree, fronds of palms, and a branch of a thickly-leaved tree and willows of the stream, and you shall rejoice before YHVH your God seven days*. See above, [note 325](#).

[348.](#) **on the first day, precisely...** The first day of *Sukkot* is the fifteenth of the month—understood here as

“fifth from the tenth,” alluding to *Tif’eret*, who is the fifth *sefirah* counting upward from *Shekhinah*, the tenth. By holding together all four species, one unites *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the *etrog*) with *Tif’eret* and the powers surrounding Him (symbolized by the other three species), as explained below.

On *Tif’eret* as the fifth *sefirah* counting from below, see above, [note 289](#). For various interpretations of this paragraph, see *Or Yaqar*; Galante; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1309; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

[349](#). **However, on the first day...** This phrase can also refer to *Binah*, the *first* sefirotic *day* issuing from *Hokhmah*, conveying the flow of emanation to all the lower *sefirot*. By fulfilling the *mitsvah* of the four species, one conducts this flow to the world.

[350](#). **Similarly, Yom Kippur has set everyone free...** On Rosh Hashanah, King *Tif’eret* judges the world, holding them captive, as it were. If people engage in *teshuvah*, then Yom Kippur—symbolizing the Divine Mother, *Binah*—grants them atonement and sets them free. Their hunger and thirst, resulting from the fast, stimulate them to pray further for nourishment and water—specifically for rain.

The yearning for rain figures prominently in *Sukkot*: it is associated with the four species of vegetation and intrinsic to the water libation performed in the Temple during the festival as well as to the special prayer for rain recited on *Shemini Atseret*.

On *Binah*’s crowning King *Tif’eret*, see above, [notes 164, 219](#). On the term *Aggadta*, see the Glossary.

[351](#). **But on this day...** The phrase *on the first day* can also refer to Abraham, who symbolizes *Hesed*, first of the seven lower *sefirot* (symbolized by the seven days of Creation). This *sefirah* is also identified with the first of the seven clouds of glory, which protected Israel in the desert and which resemble the *sukkot* that sheltered them. *Hesed* is also symbolized by water, and it represents the first flow of emanation issuing from *Binah*. Furthermore, Abraham is the

first well-digger mentioned in the Bible. See Genesis 21:25, 30; 26:15, 18.

352. Fruit of a glorious tree—the well of Isaac... Referring to *Shekhinah*, who derives from *Gevurah*, symbolized by Isaac. By being bound on the altar by his father, Isaac “glorified the blessed Holy One, and He [*Gevurah*, or *Tif’eret*] is called a *glorious tree*.” “The *fruit* of this *glorious tree*” represents *Shekhinah*.

The verse in Leviticus reads: *You shall take for yourselves on the first day fruit of a majestic [or: glorious] tree, fronds of palms* etc. For the full verse, see above, [note 347](#).

353. Fronds of palms... Symbolizing *Yesod*. This *sefirah* is known as Righteous One, and the verse in Psalms compares *the righteous one* to a *palm tree*. *Yesod* is intimately joined with *Shekhinah*, which explains why the verse reads: *fruit of a glorious tree, fronds of palms*, without the interruption of the conjunction *and*. *Shekhinah* and *Yesod* grow together. Through *Yesod*, *Shekhinah* (“the well”) is filled, after *Yesod* itself is filled by the flow of emanation from above.

The clause “one does not grow without the other” may allude to the fact that palm trees are dioecious: male and female flowers grow on separate trees. Male flowers produce pollen, while female flowers develop into fruit. (As early as 2300 B.C.E., Mesopotamian farmers had learned to hang a male flower in a female tree to enhance pollination.) Elsewhere in the *Zohar*, the male and female aspects of the palm tree symbolize respectively *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*, who are interdependent, becoming fruitful only by joining together.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 40(41):1; *Midrash Tehillim* 92:11; *BT Pesahim* 56a; *Bahir* 117 (172), 139 (198), and Scholem’s note, ad loc.; Rashi on *Pesahim* 56a, s.v. *Rav Aḥa*; *Tosafot, Menahot* 71a, s.v. *markivin*; *Zohar* 1:82a; 2:37b, 126a; 3:16a, 135b (*IR*), 143b (*IR*), 292a (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 128; *Or Yaqar*; Galante; Scholem.

On *Yesod* as Righteous One, see above, [note 43](#). On the significance of the lack of *and* in the phrase *fruit of a glorious tree, fronds of palms*, see *Sifra, Emor* 16:7, 102d; *JT Sukkah* 3:7, 53d; *BT Sukkah* 34b.

[354](#). And a branch of a thickly-leaved tree... Alluding to *Tif'eret*, who can be pictured as one branch of the sefirotic tree but serves as its trunk, embracing all the *sefirot* from *Hesed* to *Yesod*. The word עֲבוֹת (*avot*), *thickly-leaved*, is a homophone of אֲבוֹת (*avot*), “patriarchs,” signifying that *Tif'eret* (symbolized by Jacob) combines and completes the polar opposites *Hesed* and *Gevurah* (symbolized respectively by Abraham and Isaac).

From *Tif'eret, Yesod*—or *Yesod Olam* (Foundation of the World)—receives the flow, which it conveys to *Shekhinah* (“the well”).

[355](#). And willows of the stream... Rabbi Shim'on applies the plural *willows* (traditionally interpreted as referring to two willow twigs) to *the stream* itself, alluding to two sefirotic streams, *Netsah* and *Hod*, which convey the flow of emanation to *Yesod* (known as Righteous One). This sefirotic pair are sometimes pictured as two testicles supplying semen to *Yesod*, the divine phallus.

[356](#). Alternatively, and willows of the stream... Although usually *Netsah* and *Hod* are pictured respectively on the right and left side, here both of them are described as גְבוּרִין (*gevuran*), “powers,” linked to *Gevurah* (on the left), who is symbolized by Isaac. According to this interpretation, the singular wording *the stream* refers to the “supernal stream,” *Binah*, who is the direct source of *Gevurah*. Thus, *Netsah* and *Hod* are *willows of the stream*.

Whereas Mother *Binah* is the source of *Gevurah*—or *Din* (Judgment)—Father *Hokhmah* is the source of *Hesed*. Since the *willows of the stream* derive from *Binah*, they convey some of the harshness of Judgment; so they provide shade (just as *Binah* shields the lower *sefirot*), but yield no fruit (just as harsh Judgment is not fruitful).

See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1312. On the willow not yielding fruit, see BT *Menaḥot* 27a. On its lacking sweetness, cf. *Vayiqra Rabbah* 30:12; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 27:9.

357. two pillars... *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* are also pictured as two legs, supporting the trunk of the sefirotic body. The clause “but willows of the stream...” emphasizes that the essential role of *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* is to convey the flow of emanation. “All of these” means all four species of vegetation, which—if held and shaken properly—guarantee that this flow will reach *Shekhinah*.

358. fruit of a glorious tree—Abraham... Alternatively, the first two species mentioned in the verse from Leviticus allude to *Ḥesed* (symbolized by Abraham) and *Gevurah* (symbolized by Isaac). As indicated above (at [note 354](#)), the third species alludes to *Tif’eret* (symbolized by Jacob).

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 30:10: “Alternatively, *the fruit of עץ הדר (ets hadar), a glorious tree—Abraham, שהדרו הקב"ה (she-hiddero ha-qadosh barukh hu), whom the blessed Holy One made glorious [or: honored], with old age, as is said: Abraham was old, advanced in years (Genesis 24:1), and it is written וְהִדַּרְתָּ פָנָי (ve-hadarta penei), you shall honor the face of [or: defer to], an elder (Leviticus 19:32).*

“כפות (Kappot), *FronDS of, palms—Isaac, who was כפוח (kaphut), tied, and bound upon the altar. And a branch of a thickly-leaved tree—Jacob: just as the myrtle is teeming with leaves, so was Jacob teeming with sons....”*

See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 27:9. The verse in Leviticus reads: *You shall take for yourselves on the first day fruit of a majestic [or: glorious] tree, fronds of palms, etc.* For the full verse, see above, [note 347](#).

359. And willows of the stream... Alluding to *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*. See above, [notes 355–57](#).

360. The reason for this teaching... Since the third species (*a thickly-leaved tree*) alludes to Jacob (symbolizing

Tif'eret), it makes sense to suggest that the preceding two species (*fruit of a glorious tree, fronds of palms*) allude to Abraham and Isaac—symbolizing respectively *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, who are completed or embraced by *Tif'eret*.

However, Rabbi Shim'on insists on the interpretation he already presented. The *fruit of a glorious tree* more fittingly refers to *Shekhinah*, “the well of Isaac,” also known as Lower *Gevurah*, deriving from *Gevurah* itself. See above, [note 352](#).

361. כפת (kappot), fronds, spelled deficiently... This word is spelled here in Leviticus without the letter ו (vav), suggesting to Rabbi Shim'on the root כפת (kpht), “to tie, bind.” *Yesod*, symbolized by the *fronds of palms*, is intimately bound to *Shekhinah* (pictured as “the well”).

See above, [note 353](#). On *kappot* and the root *kpht*, see *Sifra, Emor* 16:5, 102d; *JT Sukkah* 3:1, 53c; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 30:8, 10; *BT Sukkah* 31a, 32a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 27:8–9; above, [note 358](#).

362. And a branch of a thickly-leaved tree... Alluding to *Tif'eret*. See above, [note 354](#).

363. And willows of the stream—Isaac... The *willows* symbolize *Netsah* and *Hod*, on the right and left sides. Both of them are linked to *Gevurah* (symbolized by Isaac) and thereby to *the stream* of Mother *Binah*, rather than to Father *Ḥokhmah*. Although *Binah* Herself is not characterized by Judgment, She represents its source. See above, [note 356](#).

364. Rav Hamnuna interpreted... He combined the two explanations mentioned above (at [notes 355, 357](#)). However, if *Netsah* and *Hod* convey the flow of emanation to *Yesod* (known as Righteous One) and through Him generate fruit, then how can *Netsah* and *Hod* be symbolized by *willows of the stream*, which yield no fruit?

The concluding sentence apparently refers to the explanation above (at [note 356](#)), that *Netsah* and *Hod* are both linked to *Gevurah* (on the left), whose quality of harsh Judgment yields no fruit.

For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; Galante; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1313; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the willow lacking taste and smell, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 30:12; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 27:9.

365. So, etrog is on the left... Traditionally, the *etrog* is held in the left hand, corresponding to the heart, which is thought to be located slightly to the left within the human body. Both the *etrog* and the heart symbolize *Shekhinah*, who is associated with *Gevurah* on the left side of the sefirotic body.

The *lulav* (symbolizing *Yesod*) is held in the right hand, which corresponds to the divine right hand (*Hesed*), since *Yesod* conveys the loving flow from *Hesed*. The biblical description of the *lulav* as כַּפֹּת (kappot), *fronds of, palms*, suggests כַּפֹּת (kaphut), “bound”—implying that the *lulav* should be joined with the other species and that *Yesod* is bound to the *sefirot* above Him and conveys their flow to *Shekhinah*.

Technically, the heart is located in the middle of the body, between the two lungs under the sternum. However, of the two ventricles, the right one pumps blood only to the lungs, whereas the left one, which is more powerful, pumps blood through the rest of the body. Since the left ventricle is slightly to the left portion of the body and is the most powerful part of the heart, this gives the effect of the heart seeming to be on the left side of the body.

On holding the *etrog* in the left hand and the *lulav* in the right, see BT *Sukkah* 31b, 37b; *Midrash Tehillim* 17:5; 25:5. On the *etrog* resembling or corresponding to the heart, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 30:14; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli’ezer* 5, p. 101; *Tanḥuma, Emor* 19; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Emor* 28; above, [note 326](#). On *kappot* and the root *kph*, see above, [notes 358, 361](#).

366. In the Book of Aggadta... The four species symbolize the supernal guests who are invited into the sukkah: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph, and

David—corresponding to the seven lower *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* to *Shekhinah*. Among the four species, the three sprigs of myrtle symbolize *Ḥesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* (represented by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob); the two willow twigs symbolize *Netsah* and *Hod* (represented by Moses and Aaron); the *lulav* symbolizes *Yesod* (represented by Joseph); and the *etrog* symbolizes *Shekhinah* (represented by David). While holding the four species, “one presents his request to the King” during the festival.

On the supernal guests, see above, [notes 313-14](#). On the term *Aggadta*, see the Glossary.

367. On this day... On the first day of *Sukkot*, Israel leaves the divine court (or the synagogue) triumphantly, carrying the four species, which are symbols of the *sefirot* (the realm of faith).

368. This may be compared to two people... The two parties represent Israel and the nations of the world.

The parable derives from midrashic sources. See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 30:2; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 27:2; *Tanḥuma, Emor* 18; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Emor* 27; *Midrash Tehillim* 17:5. The revision here also incorporates elements from *Vayiqra Rabbah* 30:7 (or its parallel: *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 27:7).

“Legionnaire” renders לגיון (*ligyon*), derived from Greek *legeon* and Latin *legio*, “legion.” In rabbinic literature, the term applies to a legion of troops or a legate, and here, to a soldier or officer. See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 30:6; *Zohar* 1:166b-167a; 2:121b, 125a, 193a.

369. Until here, joy of all... Through the seventh day of *Sukkot*, everyone rejoices along with the supernal guests; even the nations of the world partake of this joy. The Torah commands that during *Sukkot* a total of seventy bulls are to be sacrificed on the altar, and according to rabbinic tradition, these benefited the seventy nations of the world. Following the seventh day of the festival comes *Shemini Atseret*

(Eighth [Day of] Assembly), when God rejoices with Israel alone.

On the seventy bulls and the seventy nations, see above, [note 91](#). The parable here derives from midrashic sources, though here it is condensed, or more likely has suffered scribal omission (skipping from the human king's statement to God's remark about the offerings for the nations). The "guests" mentioned in the parable are the nations of the world (or their heavenly princes), as distinct from the supernal guests.

See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 28:9; *Tanḥuma, Pinḥas* 16; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), 15; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 21:24; *Zohar* 1:64a-b, 208b; David ben Judah he-Ḥasid, *Or Zaru'a*, 276. Cf. BT *Sukkah* 55b. On the transition from *Zohar* 1:220b to 3:104b, see above, [note 331](#).

[370.](#) **Yet, the guests of faith...** The supernal guests who were invited to the *Sukkah* remain during *Shemini Atseret*. On *atseret* as *gathering*, see above, [note 205](#).

[371.](#) **Jacob heads the rejoicing...** Jacob symbolizes *Tif'eret*, who is known as Written Torah, and here Rabbi Shim'on may be alluding to *Simḥat Torah* (Joy of Torah), when the reading of the Torah scroll is completed and then immediately begun again. (In the land of Israel, *Shemini Atseret* is also celebrated as *Simḥat Torah*, whereas in the Diaspora, *Simḥat Torah* is celebrated on the second day of *Shemini Atseret*.) See above, [note 206](#). Jacob's name became Israel, the same name that appears in both verses quoted here.

[372.](#) **[Command the Children of Israel]...** The context (Leviticus 24:1-2) reads: *YHVH spoke to Moses, saying, "Command the Children of Israel, that they bring you clear oil of beaten olives for lighting [or: for the light], to kindle a lamp perpetually.*

[373.](#) **the blessed Holy One adjoined this section...** This passage in Leviticus (24:1-9), dealing with the lampstand and incense, follows immediately upon the discussion of the festivals (in Leviticus 23). Rabbi El'azar

explains that the festivals symbolize the lower *sefirot* (*Hesed* to *Shekhinah*), which are pictured as seven lamps lit with the oil of emanation flowing from *Hokhmah*. By celebrating the festivals and worshiping in the Temple below, Israel stimulates the sefirotic process above and delights *Shekhinah*, who is sometimes pictured as *the heart*.

On the verse in Proverbs, see *Tanḥuma, Tetsavveh* 15; *Zohar* 1:230a; 3:8a, 11a, 30b, 34a, 58b, 89a (*Piq*), 149a, 150a, 151b, 177b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 86–87.

374. Rejoice in YHVH, and delight... On the festivals, one should rejoice with God and delight Him. The simple sense of the exclamation in Psalm 118 is *This is the day YHVH has made. Let us delight and rejoice bo, in it*. But Rabbi Abba draws on a midrashic interpretation: *Let us delight and rejoice bo, in Him*. The two meanings are “one entity,” because the divine flow of blessing and joy permeates *the day*, or because *YHVH* (namely *Tif’eret*), is pictured as a cosmic *day* and symbolized by the festival *day*.

See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 22:2: “*This is the day YHVH has made. Let us delight and rejoice bo*. Rabbi Avin said, ‘We would not have known whether to rejoice in the day or in the blessed Holy One. Then Solomon came and explained: *Let us delight and rejoice in You* (Song of Songs 1:4)—*in You*, in Your Torah; *in You*, in Your deliverance.’”

See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 28:9; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:4. The full verse in Psalm 32 reads: *Rejoice in YHVH, and delight, O you righteous; sing gladly, all upright ones!*

375. Rejoice in YHVH—when judgments are subdued... *YHVH* represents *Tif’eret*, the quality of Compassion, which overcomes harsh Judgment. When Compassion is aroused, the divine couple—*Yesod* and *Shekhinah*—is blessed and unites. *Yesod* is known as Righteous One, and *Shekhinah* is called Righteousness; together they are

the *righteous*, addressed in the verse from Psalms. From their union, blessing flows to all the lower worlds.

On *YHVH* and *Elohim* signifying, respectively, Compassion and Judgment, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 26; JT *Berakhot* 9:5, 14b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:15; 14:1; 33:3; 73:3; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 24:2; BT *Berakhot* 60b; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 43; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 7:7; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'era* 4; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 40, 167a; *Midrash Tehillim* 56:3; *Shemot Rabbah* 3:6; 6:1-3; 30:13.

On *Yesod* as Righteous One, see above, [note 43](#). On Righteous One and Righteousness, see *Zohar* 1:32a (*Tos*), 34a, 49a, 182b, 246a; 2:57a, 147b, 169b; 3:26a, 68a, 69a, 115b, 165a, 236b, 287a, 297a.

[376.](#) ***Sing gladly, all upright ones...*** Alluding to Israel, who believe in the mystery of sefirotic union and, through their joyous devotion, can participate in it. For the full verse in Psalms, see above at the end of [note 374](#).

[377.](#) ***Whoever says that there is no need for action...*** The upper worlds cannot function properly without human prayer and ritual.

The criticism here alludes to Jewish philosophical rationalists in Spain who belittled ritual performance and observance of the *mitsvot*, claiming that one could rely on elevated thought and inner devotion. See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 391-92; *Or Yaqar*; Vital; Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, 203; 397-98, n. 154; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:952, 1167, 1213; Matt, "The Mystic and the *Mizvot*," 372-76.

The curse תיפח רוּחֵיהּ (*tippaḥ ruḥeih*), "May his spirit expire!" (appearing often in rabbinic literature) is equivalent to "May he breathe his last!" "May he drop dead!" See *Zohar* 1:238b; 3:106a, 149b, 152a, 157b.

Cf. *Sifra*, *Beḥuqqotai* 1:5, 110c: "One who learns [Torah] without intending to act—better for him if he had never been created!" See JT *Berakhot* 1:2, 3b; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 35:7.

On the need to manifest action—and the principle “By an action below is aroused an action above”—see above, [pp. 41-42](#), [n. 122](#). On the need for word and action, see above, [note 230](#). On the verse in Proverbs, see above, [note 373](#).

[378](#). **The altar below...** The sacrifices offered on the Temple altar stimulate *Shekhinah*, who is pictured as a divine altar. The rituals of the human priest below stimulate *Hesed*, the Divine Priest.

[379](#). **[If you...] call the Sabbath ‘delight’...** The context in Isaiah (58:13-14) reads: *If you refrain from trampling the Sabbath, from engaging in your affairs on My holy day, and call the Sabbath “delight,” the holy of YHVH “honored”; if you honor it by not going your own ways, pursuing your affairs, or speaking a word, then you will delight in YHVH, and I will cause you to ride upon the heights of the earth, and feed you the inheritance of your father Jacob—for the mouth of YHVH has spoken.*

In the biblical context, the phrase *speaking a word* may refer to idle, mundane, or excessive talk, discussing business, or legal proceedings. Here, Rabbi Yose wonders how *pursuing your affairs*—and especially *speaking a word*—can detract from the holiness of Sabbath.

See the interpretation of the verse from Isaiah in BT *Shabbat* 113a-b: *“If you honor it by not going your own ways. If you honor it—that your Sabbath garments should not resemble your weekday garments.... By not going your own ways—that your Sabbath walking should not resemble your weekday walking. Pursuing your affairs—your affairs are forbidden, the affairs of heaven are permitted. Or speaking a word—that your Sabbath speech should not resemble your weekday speech. Speech [about mundane matters] is forbidden; thought [about such matters] is permitted.”* On speaking during Sabbath, see above, [note 155](#).

380. It is surely diminishment... Rabbi Yitshak explains that every spoken word stimulates a power above. If one speaks a mundane or profane word on Sabbath, it arouses a profane force above, associated with the profane weekdays. This disturbs the holy Sabbath union of *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah* (known respectively as the blessed Holy One and Assembly of Israel), and prevents the manifestation of *Keter* (the Holy Ancient One).

During the week (or in the current state of exile), the world is conducted by the chief angel Metatron and his forces, who are agents of the sefirotic days. Relative to the *sefirot*, Metatron is considered “profane.” See above, [notes 146-47](#).

For a more demonic sense of “profane” as contrasted to Sabbath, see *Zohar* 1:32a; 2:47b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1001, n.73. On the potency and effect of spoken words, see above, [p. 32](#), [n. 95](#).

381. thought is permitted... During Sabbath, one is permitted to think about mundane matters but not to talk about them. See BT *Shabbat* 113a-b, quoted above, [note 379](#).

382. If one emits a holy word... Such a word stimulates sefirotic holiness, which adorns King *Tif'eret*. Cf. *Zohar* 1:4b-5a; 2:85a, according to which words or innovations of Torah are themselves crowned.

383. But if someone fasts on Sabbath... Rabbi Yose affirms that speaking of mundane matters on Sabbath blemishes the holiness of the day; but what about fasting on Sabbath? Since the three joyous Sabbath meals correspond to various *sefirot* (the realm of faith), one who nullifies these meals should surely be punished.

The fasting that Rabbi Yose refers to is in response to a bad dream. According to rabbinic tradition, one can avert the fulfillment of such a dream by fasting, which annuls the dream. See BT *Shabbat* 11a: “Rava son of Mehasia said in the name of Rav Hama son of Gorias in the name of Rav:

'Fasting is as fine for a dream as fire for tow [short or broken fibers combed off flax].' Rav Hisda said, 'If it is on the same day.' Rav Yosef said, 'Even on Sabbath.'"

See above, [notes 32, 96](#); *Zohar* 3:288b (IZ). On the three Sabbath meals, see above, [note 151](#).

[384](#). this one is attended to from above... Rabbi Yitshak begins to explain that one who fasts on Sabbath is actually attended to immediately.

The tranquility of Sabbath extends even to Hell, where the wicked are allowed to rest. According to *Bereshit Rabbah* 11:5, one of the dwellers in Hell reports: "Whoever does not observe the Sabbath willingly in your world observes it here against his will All week long we are punished and on the Sabbath we are granted rest." See above, [note 149](#).

[385](#). When the Holy Ancient One is revealed... The Holy Ancient One (*Keter*) represents pure Compassion, which is manifested during the Sabbath day. This Compassion annuls all harsh decrees of Judgment, including the decree that was revealed in the dream of the one who is fasting on Sabbath.

The wedding celebration is that of King *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*. See above, [note 150](#). On various correspondences between the three Sabbath meals and specific *sefirot*, see Vol. 4, pp. 498-501, nn. 480-88. Cf. *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

[386](#). A decree of seventy years... See BT *Berakhot* 31b: "Rabbi El'azar said in the name of Rabbi Yose son of Zimra, 'If one sits fasting on Sabbath, [even] a decree of seventy years standing against him is torn up. Yet even so, he is still punished for [ruining] the delight of Sabbath.' What is his remedy? Rav Naḥman son of Yitshak said, 'Let him sit fasting [on a weekday, to atone] for this fast.'"

Rabbi Yitshak identifies the "decree of seventy years" as one which has been confirmed by all seven lower *sefirot*, which are "seventy crowns of the King" (each *sefirah*

comprising ten entities). The last sentence excludes fasting on Sabbath in response to a bad dream experienced before Sabbath eve, as well as fasting on Sabbath for any reason other than a bad dream. On the passage in *Berakhot*, see above, [note 32](#).

[387](#). constrained in a neck-iron... For punishment or for impending execution.

[388](#). Similarly with this one who is fasting... He is distressed by the divine decree revealed in his dream and feels as if he is bound in a neck-iron. If he had dreamt a threatening dream on a weeknight, then by fasting on the very next day he could annul the dream; all the more so, in this case, by fasting on Sabbath. On the “seventy years,” see above, [note 386](#).

[389](#). For there is not a single day... Each day of the week is ruled by a particular heavenly power, or by one of the seven lower *sefirot* (each of which represents a cosmic day). If one experiences a threatening dream on a weeknight and then fasts upon awakening, the power of that day cancels the dream—except when the threatening decree has been confirmed by the seventy divine forces. Such a dream-decree can only be annulled if a person experiences it on Sabbath eve and then fasts on Sabbath day. See above, [note 96](#). Cf. *Zohar* 1:224a-b.

[390](#). Therefore, on that very day, not on another... In order to avert the fulfillment of a bad dream, one must fast upon awakening, not on a subsequent day, because each day is empowered only over what happens during that very day.

See above, [note 96](#). The full verse in Leviticus reads: *These are the fixed times of YHVH, that you shall proclaim as sacred convocations, to bring a fire offering to YHVH—ascension offering and grain offering, sacrifice and libations—each day’s thing on its day.* The expression *each day’s thing* [or: *matter*] *on its day* appears numerous times in the Bible, including Exodus 5:13, 19; 16:4. The verse in Leviticus is

from *Parashat Emor*, the portion pertaining to this section of the *Zohar*.

391. Not without reason is he warned... And only one who is *evil* is denied warning in a dream.

The full verse in Psalms reads: *For You are not a God delighting in wickedness; evil cannot abide with You*. Here it implies that the soul of one who is *evil* does not *abide with God* at night or receive a divine warning.

The full verse in Proverbs reads: *Awe of YHVH leads to life, and one passes the night contented, not met [or: not visited, unafflicted] by evil*. Here, based on a midrashic reading, Rabbi Yitshak construes the end of the verse as: *one who is not visited [by a dream] is evil*.

See BT *Berakhot* 14a, in the name of Rabbi Zeira: “Whoever goes seven days without a dream is called *evil*, as is said: וְשִׁבְעָה (ve-save’a), and contented, one passes the night, not visited by evil. Do not read *save’a*, *contented*, but rather *sheva*, *seven*.” The reading *sheva*, *seven*, yields a new meaning for the verse: *and one who passes seven nights without being visited [by a dream] is evil*. See BT *Berakhot* 55b.

392. Since it is written pursuing your affairs... Regarding what is forbidden on Sabbath. Doesn’t *pursuing your affairs* include *speaking a word*? Why does the verse need to specify the latter? Rabbi Yose indicates that thereby Scripture forbids explicit mundane speech, whereas thinking of mundane matters is permitted. See above, [notes 379, 381](#).

393. children who will not speak falsely... The verse reads: *Surely they are My people, children who not lie [or: be false]*. Here, apparently, Rabbi Yose construes this as *children who will not speak falsely*, which includes speaking of mundane matters on Sabbath.

See Vital. On the indecency and unlikelihood of telling a lie on Sabbath, see JT *Demai* 4:1, 23d.

394. *The son of an Israelite woman...* The following verse reads: *The son of the Israelite woman pronounced the Name, cursing [it], and he was brought to Moses. His mother's name was Shelomith daughter of Dibri of the tribe of Dan.*

395. *Went out...* According to Rabbi Yehudah, this *son of an Israelite woman and an Egyptian man* rejected the holy faith, excluding himself both from Israel and the divine totality.

For various midrashic interpretations of the expression *went out* in this verse, see *Sifra, Emor 14:1, 104c; Vayiqra Rabbah 32:3; Tanḥuma, Emor 23-24; Tanḥuma (Buber), Emor 31-32; Rashi, ad loc.*

396. *Brawled in the camp...* The foreign, polluted seed of the *son of an Israelite woman and an Egyptian man* incited him to fight with a pure Israelite, thereby exposing his disreputable origin.

397. *It is the glory of God to conceal a matter...* A person should honor God by not divulging His innermost secrets.

See *Pesaḥim 119a*: “What is meant by למכסה עתיק (*limkhasseh atiq*), *cover themselves elegantly*? This refers to one who *mekhasseh, conceals*, things that עתיק (*attiq*), the Ancient of, Days concealed. What are those? Secrets of Torah. And some say: This refers to one who reveals things that *attiq*, the Ancient of, Days concealed. What are those? Reasons of Torah.”

The term the Ancient of Days appears in Daniel 7:9: *As I watched, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days sat—His garment like white snow, the hair of His head like clean fleece, His throne flames of fire, its wheels blazing fire.* In the *Zohar*, this name designates the primordial *sefirah, Keter*.

Here Rabbi Ḥiyya indicates that one is allowed to explore and reveal “until that place permitted to you,” apparently referring to the seven lower *sefirot* (*Ḥesed* to

Shekhinah). However, the highest realm (*Keter*, *Hokhmah*, and *Binah*) must remain concealed. He may be playing on לשבעה (*le-sav'ah*), *to satiety* [or: *their fill*], and לשבעה (*le-shiv'ah*), “to seven,” referring to the seven lower *sefirot*. Cf. Vol. 4, p. 530, n. 598.

On things (or words) of the Ancient of Days, see the rabbinic blessing in BT *Berakhot* 17a: “May your steps run to hear words of the Ancient of Days!” See also BT *Bava Batra* 91b; *Zohar* 1:4b, 8b-9a; 2:134b, 143a, 149a, 168a; 3:20a, 138b (*IR*), 232b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 49; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 216, n. 215.

The original verse in Isaiah refers to the Phoenician city of Tyre (located in south Lebanon), which was the prosperous capital of a city-state extending from Acre to Sidon and including colonies in the Mediterranean. The verse reads in full: *Her profit and fee shall be consecrated to YHVH. They shall not be treasured or stored; rather shall her profit go to those who abide before YHVH, that they may eat their fill and cover themselves elegantly.*

See below, [p. 317](#), [n. 84](#). On the application of this verse to studying Torah, see also *Tanḥuma*, *Balaq* 14; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 20:20.

[398](#). Alternatively, *that they may eat their fill...* Those who have been initiated, such as the Companions of Rabbi Shim'on, can explore and share even the deepest mysteries. From (and in) other generations, the secrets should remain concealed. Whereas in the days of Rabbi Shim'on, secrets were freely revealed, once he died it became sinful to do so.

According to rabbinic sources, Rabbi Shim'on claimed that he could protect the world until the Messiah arrives. (See *Bereshit Rabbah* 35:2; JT *Berakhot* 9:2, 13d; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:15. Cf. BT *Sukkah* 45b.) According to the *Zohar*, Rabbi Shim'on's generation is the greatest one there will be until the Messiah appears. See *Zohar* 2:9a, 147a; 3:58a, 159a, 206a, 236b, 241b. On Rabbi Shim'on's

messianic status in the *Zohar*, see Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 1–84.

On the unique status of Rabbi Shim'on's generation, see also *Bereshit Rabbah* 35:2; *Zohar* 1:225a; 2:149a, 156a; 3:79a, 287a; Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows from Eden*, 62–104. On the open or revealed quality of Rabbi Shim'on's generation, see *Zohar* 1:92b; 2:9a, 86b, 147a, 149a, 156a, 190b; 3:22b, 46a, 79a, 171a, 236b, 241b, 287a. Cf. *Zohar* 3:59b–60a.

For the expression “Open your mouth and let your words shine,” see JT *Berakhot* 3:4, 6c; BT *Berakhot* 22a; *Zohar* 2:4a; 3:79a; ZH 37c, 67c (*ShS*), 70c (*ShS*), 73c (*ShS*).

On the verse in Ecclesiastes, see *Tosefta Hagigah* 2:3; JT *Hagigah* 2:1, 77b; BT *Hagigah* 15a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:4 (all pertaining to Elisha son of Avuyah); *Zohar* 2:87a; 3:79a, 128a (*IR*), 159a; ZH 89d (*MhN, Rut*).

399. What is meant by ויקוב (*va-yiqqov*), pronounced?... Rabbi Hiyya interprets this verb in the verse from Leviticus according to its sense in the book of Kings, which states that the priest Jehoiada *pierced* [or: *bore*] a hole in the door of a chest, which then served as a coffer for sacred donations for Temple repair. The significance of Rabbi Hiyya's interpretation is explained below.

On the meaning of the verb *va-yiqqov* in Leviticus, see Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 3:2107–8, 2117–18. On the phrase *pronounced*—or: *pierced*—*the Name*, see *Zohar* 1:37a; 3:113b, 191b. Cf. 3:176b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 360.

The full verse in Leviticus reads: *The son of the Israelite woman pronounced the Name, cursing [it]; and he was brought to Moses. His mother's name was Shelomith daughter of Dibri of the tribe of Dan.* For the preceding verse, see above at [note 394](#).

400. His mother's name was Shelomith... Until here, his mother is referred to only as *an* (or *the*) *Israelite*

woman. Once he committed the act of “piercing the Name,” she is named—as if to say, “Cursed be the one who bore and raised a son such as this.”

401. the Holy Lamp... The honorific title of Rabbi Shim'on in the *Zohar*. See above, [note 250](#). His presence enables and emboldens Rabbi Abba to disclose the secret meaning of *pierced the Name*.

“The Reapers of the Field” are those who harvest secrets of Torah, which can be pictured as sprouting in the field of *Shekhinah*.

See *Zohar* 1:156a (*ST*), 216a; 2:37a, 79b, 85b, 240b, 258a (*Heikh*); 3:127b (*IR*), 141b (*IR*), 143a (*IR*), 144a (*IR*), 214b, 297a; *ZH* 85d (*MhN, Rut*); *Or Yaqar*; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 175–76, n. 99. On *Shekhinah* as a field, see above, [p. 23](#), [n. 66](#). On the rabbinic curse “May their spirit expire!” cf. above, [note 377](#).

402. this is the son of another wife of his father... According to a midrashic tradition, in Egypt Shelomith had sexual relations with an Egyptian taskmaster, and the child born from their illicit union was *the son of an Israelite woman—he being the son of an Egyptian man* mentioned here in Leviticus. Rabbi Abba adds that when Shelomith’s husband realized what had happened with his wife, he separated from her and married another woman, with whom he engendered another son, who grew up to be the *certain Israelite man* who brawled with *the son of an Egyptian man*.

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 32:4, in the name of Rabbi Levi: “[*He being the son of an Egyptian man* (Leviticus 24:10).] He was definitely a bastard. How so? The taskmasters [in charge of the Israelites enslaved in Egypt] were Egyptians and the officers were Israelites. One taskmaster was in charge of ten officers and one officer was in charge of ten [Israelite] men. Thus a taskmaster was in charge of a hundred and ten men [namely a hundred Israelite slaves and ten Israelite officers]. One time a taskmaster paid an

early morning visit to an officer and said to him: ‘Go and assemble your group of ten.’ When [the Egyptian taskmaster] entered [the Israelite officer’s] house, [the officer’s] wife smiled at him. He thought, ‘She is all mine!’ He went out and hid behind a ladder. As soon as her husband went out, he entered and disgraced himself with her. [The Israelite officer] turned around and saw him coming out of the house. When [the Egyptian taskmaster] realized that he had seen him coming out of his house, he kept beating him the whole day, saying, ‘Work better, work better!’ He intended thereby to kill him. At that moment, the Holy Spirit stimulated Moses, as is written: *He turned this way and that way* (Exodus 2:12). What does this mean? Well, [Moses] saw what [the Egyptian taskmaster] had done to [the Israelite officer] in the house and what he intended to do to him in the field. He said, ‘Not enough that he disgraced himself with [the Israelite’s] wife, but he wants to kill him!’ Immediately, *He saw that there was no man [and he struck the Egyptian and buried him in the sand]* (ibid.).”

See *Tanḥuma, Shemot 9, Emor 24; Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Emor 32; Shemot Rabbah 1:28; Pirḳei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer 48*. The wording here in the *Zohar* “[her husband] returned home” reflects the version in all the *Tanḥuma* passages and *Shemot Rabbah*. According to the version in *Tanḥuma, Shemot*, and *Shemot Rabbah*, Shulamith never smiled at the Egyptian taskmaster, and when he later copulated with her, she thought that he was actually her husband.

The context in Exodus (2:11–12) reads: *It happened in those days that Moses grew up and went out to his brothers and saw their burdens. And he saw an Egyptian man striking a Hebrew man, one of his brothers. He turned this way and that way and saw that there was no man, and he struck the Egyptian and buried him in the sand*. For the full verse in Leviticus, see above at [note 394](#).

403. that certain Israelite man said something...

He insulted his opponent (*the son of the Israelite woman*) by saying that his mother, Shelomith, had sexual relations with an Egyptian taskmaster and that he was born from their illicit union. Immediately, *the son of the Israelite woman pierced the Name*—that is, he sought to defend his mother by associating her with the Divine Female, *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by the last letter of יהוה (YHVH): ה (he). However, by separating this letter from יהוה (YHVH), he impaired the complete name, leaving *Shekhinah* vulnerable to demonic forces, who, as it were, violated and contaminated Her. It is as if *Shekhinah* became *an adulteress*, like Shelomith—or as if She turned into Lilith, the demonic female who threatens to steal the flow of emanation.

The full verse in Proverbs 30 reads: *Such is the way of an adulteress: she eats and wipes her mouth, and says, "I have done no wrong."* In the *Zohar* this verse sometimes refers to Lilith. See *Zohar* 2:196b; 3:47a, 72a, 180b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 83.

On the relationship between *Shekhinah* and Lilith, see *Zohar* 1:122a-b, 131b, 190b, 204a; 2:60b-61a, 96a-b, 117b-118b (RM); 3:47a, 69a, 72a, 266a, 279b (RM); TZ, intro, 2a; Idel, *Kabbalah and Eros*, 120-22. On the relation between *Shekhinah* and the demonic realm, see also Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:373-79; Patai, *The Hebrew Goddess*, 249, 251-54; Scholem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead*, 189-92.

On the rendering *the son of the Israelite woman pierced*, see above, [note 399](#). On “the Reapers of the Field,” see above, [note 401](#). In the concluding verse (from Proverbs 25), *another’s secret* means “your neighbor’s secret.” For various interpretations of this paragraph, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; Scholem; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

404. The final ה (he) was the Female... *Shekhinah*, symbolized by this letter, imbibes from *Hesed* on the right

and *Gevurah* on the left. Employing the divine weapons that derive from *Gevurah*, *Shekhinah* wreaked vengeance on *the son of the Israelite woman who pierced and cursed*.

The verse in Leviticus 19 mentions *his mother* before *his father*. See *Mekhilta, Bahodesh* 8, in the name of Rabbi Yehudah the Prince: “It is revealed and known to Him by whose word the world came into being that a person reveres his father more than his mother, because he teaches him Torah. Therefore in regard to reverence He mentioned the mother before the father [*Every man shall revere his mother and his father*].” See above, [p. 13](#), [n. 39](#).

Here Rabbi Abba implies that a person should revere (or fear) *Shekhinah* because She wields the weapons of punishment. On Her control of these weapons, see above, [note 323](#).

The full verse in Leviticus 24 reads: *Take out the one who cursed beyond the camp, and all who heard shall lay their hands on his head, and all the community shall stone him*.

[405.](#) **sin** Or *guilt, punishment*.

[406.](#) **his God, unspecified...** The wording *his God* could refer to various false deities, including the heavenly princes of the nations or the stars or astral (or angelic) powers. If the person said, “Cursed be my God (or: my god),” he may have intended to curse one of these false gods, rather than the true God; so he is not executed by power of the court, but instead *he shall bear his sin*—implying that he will suffer divine punishment.

See below, [note 415](#); ZH 3d (*MhN*). On the wording (*if anyone curses*) *his God*, see *Sifra, Emor* 19:5, 104c; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 21:17; BT *Sanhedrin* 56a, *Shevu’ot* 36a. On *he shall bear his sin* as implying divine punishment, see *Sifra, Emor* 19:6, 104c; JT *Sanhedrin* 7:5, 25a. On the seventy heavenly princes, see above, [note 206](#).

[407.](#) **he would not arouse a word...** By cursing. Since he did so, we suspect him of heresy or idolatry.

Nevertheless, he is not subject to capital punishment by the court, since the wording (*if anyone curses his God*) does not specify whom exactly he cursed.

408. Judge him favorably... If the person said, “Cursed be my god (or: my God),” we should give him the benefit of the doubt, since he can claim that he cursed the false god whom he now rejects.

According to Kabbalah, each letter of the name *YHVH* alludes to one of more *sefirot* and thus “amounts to a name.” See Asher ben David, *Peirush Shem ha-Meforash*, 112; *Zohar* 1:162a (ST); 2:123b, 126b–127a, 219b; 3:4b, 10b, 65b, 66b, 92a, 267b; Gikatilla, *Sha’arei Orah*, 44a–45b.

409. Alternatively, The son of the Israelite woman... As explained above, this person was the illegitimate son of Shelomith and an Egyptian taskmaster, and the *certain Israelite man* who brawled with him insulted his mother for her illicit sexual activity. However, whereas Rabbi Abba taught that the *certain Israelite man* was the son of Shelomith’s husband and his second wife, Rabbi Yitshak indicates that he was actually Shelomith’s husband. See above, [notes 402–3](#).

410. He was the son of Shelomith’s husband... As Rabbi Abba indicated. See above, [note 402](#).

411. They brawled with one another... As the *certain Israelite man* fought with *the son of the Israelite woman*, he insulted the latter’s mother for having illicit sexual relations with the Egyptian taskmaster (his father). He also mentioned that this taskmaster was the same one killed by Moses through uttering the name *YHVH*. This incited *the son of the Israelite woman* to curse.

The account of Moses killing the Egyptian taskmaster appears in Exodus 2:11–14: *It happened in those days that Moses grew up and went out to his brothers and saw their burdens. He saw an Egyptian man striking a Hebrew man, one of his brothers. He turned this way and that way and saw that there was no man, and he struck the Egyptian and*

buried him in the sand. He went out the next day, and, look, two Hebrew men were brawling, and he said to the one in the wrong, "Why are you striking your fellow?" He replied, "Who set you as chief and judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" Moses was frightened, and he thought, "Surely, the thing is known!"

According to a midrashic tradition, the question אומר אתה הלהרגני (Ha-lehargeni attah omer), *Do you intend to kill me?* is to be read hyperliterally: *Do you speak to kill me?*—implying that Moses killed the Egyptian taskmaster by the power of the name YHVH.

See *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 20; *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 10; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:30. Cf. *Vayiqra Rabbah* 32:4; *Pirḳei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 48; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:29; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, Exodus 2:12, n. 102. On the Egyptian taskmaster's identity, see above, [note 402](#); Rashi and Baḥya ben Asher on Leviticus 24:10.

412. and he was brought to Moses... Since Moses had already killed the Egyptian taskmaster (the father of *the son of the Israelite woman*), it was fitting for him to detain that Egyptian's son.

The full verse in Leviticus reads: *He was put under guard until it should be made clear to them by the word of YHVH.*

413. There shall be among you no strange god... Rabbi Yitṣḥak wonders why the verse continues with what seems to be redundant: *and you shall not bow to an alien god.*

414. one should not let the evil impulse enter... Because it will tempt him to sin and eventually to worship false gods.

The simple sense of the verse in Psalms is: *There shall be בך (vekha), among you, no strange god*, but here Rabbi Yitṣḥak adopts a midrashic hyperliteral reading: *There shall be vekha, within you, no strange god.*

See BT *Shabbat* 105b: “Rabbi Shim’on son of El’azar said in the name of Hilfa son of Agra, who said in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan son of Nuri: ‘One who tears his garments in anger or breaks his vessels in anger, or scatters his money in anger—regard him as an idolator. For such is the craft of the evil impulse: today he tells him, “Do this”; tomorrow he tells him, “Do that,” until he tells him, “Worship idols,” and he goes and worships.’

“Rabbi Avin said, ‘What is the verse [indicating this]? *There shall be* כָּךְ (*vekha*), *within you, no strange god, and you shall not bow to an alien god.* Who is the *strange god* within a person’s body? You must admit that this is the evil impulse.’”

On the hyperliteral reading of the verse in Psalms, see JT *Nedarim* 9:1, 41b; *Zohar* 2:182a; *ZH* 21a (*MhN*).

415. Thus, if [anyone] curses his God... The wording *his God* (or *his god*) can include the evil impulse (“the evil faith”), which is known as a *strange god within you*. If a person says, “Cursed be my God (or: my god)” (in an unspecified manner), *he shall bear his sin*—that is, he will suffer divine punishment. But if he specifies and *pronounces the name of YHVH*, then he will be executed by power of the court.

See above, [notes 406](#), [408](#). Leviticus 24:16 reads in full: וְנִקְבַּ (Ve-noqev), *He who pronounces, the name of YHVH shall surely be put to death The whole community shall surely stone him; sojourner and native alike, if he pronounces the Name, he shall be put to death.* On the meaning of the verb *noqev*, see Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 3:2107–8, 2117–18; above, [note 399](#).

416. If so, why he shall bear his sin?... If someone curses his evil impulse, why must he *bear his sin*? Shouldn’t he be forgiven for his past sins? Rabbi Yehudah explains that if a person says, “Cursed be my God (or: my god),” it is unclear which deity he is cursing, so he cannot simply be forgiven.

417. he has no right to claim anything Namely, that he intended to curse false gods or the evil impulse. See above, [notes 406, 408, 415](#).

418. Surely this faith... Faith in the name *YHVH* is vital to all of existence. The letters of this name symbolize the various *sefirot*; the tiny first letter—י (*yod*)—symbolizes the primordial point of *Hokhmah*, upon which all worlds depend.

The verses in Psalms and Ecclesiastes imply here that one should be careful not to pronounce (or curse) the name *YHVH*.

On the sefirotic significance of the letters of *YHVH*, see above, [note 83](#). On “this world and the world that is coming” being dependent on the Divine Name, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:10: “כי ביה יהוה צור עולמים (Ki be-Yah YHVH tsur olamim), For by Yah YHVH, an eternal rock (Isaiah 26:4)—with these two letters the blessed Holy One created His world [interpreting the verse as: For ביה (be-Yah), by (the letters) ה י (yod, he), YHVH צר עולמים (tsar olamim), formed worlds].... “This world’ was created by ה (he)... and ‘the world that is coming’ was created by י (yod).”

See JT *Hagigah* 2:1, 77c; BT *Menaḥot* 29b; *Alfa Beita de-Rabbi Aqiva (Battei Midrashot, 2:363)*; *Midrash Aggadah*, Genesis 1:1; *Tosafot, Berakhot* 51a, s.v. *zokheh*; *Zohar* 1:140a, 141b; 2:22b, 126b; 3:10b, 290b (*IZ*). On the expression “worlds of yearning,” see *Zohar* 1:123b (*Tos*), 124b (*MhN*); 2:115a (*RM*); 3:132a (*IR*), 159b, 288a (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 64a (*ShS*); *TZ* 32, 76b.

419. No hand shall touch it... The context in Exodus (19:12-13) records God’s command to Moses regarding the boundaries around Mount Sinai: *You shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, “Beware not to go up the mountain or to touch its edge. Whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death. No hand shall touch him, but he shall surely be stoned or be shot; whether beast or person, he shall not live. When the ram’s horn blasts long, they may go up on the mountain.”*

The instruction *No hand shall touch him* is construed here in the *Zohar* as: *No hand shall touch it* (namely Mount Sinai). See Rashbam and Ibn Ezra, ad loc.; Kasher, *Torah Sheleimah*, Exodus 19:13, n. 164.

Rabbi Hizkiyah reasons that if the Israelites were forbidden to touch Mount Sinai under penalty of death, then surely anyone who “touches” God by pronouncing or cursing the name *YHVH* is subject to death.

420. Do not come any closer... God’s command to Moses at the Burning Bush. Rabbi Yeisa reasons that if Moses (who was so holy) was forbidden to come too close to God, then surely everyone is forbidden to accost God contemptuously by pronouncing or cursing the name *YHVH*.

On Moses being surrounded by radiance at (or from) birth, see BT *Sotah* 12a; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:20, 22; *Zohar* 2:11b-12a, 54a.

The expression “worthy to wield My glory” derives from a report about Rabbi Akiva in BT *Hagigah* 15b: “The ministering angels sought to thrust Rabbi Akiva away [from Paradise], but the blessed Holy One said to them, ‘Let this elder be, for he is worthy to wield My glory.’”

421. When the people of Israel were in Egypt... They worshiped the heavenly princes appointed over the nations of the world. Even though it is forbidden to worship these heavenly powers, they must not be cursed or humiliated, since God appointed them to conduct the world. On the verse in Leviticus, see above, [notes 406](#), [408](#), [415](#).

422. However, he who pronounces the name of YHVH... Whereas a person who curses one of the heavenly princes *shall bear his sin* (and suffer divine punishment), one who pronounces (or curses) the name *YHVH shall be put to death* by power of the court. See above, [notes 406](#), [408](#), [415](#).

The expression מות יומת (*mot yumat*) includes the infinitive absolute form *mot* and the imperfect form *yumat*. This dual construction conveys the sense *he shall surely be put to*

death. Here, Rabbi Abba interprets each element separately: “*Mot, dying* [or: *to die*], in this world; *yumat, he shall be put to death*, in the world that is coming.”

See Pirqoi ben Baboi, in *Ginzei Schechter* 2:564. Cf. *Midrash Tehillim* 92:1; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli’ezer* 20, p. 364; *Sekhel Tov*, Exodus 16:28. For similar formulations, see JT *Sanhedrin* 10:2, 28b-c; BT *Berakhot* 10a; and also *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 347; *Midrash Tanna’im*, Deuteronomy 33:6; *Targum Onqelos, Targum Yerushalmi*, on Deuteronomy 33:6; BT *Sanhedrin* 92a; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayetse* 13.

423. Rabbi Shim’on was walking on the way... The whole paragraph is riddled with neologisms and weird wording.

“Obstructive watercourse” is a conjectural rendering of טיקלי דמיא (*tiklel de-mayya*). *Tiklel* may be based on תיקלא (*tiqla*), “obstacle,” which appears, for example, in BT *Bava Batra* 54a right before a passage about irrigating a field. See *Arukh ha-Shalem*, s.v. *tql*; *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Derekh Emet*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; Luria, *Va-Ye’esof David*, s.v. *tiqla*; *Sullam*; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 334.

The verb “slipped” renders the neologism פוסקרא (*pusqera*), whose meaning is quite uncertain and whose form is actually nominal, not verbal. According to *Bei’ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, the reading here is not *pusqera* but rather קטפרס (*qataphres*), “slope, incline,” (from Greek *katapheres*, “going down, sloping, inclined”). See M *Oholot* 3:3; *Zohar* 2:48b; 3:36b, 51a; *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Bei’ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 188, s.v. *qataphres*; *Ma’arikh*, s.v. *qataphres*; *Derekh Emet*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; Luria, *Va-Ye’esof David*, s.v. *pusqera*; *Sullam*; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 351, 354.

The phrase “fully clothed” renders בקטפוי (*be-qatpoi*), apparently based on Arabic *qatipha*, “cloak, blanket.” See *Arukh ha-Shalem*, s.v. *qtph*; *Zohar* 2:45b; 3:19a; *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Bei’ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 183-84, s.v. *atipha*; *Derekh Emet*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; Luria, *Va-Ye’esof David*, s.v. *qatpoi*; *Sullam*.

The phrase “this construction of measured water” renders קטורא דקוסטי דמייא (*qetora de-qustei de-mayya*). *Qetora* is based on the root קטר (*qtr*), “to tie, construct.” *Qustei* derives from Greek *xestes*, a measure about the size of a pint. See BT *Avodah Zarah* 30a: קיסתא דמייא (*qista de-mayya*), “a *xestes* of water.” See also *Bereshit Rabbah* 4:5; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 12:1; *Zohar* 1:33a, 83a, 121b, 162a, 164a, 211a, 243a; 3:74b; *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Derekh Emet*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; *Sullam*.

424. You are forbidden... Rabbi Shim'on scolds Rabbi Yose for speaking contemptuously about any created thing that provides a service to the world. See above, [note 421](#).

425. God saw all that He had made... Even creatures or things that seem harmful actually serve a useful function and are *very good*.

See *Shemot Rabbah* 10:1: “Our Rabbis said, ‘What is meant by ויתרון (*ve-yitron*), *The gain of, earth is in all* (Ecclesiastes 5:8)? Even things that you consider מיותרים (*meyuttarim*), superfluous, in the world—like flies, mosquitoes, and fleas—were included in the scheme of Creation, as is said: *God saw all that He had made, and look, it was very good.*’

“Rabbi Aḥa son of Rabbi Ḥanina said, ‘Even things that you consider *meyuttarim*, superfluous, in the world—like snakes and scorpions—were included in the scheme of Creation....’”

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 10:7; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 22:1-3; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 5:8. Cf. JT *Berakhot* 9:2, 13c; BT *Shabbat* 77b; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 1, p. 6; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 49; *Tanḥuma, Ḥuqqat* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ḥuqqat* 1; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 18:22; *Midrash Tehillim* 18:12; *Zohar* 2:28a, 68b; 3:36b.

The word “authority” renders קיסטרא (*qistera*), which may reflect the rabbinic term קוסטור (*qustor*), deriving from Latin *quaestor*, a Roman official. *Qistera* might also be based on Latin *castrum* (pl. *castra*), “castle, fortress.” See *Bei’ur ha-Millim*

ha-Zarot, 188, s.v. *qastira*; *Derekh Emet*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David*, s.v. *qstr*.

426. a viper... אֶפְעָה (*Eph'eh*), “snake, asp, viper.” Here, the word designates a basilisk, a legendary reptile reputed to cause death with a single glance. See *Nitsotsei Orot*.

On a snake's saving a person, see *Zohar* 2:68b. Cf. 1:201b; 3:111a. On God fulfilling His commission by all creatures, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 10:7; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 22:3; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 5:8; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 49; *Tanḥuma, Huqqat* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Huqqat* 1; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 18:22; *Shemot Rabbah* 10:1. Cf. the preceding note.

The context in Psalms (91:10–13) includes a threatening reptile: *No evil will befall you, nor affliction draw near your tent. For His angels He will command for you, to guard you on all your ways. On their palms they will lift you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone. On lion וּפְתֵן (va-pheten), and viper [or: asp], you will tread; you will trample young lion and serpent.*

The phrase “diametrically across the road” renders בְּקִיטְרָא דְאֹרְחָא (*be-qitra de-orḥa*). Here *qitra* is probably based on medieval Hebrew קִטְר (*qoter*), “diameter.” See *Ma'arikh*, s.v. *qutra*; *Derekh Emet*; *Nitsotsei Orot*.

427. I am a lily of Sharon... In midrashic literature, the dialogue between the two lovers in Song of Songs is understood as being conducted between God (the blessed Holy One) and the earthly Assembly of Israel. In the *Zohar*, “Assembly of Israel” often designates (or includes) *Shekhinah*, who is in love with *Tif'eret* (known as the blessed Holy One), and the two lovers sing each other's praise. Here this particular verse is understood as being sung by *Shekhinah*, who describes Herself as *a lily of Sharon, a rose of the valleys*. She arranges numerous angelic “praisers and singers” to accompany Her.

The verse is often rendered: *I am הַבְּצֵלֶת (ḥavatsélet), a rose of, Sharon, שׁוֹשַׁנָּה (shoshannat), a lily of, the valleys.*

Neither experts on Palestinian flora nor biblical scholars agree about the identity of these two flowers. *Havatselet* is variously translated as “rose, lily, tulip, crocus.” *Shoshannah* is translated as “lily, lotus, hyacinth, narcissus.” In the *Zohar*, *shoshannah* sometimes means “rose.”

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 23:3; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 2:6 (on 2:2); *Zohar* 1:1a, 137a; 2:20a (*MhN*), 189b; 3:180b, 233a-b, 286b; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 489 (lily); Joseph ibn Akhnin, *Peirush Shir ha-Shirim*, 63-65 (rose); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 183-84; Vol. 6, p. 66, n. 33.

On *Shekhinah* as a *shoshannah*, see *Zohar* 1:1a, 137a; 3:37b-38a, 74a, 233b, 286b-287a. On the verse in Song of Songs, see *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:1; *Midrash Tehillim* 1:20; *Zohar* 1:29a. On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, [p. 11](#), [n. 32](#).

[428.](#) **planted in radiant beauty...** *Shekhinah* is planted in the Garden of emanation.

[429.](#) **She שרה (*sharah*), sings...** To Her beloved, King *Tif'eret*.

[430.](#) **She desires to be saturated...** Now Rabbi Shim'on associates שרון (*sharon*) with one sense of the root שרה (*shrh*), “to soak.” *Shekhinah* yearns for the flow of emanation issuing from the deep stream of *Binah*.

The quotation *Sharon shall become a pond of water* is a conflation of several verses from Isaiah: השרון (*Ha-sharon*), *Sharon, shall become a pasture for flocks* (65:10); השרב (*Ha-sharav*), *Arid land, shall become a pond* (35:7). Cf. 33:9: *Sharon has become like a desert*; and 41:18: *I will turn the desert into a pond of water*. See *Or Yaqar*. On the phenomenon of Zoharic biblical quotations differing from the Masoretic text, see Vol. 7, p. 8, n. 24.

[431.](#) **A rose of העמקים (*ha-amaqim*), the valleys...** *Shekhinah*, who is known as Lower Wisdom, is linked with *Hokhmah*, (Upper) Wisdom, “the depth of all.”

Hokhmah and *Binah* are pictured as twin *amaqim*, *valleys*, or *ma'amaqim*, *depths*. For Rabbi Shim'on, *the depths* mentioned in the verse from Psalms do not refer primarily to the depths of the human heart or the depths of despair, but rather to the two cosmic depths, *Hokhmah* and *Binah*. From them, one should seek to draw forth the divine stream: *From the depths* [in which You are] *I call You* [forth].

See *Zohar* 2:63a-b; 3:26a, 70a, 265b; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 37b-38a; idem, *Sod Shelosh-Esreh Middot*, 219. For the rabbinic application of the verse in Psalms to prayer, see *Tosefta Berakhot* 3:17; JT *Berakhot* 2:3, 4:4; BT *Berakhot* 10b.

432. where the saturating flow of streams issues... *Binah*.

433. At first, greenish... Before uniting with *Tif'eret*, *Shekhinah* is green like the leaves of a lily. Then, when She joins with Her beloved, Her color red (symbolizing Judgment) is balanced by white (symbolizing Love or Compassion).

The phrase "colored white and red" apparently alludes to *Rosa gallica versicolor* (also known as *Rosa mundi*), one of the oldest of the striped roses, whose flowers are crimson splashed on a white background. The striping varies and occasionally flowers revert to the solid pink of their parent, *Rosa gallica*. The parent was introduced to Europe in the twelfth or thirteenth century by Crusaders returning from Palestine. Both parent and sport were famous for their aromatic and medicinal qualities. See *Zohar* 1:1a; 3:286b. Elsewhere (2:20a-b [*MhN*]) the *Zohar* alludes to the process of distilling oil from the petals of the flower to produce rose water, a popular remedy. During this process the color gradually changes from red to white.

The six leaves apparently allude to the six *sefirot* from *Hesed* to *Yesod* or to six angelic forces surrounding *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 3:286b. Cf. *Zohar* 1:1a, which mentions five

leaves. On the transition from *lily* to *rose*, see *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:1.

434. She varies and changes Her colors... *Shekhinah* reflects both Judgment (symbolized by red) and Love or Compassion (symbolized by white).

435. The woman saw... God wanted the first human to cleave to Him, especially to *Tif'eret*, the core of the *sefirot*, symbolized by the Tree of Life.

The full verse in Genesis 3 (referring to the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil) reads: *The woman saw that the tree was good for eating and attractive to the eyes and the tree was desirable to look at [or: to contemplate, to bring wisdom], and she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave to her man with her, and he ate.*

436. Afterward, they strayed... Instead of cleaving to the Tree of Life (symbolizing *Tif'eret*), Adam and Eve ate from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, which symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who vacillates between opposites and is vulnerable to the demonic Other Side. The first human couple should have united *Shekhinah* with *Tif'eret*, thereby perfecting and harmonizing all. By eating from the Tree of Knowledge, they separated *Shekhinah* from *Tif'eret* and clung to Her alone—abandoning the unified realm, becoming subject to the vacillations of *Shekhinah* and vulnerable themselves to demonic forces.

On the nature of Adam's sin, see above, [p. 41](#), [n. 121](#). On the relation between *Shekhinah* and the demonic realm, see above, [note 403](#).

437. You have abandoned life... Adam abandoned the Tree of Life (symbolizing *Tif'eret*) and clung to the Tree of Knowledge (symbolizing *Shekhinah*). This second tree is also known as the Tree of Death, because when Adam and Eve ate of its fruit, death ensued. When *Shekhinah* is separated from the other *sefirot*, She becomes vulnerable to demonic forces and can transmit death and destruction; so She is then called the Tree of Death.

On the Tree of Death, see *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 5, p. 24; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:375–76. Cf. Genesis 2:17: *But from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat, for on the day that you eat from it, you will surely die.*

The full verse in Proverbs, warning against the seductive *strange woman*, reads: *Her feet descend to Death; her steps grasp Sheol.* In the *Zohar* this verse is sometimes applied to Lilith and her demonic realm (*Zohar* 1:161b [ST], 190a) and sometimes to *Shekhinah* (1:35b; 2:48b). The verse from Ecclesiastes alludes here to the Divine Woman, *Shekhinah*.

438. If he sinned... Granted that Adam sinned and thereby became mortal, but how did other creatures sin? According to a midrashic tradition, all the animals in the Garden of Eden ate of the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge (except for the phoenix, which thereby gained, or retained, immortality). Rabbi Shim'on rejects this literal understanding of the creatures' behavior; rather, they all followed Adam's lead in worshiping *Shekhinah* alone and separating Her from *Tif'eret*. Thereby, they inherited death.

On the creatures' fear of, and subservience to, Adam, see BT *Shabbat* 151b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 11; *Zohar* 1:13b, 38a, 71a, 191a; 2:54b–55a, 125b; 3:117a; ZH 38c; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 309, 337–38. Cf. Genesis 9:2.

On the creatures eating the forbidden fruit, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 19:5; *Midrash Shemu'el* 12:2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), intro, 78a; Vol. 7, p. 540, n. 567.

439. Then Adam changed... He lost his constancy and became subject to the vacillations of *Shekhinah*, who is pictured as both *the ever-turning sword* and *the tree of knowledge of good and evil*.

The full verse in Genesis 3 reads: *He drove out the human and placed east of the Garden of Eden the cherubim and the flame of the whirling [or: ever-turning, revolving]*

sword to guard the way to the Tree of Life. For the full verse in Genesis 2, see above, [note 437](#).

[440.](#) **for woman attains her place...** Every woman is linked naturally with *Shekhinah*, so Eve was attracted to Her alone and she drew Adam there.

[441.](#) **For as the days of the tree...** According to Rabbi Shim'on, in the time to come Israel will regain the immortality of *the tree*—the Tree of Life.

The verse in Isaiah 25 reads: *He will swallow up death forever. My Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces and remove the disgrace of His people from the whole earth—for YHVH has spoken.* On the two verses in Isaiah, see *Yalqut Shim'oni*, Isaiah 509; *Zohar* 1:38a.

1. This is the teaching of the ascent offering... The ascent offering symbolizes *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel), who ascends to unite with King *Tif'eret*.

On *Shekhinah* as the ascent offering, see *Zohar* 2:238b; 3:37a-b. The full verse in Leviticus reads: *Command Aaron and his sons, saying, "This is the teaching of העולה (ha-olah), the ascent offering. It is the very ascent offering [or: It is that which ascends] upon its hearth on the altar all night till morning, and the fire of the altar shall keep burning on it."* The ascent offering was totally consumed by fire.

2. As soon as night enters... The gates of the heavenly palaces are shut, the flow of blessing is interrupted, and demonic forces are aroused.

The image of donkeys and dogs derives from BT *Berakhot* 3a, in the name of Rabbi Eli'ezer: "In the first watch [of the night], a donkey brays; in the second, dogs bark; in the third, a child sucks from its mother's breast, and a woman converses with her husband." See *Zohar* 1:242b; 2:41b (*RM*), 46a; 3:206b-207a; *ZH* 47c.

According to a rabbinic tradition, Balaam practiced sorcery by committing bestiality with his ass. See BT *Sanhedrin* 105a-b; *Zohar* 1:125b; 2:21b (*MhN*); 3:206b-207a; *ZH* 47c; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 14-14 (18); idem, *She'elot u-Tshuvot*, 75.

"The lower altar outside" alludes to *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by the sacrificial altar in the Temple, situated "outside" the Sanctuary proper. As the last of the ten *sefirot*, *Shekhinah* is "lower," and She is "outside" in the sense that She borders on the "outside," extradivine realm. She burns with the harsh fire of Judgment, which nourishes the demonic powers. The other altar in the Temple—the golden (or incense) altar—was situated within the Sanctuary and symbolizes *Binah*, the more inner realm.

On the apparent contradiction between "donkeys, asses, and dogs go roaming. ... Asses and dogs do not roam about," see *Miqdash Melekh*.

3. At midnight a north wind is aroused... The direction north symbolizes *Gevurah*, which along with the flame of *Shekhinah* banishes the demonic forces.

See BT *Berakhot* 3b, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on the Ḥasid: "There was a harp suspended above [King] David's bed. As soon as midnight arrived, a north wind came and blew upon it, and it played by itself. He immediately arose and engaged in Torah until the break of dawn."

In the *Zohar* this legendary custom is expanded into a ritual. At midnight, God delights in the souls of the righteous in the Garden of Eden, and those who study Torah here below partake of this joy. Kabbalists are expected to rise at midnight and adorn *Shekhinah* with words of Torah in preparation for Her union with *Tif'eret*. Thereby they join with Her in singing to Him. See above, [pp. 10-11, n. 32](#).

On the rooster, see Rashi on BT *Eruvin* 53b, s.v. *maggidei ba-alatah*, according to whom the rooster's crows mark the various divisions of the night. See *Pereq Shirah*, 2:57 (s.v. *tarnegol*): "When the blessed Holy One comes to the righteous in the Garden of Eden, all the trees of the Garden sprinkle spices before Him. Then he [the rooster] praises."

See 3 Baruch 6:15-16; Naḥmanides on Job 38:36; *Zohar* 1:10b, 77b, 92b, 195b-196a, 218b; 3:22b-23b, 52b, 171b-172a; *ZḤ* 13c (*MhN*), 88a (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Maskiyyot Kesef*, 105a, 12-13; Liebes, *Pulḥan ha-Shaḥar*, 168-97. In *ZḤ* 88a (*MhN, Rut*), the heavenly גבר (*gever*), "rooster," is identified as גבריאל (*Gavri'el*), "Gabriel," who derives from *Gevurah*. Cf. *Zohar* 3:23a-b, 171b-172a.

4. the blessed Holy One appears among the righteous... Delighting in their souls in the Garden of Eden. (See the preceding note.) Through the rest of the night, *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel) praises Him, and in the morning the divine couple shares intimacy. Abraham symbolizes *Ḥesed*, whose light and love are manifested in the morning.

The image of the divine couple “conversing” derives from the passage in *Berakhot* quoted in [note 2](#): “In the first watch [of the night], a donkey brays; in the second, dogs bark; in the third, a child sucks from its mother’s breast, and a woman converses with her husband.” On the erotic connotation of “converses,” see BT *Nedarim* 20b, and pseudo-Rashi, ad loc.; Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod, Berakhot* 3a, p. 3a. Cf. *Zohar* 1:178a; 2:46a; 3:45a, 64b-65a.

The expressions “pleasure” and “tranquil pleasure” both render נְיָהָה (*neyaḥa*), “comfort, tranquility, rest.” In the *Zohar*, this term also conveys נְחֵת רוּחַ (*naḥat ruah*), “satisfaction, pleasure.” The word *neyaḥa* appears frequently in this passage. The verse in Leviticus reads:... *upon its* [or: *her*] *hearth* etc. See above, [note 1](#).

5. When Israel entered the Land... The previous nighttime scenario applies to the long era of exile, but when Israel dwelled in the Holy Land and the Temple was standing, the demonic forces subsided. Then *Shekhinah* (known as both Assembly of Israel and *Righteousness*) rested on the wings of the cherubim. Each night She joined with Her Husband, *Tif’eret*, and the verse from Leviticus alludes to their tranquil union: *The land* (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) *shall rest, a Sabbath for YHVH* (the name of *Tif’eret*).

The quotation from Leviticus is from the opening verses of *Parashat Be-Har*: *YHVH spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying, “Speak to the Children of Israel and say to them: When you enter the land that I am giving you, the land shall rest, a Sabbath to [or: for] YHVH [or: the land shall observe a Sabbath to YHVH].”*

The full verse in Isaiah, referring to the corruption of Jerusalem, reads: *How has the faithful city become a harlot? She who was full of justice, righteousness lodged in her—but now murderers!*

6. If you buy a Hebrew slave... Rabbi El’azar associates the liberation of Hebrew slaves in the seventh

year (as commanded in Exodus) with the description of the Sabbatical year in Leviticus.

Every Israelite male who bears the holy mark of circumcision attains the rung of *Yesod* (the divine phallus) and is thereby privileged to enter the realm of *Shekhinah*. She is symbolized by the Sabbatical year because She is the seventh of the lower *sefirot* (from *Hesed* to *Shekhinah*). So every circumcised Israelite “has repose in the Sabbatical year.”

The phrase *Sabbath of the land* alludes doubly to *Shekhinah*, who is “seventh” and symbolized by *the land*. In the context in Leviticus, the phrase refers to the aftergrowth of the fields, which are not be planted during the Sabbatical year. The verse reads: *The Sabbath [or: the Sabbath-yield] of the land shall be for you to eat.*

Whereas according to Exodus 21:2, Hebrew slaves are to be set free after six years (associated here with the start of the Sabbatical year), rabbinic sources sometimes associate the Jubilee year with the freeing of slaves. This is based partly on Leviticus 25:10: *You shall hallow the fiftieth year and proclaim דרור (deror), release [or: freedom], in the land for all of its inhabitants. A jubilee it shall be for you, and you shall go back each man to his holding, and each man to his clan you shall go back.*

Furthermore, according to Leviticus, an Israelite debtor forced to work for another Israelite (as well as an impoverished Israelite sold as a slave to a non-Israelite) both go free in the Jubilee. (See Leviticus 25:40, 54.) Moreover, according to Exodus 21:6, a slave who refuses to be set free in the seventh year *shall serve [his master] forever*; and this is interpreted midrashically as “until the Jubilee.”

On this passage, see Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 232. On *forever* as implying “until the Jubilee,” see *Mekhilta, Neziqin 2; Targum Yerushalmi, Exodus 21:6; BT Qiddushin 15a, 21b.*

On Hebrew slaves being liberated in the Jubilee, see also M *Qiddushin* 1:2; *Sifra, Behar* 3:6, 107c; 7:4, 109d; Bekhor Shor on Exodus 21:6; *Zohar* 3:6b, 92b. On their being liberated in the Sabbatical year, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 21:7; 22:2. For further discussion, see Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 3:2251-53; *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 17:624, 626. On the association (or confusion) here between the Sabbatical year and the liberation of the Hebrew slave in the seventh year, see Joseph Delmedigo, *Matsref la-Hokhmah*, ch. 25; Emden, *Mitpaḥat Sefarim*, 29.

7. ה (He) is rest... In the name יהוה (YHVH), the first ה (he) symbolizes *Binah*, the second he, *Shekhinah*. *Binah* is symbolized by the Jubilee, celebrated after forty-nine years; *Shekhinah* is symbolized by the Sabbatical year. Yet, “upon contemplating matters, all is one,” that is, these two *sefirot* are interdependent, and a certain feature of the Jubilee year inheres in the Sabbatical (as seen below).

The quality of rest, attributed to the letter ה (he), may allude to its effortless aspirated pronunciation. The association of the number forty-nine (or fifty) with *Binah* is based on a statement attributed to Rav and Shemu’el (BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b, *Nedarim* 38a): “Fifty gates of בינה (*binah*), understanding, were created in the world, all of which were given to Moses except for one, as is said: *You made him little less than God* (Psalms 8:6).”

On the formulation “Upon contemplating matters, all is one,” see *Zohar* 1:241a; 3:6b, 161b, 288a (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 97 (124). The verse in Leviticus, regarding the Jubilee, reads: *You shall count for yourselves seven sabbaths of years, seven years seven times.*

8. Therefore, the land shall rest... The Sabbatical year includes the element of liberation, which derives from the Jubilee, so *in the seventh* year slaves go free. See above, [note 6](#).

According to the simple sense of the verse in Exodus, חנם (*hinnam*) means *with no payment*, implying that the slave

does not have to purchase his freedom. On *Binah* and liberation, see above, [p. 90](#), [n. 107](#).

9. However, this is a mystery... Rabbi El'azar reveals a deeper meaning of the word *ḥinnam*, based on its appearance in the book of Numbers, where the Israelites are complaining about their suffering in the desert and recalling how “easy” their life was in Egypt when they ate fish *ḥinnam*. The simple sense of the word there is *for free*, but Rabbi El'azar (drawing on a midrashic tradition), understands it as “*free* from any obligation to perform the *mitsvot* relating to food,” such as saying a blessing before and after eating, since in Egypt the Israelites had not yet received the Torah and had not accepted the “yoke” of the commandments.

On the midrashic interpretation of the verse in Numbers, see *Sifra*, Numbers 87; *Targum Yerushalmi* and Rashi, ad loc. Cf. BT *Yoma* 75a.

10. Slaves are exempt from the yoke of the Celestial Kingdom... According to rabbinic law, a non-Jewish male slave goes through a semi-conversion that gives him the status of being part of Israel, and he is then obligated to refrain from violating the negative *mitsvot* and to fulfill those *mitsvot* that are not time-bound. Like a Jewish woman, a non-Jewish male slave is exempt from *mitsvot* that are time-bound. In contrast, a Jewish—sometimes called “Hebrew”—male slave is basically obligated to fulfill all the *mitsvot*.

Here Rabbi El'azar indicates that Hebrew male slaves (or Hebrew male slaves too) are exempt from the *mitsvot*, since they are exempt from “the yoke of the Celestial Kingdom.” The phrase “the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven” often pertains to the *Shema*, whose opening verse is *Hear, O Israel! YHVH our God, YHVH is one!* (Deuteronomy 6:4). By reciting this prayer, a man acknowledges the one true God and accepts upon himself the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven.

See M *Berakhot* 2:2, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Korḥah: "Why does [the first paragraph of] the *Shema* precede [the second paragraph, beginning:] *It shall be if you [indeed] listen [to My commands]* (Deuteronomy 11:13)? Well, so that one will first accept upon himself the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven and afterward accept upon himself the yoke of the *mitsvot*."

Technically, a non-Jewish male slave would be exempt from the obligation to recite the *Shema*, since this obligation is time-bound. However, a Jewish (or "Hebrew") male slave would be obligated to recite it.

On the exemption of a non-Jewish male slave from time-bound *mitsvot*, see M *Berakhot* 3:3 (reciting the *Shema* and donning tefillin); *Sukkah* 2:1 (dwelling in the sukkah); *Hagigah* 1:1 (making pilgrimage and bringing an ascent offering on the festivals); BT *Hagigah* 4a (all time-bound *mitsvot*); *Semaḥot* 1:10 (tefillin).

On the conflict between Rabbi El'azar's view here and rabbinic tradition, see Joseph Delmedigo, *Matsref la-Hokhmah*, ch. 25; Emden, *Mitpaḥat Sefarim*, 29; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:57; Katz, *Halakhah ve-Qabbalah*, 50. Cf. *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On this passage, see Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 232.

11. Serve YHVH with awe... According to Rabbi El'azar, this implies that in approaching God one should first attempt to commune with *Shekhinah*, who is known as *awe*. She is the gateway to all the other *sefirot* and leads to *Hokhmah* (*wisdom*). Her name *Malkhut* (Kingdom) identifies Her as the Kingdom of Heaven.

Shekhinah is symbolized by the *tefillah* (phylactery) of the hand, which is put on first, before the *tefillah* of the head (symbolizing *Tif'eret*). On tefillin and their significance, see Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 4-6; *Zohar* 1:13b-14a, 147a, 168b; 2:43a-b (*Piq*), 162a; 3:54b, 120b, 140a (*IR*), 262a-263a, 269a-b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*,

235–40; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1161–65; Vol. 1, p. 96, n. 719.

As the Divine Presence, *Shekhinah* is also known as זֹאת (*zot*), *this*, because She is constantly present right here. The wording in Leviticus—בְּזֹאת (*Be-zot*), *With this*—implies that Aaron should enter the Holy of Holies while focusing on Her and “with Her.”

The full verse in Leviticus reads: *With this shall Aaron enter the sanctuary, with a bull from the herd for a purification offering and a ram for an ascent offering.* See *Zohar* 1:72a; 2:51a, 57a; 3:8b, 37b, 53b, 58b–59a, 60b, 145b. For other references to *Shekhinah* as *zot* (*this*), see *Zohar* 1:49b, 93b, 176b, 200b, 228a; 2:11b–12a, 37a–b, 39b, 50b, 54b, 57a, 126b, 236b, 238b; 3:13b, 24a, 31a, 40b–41a, 48b, 52b–53a, 62a, 76a, 79b, 115b, 145b–146a, 179b, 250a.

12. This yoke does not settle... The yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven does not settle upon one who is subservient to a human master, so slaves are exempt from it—and specifically exempt from the obligation to recite the *Shema*. Being exempt from this obligation, they are exempt from all other *mitsvot*, since according to M *Berakhot* 2:2, one should “first accept upon himself the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven and afterward accept upon himself the yoke of the *mitsvot*.”

This explains why the Israelite slaves ate food in Egypt *hinnam*, *for nothing*—without reciting any blessing. Similarly, in the seventh year a Hebrew slave *shall go free hinnam, for nothing*—meaning that whatever good deeds or *mitsvot* he enacted during his years of servitude do not count as fulfilling a religious obligation, since he was not subject to the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven or the yoke of the *mitsvot*.

See above, [note 10](#). On the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven not settling upon one who is subservient to a human master, cf. JT *Berakhot* 3:3, 6b.

13. After gaining freedom... Then the liberated slave receives the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven from *Shekhinah*, who is known as *Malkhut* (Kingdom). If he refuses to leave his human master, he in effect spurns the dominion of *Shekhinah* and thereby impairs Her.

The context in Exodus (21:5–6) reads: *If the slave declares, "I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go free," his master shall make him approach האלהים (ha-Elohim), the gods [interpreted traditionally as the judges], and make him approach the door or the doorpost, and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl, and he shall serve him forever.*

Rabbi El'azar indicates that the term *ha-Elohim* is "unspecified"—implying that it could refer to various *sefirot*: *Binah*, *Gevurah*, or *Shekhinah*. Here, it signifies *Shekhinah*, "who is also called *Elohim*."

See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 232. On the interpretation of *Elohim* as *judges*, see above, [p. 169](#), [n. 326](#). On the verses in Exodus, cf. *Zohar* 2:106a.

14. The door or the doorpost... Symbolizing *Shekhinah*, who is the opening of the divine realm. On *Shekhinah* as *mezuzah*, see *Zohar* 3:257a, 258a, 263b–264a (*Piq*); *ZH* 85a (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 231–33.

15. Since he intended... Since by refusing to be liberated by *Shekhinah*, he impaired Her, he is marked permanently with a corresponding blemish.

According to rabbinic tradition, *he shall serve him forever* means until the next Jubilee year. See above, [note 6](#). For the context in Exodus, see above, [note 13](#).

16. Why his ear?... See *Tosefta Bava Qamma* 7:5, in the name of Rabban Yoḥanan son of Zakkai: "Now, why was the ear singled out from all the limbs to be pierced? Because it heard on Mount Sinai: *For Mine are the Children of Israel as servants* (Leviticus 25:55), and yet this [person] broke off the yoke of heaven and accepted upon himself a yoke of flesh-and-blood. Therefore Scripture

states: ‘Let the ear come and be pierced, since it did not fulfill what it heard!’”

Rabbi El’azar adds that “hearing” depends upon *Shekhinah* (through whom human prayer is heard), whereas “doing” depends upon the higher realm of *Binah*. Normally, “hearing is first, and afterward doing”—both in human behavior and in the progression up the sefirotic ladder. However, at Mount Sinai, Israel “placed doing before hearing,” by declaring *נַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁמָע* (*na’aseh ve-nishma*), *we will do and we will listen* (Exodus 24:7)—thereby demonstrating true faith: committing themselves to fulfill God’s word even before hearing the details.

Since hearing depends on *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the Sabbatical year), a slave who refuses to go free in the seventh (or Sabbatical) year—thereby spurning and impairing *Shekhinah*—is punished by having his hearing impaired (or rather, by having his ear pierced).

On the phrase “*approach the Elohim*, unspecified,” see above, [note 13](#). The concluding quotation from Leviticus implies here that *Shekhinah* (symbolized by *the land*) shall rest in the Sabbatical year and ideally extend this rest to everyone, including slaves. See above, [notes 5-6, 8](#).

On the passage in *Tosefta*, see *Mekhilta, Neziqin* 2; JT *Qiddushin* 1:2, 59d; BT *Qiddushin* 22b; Rashi on Exodus 21:6; *Zohar* 2:192a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 232. On hearing depending upon *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 3:261a. Elsewhere, hearing is actually associated with *Binah*. See, e.g., *Zohar* 3:138b (*IR*).

The verse in Exodus reads: *All that YHVH has spoken נַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁמָע* (*na’aseh ve-nishma*), *we will do and we will heed* [or: *listen*]. On the significance of this declaration, see *Mekhilta, Neziqin* 13; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 24:7; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 320; *Tosefta Bava Qamma* 7:9; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 2:4; BT *Shabbat* 88a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:5, 12; 2:1-3; 3:9; 4:9; 5:2; 6:5; *Tanḥuma, Vayishlah* 2,

Vayiqra 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayiqra* 1; *Seder Eliyyahu Zuta* 4, p. 179.

17. Six years you shall sow... In the seventh year, *the needy... may eat* the aftergrowth of the field. Rabbi El'azar explains that the "the poor depend upon this place," namely upon *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by the Sabbatical year. *Shekhinah* is associated with poverty and the poor because She Herself is poor—in the sense that She has nothing of Her own, only what She receives from the other *sefirot*.

The context in Leviticus (25:3-4) reads: *Six years you shall sow your field and six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its yield. But in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of complete rest for the land, a Sabbath to YHVH: your field you shall not sow and your vineyard you shall not prune.*

The context in Exodus (23:10-11) reads: *Six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield. But in the seventh you shall release it and leave it fallow, that the needy of your people may eat, and what they leave, the beast of the field will eat. Thus shall you do with your vineyard, with your olive grove.*

18. one who shows compassion... By helping the poor, one stimulates the flow of emanation to *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel) through *Yesod*, who is called Peace, because He unites *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, thereby bringing harmony.

צדקה (*Tsedakah*), "Righteousness," designates *Tif'eret*, who together with *Yesod* (the phallus) constitutes the Divine Male. In rabbinic Hebrew, *tsedakah* also means "charity," which pertains here.

On helping the poor as bringing peace, see *M Avot* 2:7; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 34:16; *Maḥazor Vitri*, p. 498; *Zohar* 1:199a-b, 200b; *ZH* 75c-d (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 356-57; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 113-14.

On *yesod* (the phallus) as Peace, cf. BT *Shabbat* 152a, where Rabbi Shim'on son of Halafta refers to the phallus as "peacemaker of the home." See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 18:1; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 12:5; *Zohar* 3:31a, 115b.

19. And should you say... The context in Leviticus (25:20-21) concerns the Sabbatical year, in which the land is not sown: *And should you say, "What will we eat in the seventh year, if we do not sow and do not gather in our produce?" I will ordain My blessing for you in the sixth year, and it will yield enough produce for three years.* The *three years* include not only the sixth and seventh years but also the eighth: until the eighth year's crop is harvested, the people will have sufficient food from the abundant crop of the sixth year.

20. ועשה טוב (*va-aseh tov*), and do good... By doing good, a person is able to *do good*—that is, to actualize *yesod* (who is known both as Righteous One and as *good*) and to stimulate His union with *Shekhinah*.

The full verse in Leviticus reads: *If by My statutes you walk, and My commands you keep* ועשיתם אֹתָם (*va-asitem otam*), *and you do them.* Here Rabbi Yehudah borrows a midrashic interpretation, which is based on the "defective" spelling of אֹתָם (*otam*), *them*, without the letter ו (*vav*). See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 35:7: "ועשיתם אֹתָם (*va-asitem otam*), *and you do them.* Rabbi Hama son of Rabbi Hanina said, '[God] said to them, "If you keep the Torah, I consider it as though you made [the commandments], as is written: ועשיתם אֹתָם (*va-asitem attem*), *and you yourselves make [them].*""

Rabbi Yehudah indicates that by doing good a person is able to *make them*—that is, to stimulate the sefirotic roots of the *mitsvot* and actualize divine union.

The concluding clause "and all is one" means that both *the land* and *faith* allude to *Shekhinah*. On *Shekhinah* as *faith*, see *Zohar* 1:19b; 2:214a; 3:16b, 35b, 198b; *ZH* 82a (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 25-26.

On the principle “By an action below is aroused an action above,” see above, [pp. 41–42](#), [n. 122](#). On the passage in *Vayiqra Rabbah*, see BT *Sanhedrin* 99b; *Tanḥuma*, *Ki Tavo* 1; *Zohar* 3:113a, 122a; *Minḥat Shai* on Leviticus 26:3. Cf. Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 365.

On *Yesod* as Righteous One, see above, [pp. 68–69](#), [n. 43](#). On the verse in Isaiah, see BT *Yoma* 38b, *Ḥagigah* 12a; *Zohar* 1:30b, 33a, 60a, 82b; 2:11b, 128b, 176b (*SdTs*); 3:16a.

[21. Dwell in the land—Supernal Land...](#) *Shekhinah*, in whom no one can dwell until he stimulates *Yesod* (known as *good*) to unite with Her. Thereby, he actualizes—or, as it were, “makes”—*Yesod*, and is then able to participate in the divine union.

[22. And shepherd faith—the land...](#) As indicated above ([note 20](#)), both *faith* and *land* allude to *Shekhinah*. The verse in Psalms links *faithfulness* (or *faith*) with *nights*, symbolizing *Shekhinah*.

One who participates in the divine union assumes the role of *Yesod* and is able to conduct *Shekhinah*.

[23. If you do not arouse this good...](#) Then *Yesod* cannot unite with *Shekhinah* and assuage Her harsh quality of Judgment.

Rabbinic sources often apply the verse in Job to virtuous or righteous individuals, including such biblical heroes as Jacob and Moses. See, e.g., BT *Ta’anit* 23a, where it is reported that the Sanhedrin sent a message to Honi the Circle-Drawer [the miracle-worker] : “*You will decree and it will be fulfilled, and light will gleam on your ways* (Job 22:28). *You will decree*—you have decreed below, and the blessed Holy One fulfills your word above.”

Cf. BT *Mo’ed Qatan* 16b, where Rabbi Abbahu quotes God as saying: “I rule over humanity. Who rules over Me? The righteous one. For I issue a decree and he abolishes it.” See Vol. 7, pp. 90–91, n. 275. The phrase “into a blazing fiery furnace” derives from Daniel 3:6.

24. Scions of Faith conduct this one... *Shekhinah* fulfills whatever the truly faithful wish. They stimulate *Yesod* (known as *good*) by giving generously to the needy, not sparing their money.

The subject of the clause “this one stimulates blessings toward him” is likely *Yesod*, or else *Shekhinah*. In the concluding sentence, the word “overwhelmingly” renders ךַּ עַד בְּלִי (ad beli dai), which derives from Malachi 3:10: *I will pour out blessings for you ad beli dai, until there is not enough [room to contain them]*. Possibly, *ad beli dai* means simply *until there is not enough*—that is, “until My abundance has been exhausted,” or—since this can never be—“forever.” See BT *Shabbat* 32b (and parallels): “What is meant by ךַּ עַד בְּלִי (ad beli dai), *until there is not enough?* ... Rav said, ‘*Until your lips wear out from saying ךַּ (dai), Enough!*’”

The full verse in Proverbs reads: *There is one who scatters yet gains more, and another saves honestly but ends up needy.*

25. and it will yield... Rabbi Yehudah wonders about the apocopated spelling וַעֲשֵׂת (ve-asat), *and it will yield*, without the concluding ה (he): וַעֲשֵׂתָה (ve-asetah). He implies that the letter *he*—a feminine marker—alludes to *Shekhinah*. Being the seventh of the lower *sefirot*, She is symbolized by the Sabbatical year, and the absence of the *he* signifies that She is inactive in Her Sabbatical. Instead, *Yesod* (the sixth of the lower *sefirot*, symbolized by *the sixth year*) yields enough emanation and blessing to nourish both *Shekhinah* and the world.

As explained above, the simple sense of Leviticus 25:21 is that the crop of the sixth year will be so abundant that it will provide food for that year, the following year (the Sabbatical year), and the eighth year, until the eighth year’s crop can be harvested.

The verse in Exodus refers to the manna, a double portion of which appeared on *the sixth day*, enough for

both that day and Sabbath. Here, this implies that *Yesod* (*the sixth day*) provides enough to sustain *Shekhinah* (symbolized by *the Sabbath*) and the world. The full verse reads: *See that YHVH has given you the Sabbath. Therefore He gives you on the sixth day bread for two days. Stay, each where he is; let no one go out from his place on the seventh day.*

26. that this deed should be done by us That we should provide him with food.

27. Perhaps judgment was decreed... Maybe the generous man deserved heavenly punishment, and God provided him this opportunity of performing a *mitsvah* so that he could gain merit and be spared.

28. Do you want to exhaust his merit?... By depriving him of suffering for the sake of the poor man whom he nourished. Rabbi Yose perceives that this man who just acted generously had been condemned in heaven to die.

See the preceding note. On a person's merit being exhausted, see *Zohar* 1:111b.

The clause "fastened to this one's ropes is a flickering ember of death" includes two Zoharic neologisms. The first one, קפטורי (*qafturei*), rendered here as "ropes," is based on the invented root קפטר (*qftr*), which in turn derives from the root קטר (*qtr*), "to tie, bind." On the connection between *qftr* and "rope," see above, [p. 154](#), [n. 279](#). Cf. *Or Yaqar*; *Derekh Emet*; *Ma'arikh*, s.v. *quftera*; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David*, s.v. *qftr*; *Sullam*.

"A flickering ember" renders טיפסא (*tifsa*), which sometimes means "glowing ember, burning coal" in the *Zohar*. See *Zohar* 1:242a; the similar phrase קופטרא דטיפסא (*quftera de-tifsa*) in 1:218a (Vol. 3, p. 316, n. 75); and 3:114b. See also *Or Yaqar*; *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 178–80, s.v. *tufsa*, *tifsa*; *Derekh Emet*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David*, s.v. *tifsa*; *Sullam*.

29. a flaming ember... "Ember" renders טיפסא (*tifsa*). See the preceding note. Some commentators interpret this

as referring to a reptile, which fits the context. See *Or Yaqar*; *Haggahot Maharḥu*; *Derekh Emet*; *Ma'arikh*, s.v. *tifsa*; *Nitsotsei Orot*.

30. a snake came down... On being saved from a snake by the merit of feeding the poor, see BT *Shabbat* 156b.

“Erecting” renders קסטר (*qister*), perhaps based on Latin *castrum* (pl. *castra*), “fortress, castle.” Cf. *Nitsotsei Orot*; above, [p. 72](#), [n. 51](#). For another interpretation (“turning”), see *Haggahot Maharḥu*; *Derekh Emet*. Cf. Luria, *Va-Ye’esof David*, s.v. *qstr*.

31. you should not exhaust his merit By giving him food. See above, [notes 27–28](#).

32. Trust in YHVH and do good... One who provides for the needy with his own money or possessions (“using what is his”) stimulates *Yesod* (who is known as *good*) to unite with *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel).

In rabbinic Hebrew, צדקה (*tsedaqah*), “righteousness,” also means “charity.” In the *Zohar*, this term designates *Tif’eret*, who together with *Yesod* (the phallus) constitutes the Divine Male. See above, [note 18](#). On the interpretation of the verse in Psalms, see above, [note 20](#).

33. Tsedaqah delivers from death... The simple sense of the verset is: *Righteousness delivers from death*. But in numerous rabbinic sources, this is construed as: *Charity delivers from death*. See the preceding note; above, [p. 29](#), [n. 84](#).

Here *tsedaqah* also designates *Tif’eret*, who is symbolized by the Tree of Life. A human act of *tsedaqah* stimulates *Tif’eret* to sweeten the harshness of *Shekhinah*. She is symbolized by the Tree of Knowledge, which is also known as the Tree of Death, because when Adam and Eve ate of its fruit, death ensued. When *Shekhinah* is separated from the other *sefirot*, She becomes vulnerable to demonic forces and can transmit death and destruction; so She is then called the Tree of Death.

On the Tree of Death, see *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 5, p. 24; above, [p. 204](#), [n. 437](#). Cf. Genesis 2:17: *But from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat, for on the day that you eat from it, you will surely die.*

On *tsedaqah* as the Tree of Life, see *Zohar* 3:113b. Cf. Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 114-15. The verset *Tsedaqah delivers from death* appears also in Proverbs 11:4. The full verse in Psalms reads: *Happy are those who keep justice, who perform tsedaqah, righteousness, at all times.*

[34.](#) [**ZH 49d**] The following passage from *Zohar Hadash* (extending below to [p. 222](#) at [n. 42](#)) continues and concludes the story of Rabbi Ḥiyya and Rabbi Yose (which begins above on p. 217). See *Or Yaqar*.

[35.](#) **can a person perform *tsedaqah* at all times?** How can the verse read *Happy are those... who perform tsedaqah at all times?* Who can give charity twelve hours a day? Rather, the verse implies that by providing for the needy, one stimulates the flow from *Tif'eret* (known as *tsedaqah*) not only to *Shekhinah* (who is referred to as “a holy time of favor”) but to *all times*—that is, to all the forces beneath *Shekhinah*, perhaps including even harsh and demonic powers, who are assuaged by the blessed flow from above.

See *Zohar* 1:153a. On the question “Can a person perform *tsedaqah* at all times?” see also BT *Ketubbot* 50a; *Ester Rabbah* 6:1; *Midrash Tehillim* 106:3. The phrase “for twelve hours a day” may imply that charity is not usually distributed at night. See *Tosafot, Shabbat* 118a, s.v. *de-malvinan*; *Bava Batra* 9a, s.v. *ein poḥatin le-ani*; *Nitsotsei Zohar*.

On the verse in Leviticus, see *Zohar* 1:80a (*ST*), 116b, 194a; 2:155b; 3:58a-b. The full verse reads: *YHVH said to Moses, “Speak to Aaron your brother, that he not enter at all times into the sanctuary within the curtain, in front of the cover [or: purging cover] that is on the Ark, lest he die. For in the cloud I shall appear over the cover.”* On the *purging cover*, see above, [p. 151](#), [n. 276](#).

36. told him what had happened... Rabbi Ḥiyya and Rabbi Yose recount to him the generosity and the miracle that they witnessed. See above, [pp. 217-18](#).

Rabbi Shim'on responds by saying that anyone who provides for the needy grasps the Tree of Life (symbolizing *Tif'eret*), and is thereby saved from death.

See BT *Shabbat* 156b: "Rabbi Akiva had a daughter. The Chaldean [astrologers] said to him, 'On the day she enters the bridal chamber, a snake will bite her and she will die.' He was very troubled by this. On that day [of her wedding] she took a twisted pin and stuck it into a crack [per Vatican MS 108] and it happened to penetrate the eye of a snake. The next morning, when she took it out, the snake came trailing after it. Her father asked her, 'What did you do?' She replied, 'In the evening a poor man came, crying out at the door, and everyone was busy preparing the banquet and no one heard him. So I got up and took the portion that you gave me and gave it to him.' He said to her, 'You performed a *mitsvah* [by whose merit you were saved]!' Rabbi Akiva went out and expounded: '*Tsedaqah delivers from death* (Proverbs 10:2)—not just from an unnatural death, but from death itself!'"

On the closing sentence in this Talmudic passage, see BT *Bava Batra* 10a; *Midrash Mishlei* 10:1. For various interpretations of the concluding clause here in the *Zohar* ("even from death..."), see *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

37. By all of them... By all those who help the needy—by each act of *tsedaqah*—*Tif'eret* is stimulated. Symbolized by the Tree of Life, He nourishes all.

38. What is the nature of scholars?... Since they have attained the rung of *Tif'eret* (known as *tsedaqah* and symbolized by the Tree of Life) and their merit brings nourishment to all, why do they themselves need to struggle in order to gain sustenance?

See BT *Berakhot* 17b: “Listen to me, you stout-hearted, who are from *tsedaqah*, righteousness (Isaiah 46:12). Rav and Shemu’el—according to others, Rabbi Yoḥanan and Rabbi El’azar—interpreted this differently. One said, ‘The whole world is nourished by [God’s] *tsedaqah*, charity, while they [the *stout-hearted*, i.e., the righteous] are nourished by [their own] arm [i.e., by the power, or merit, of their own deeds].’ The other said, ‘The whole world is nourished by their merit, whereas they are not nourished even by their own merit.’”

On this Talmudic passage, see JT *Ma’aser Sheni* 5:13, 56d; *Zohar* 1:189a. On scholars increasing peace in the world, see BT *Berakhot* 64a (and parallels).

39. a scholar is the actual Tree of Life... Through his learning and virtue, he actually merges with *Tif’eret*, the Tree of Life. *Tif’eret* is sustained by *Binah* (known as the World that is Coming), and that sublime realm does not pertain to this world. Rather, after the scholar departs from this world and enters the world that is coming, he is then nourished by *Binah*, within whom he is planted. On *Binah* as the World that is Coming, see above, [pp. 33–34](#), [n. 97](#).

40. Now, they eat of the fruit... In this world, scholars are nourished by *Shekhinah*, who is pictured as the fruit of *Tif’eret* (the Tree of Life). *Shekhinah* sustains the poor, with whom She is associated since She has nothing of Her own, only what She receives from the other *sefirot*.

On the spiritual sustenance of scholars, see *Zohar* 2:61b–62a. On *Shekhinah* and the poor, see above, [note 17](#).

The full verse in Genesis 3 (spoken by Eve to the serpent) reads: *But from the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden God has said, “You shall not eat from it and you shall not touch it, lest you die.”* In its biblical context, *the tree* actually refers to the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.

41. [The righteous] are nourished by the arm... See BT *Berakhot* 17b (quoted above, [note 38](#)): “The whole

world is nourished by [God's] *tsedaqah*, charity, whereas they [the righteous] are nourished by [their own] arm [i.e., by the power, or merit, of their own deeds]."

Rabbi Shim'on interprets "arm" as referring to the divine arm, *Gevurah* (Power)—or rather to *Shekhinah*, who is known as Lower *Gevurah*. Whereas now they are nourished limitedly by Her, in the time to come they will be sustained directly by *Binah*. Through their devotion to Torah, they imbibe now a taste of future bliss. *Shekhinah* is also described as the Lower Tree.

42. numerous supernal streams... Within *Binah*, the World that is Coming. She is also known as Jubilee.

According to a rabbinic tradition, thirteen rivers of balsam await the righteous in the world that is coming. See above, [p. 77](#), [n. 67](#). On the verse in Isaiah, see BT *Berakhot* 34b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "All the prophets prophesied only concerning the days of the Messiah, but as for the world that is coming, *No eye has seen, O God, but You, [what You will do for one who awaits You]*." See *Zohar* 3:239a. On *Binah* as Jubilee, see above, [note 7](#).

1. If by My statutes you walk... This Torah portion (*Be-Huqqotai*) includes descriptions of Israel's reward for fulfilling God's commandments and their punishment for violating the commandments. The opening verse reads: *If by My statutes you walk, and מצוותי (mitsvotai), My commands, you keep and do them.* Here, Rabbi Ḥiyya substitutes משפטי (mishpatai), *My laws*, for *mitsvotai, My commands*.

See *Minḥat Shai*, ad loc.; below, [note 20](#). Cf. Leviticus 25:18; Ezekiel 36:27; and see also Leviticus 18:4-5, 26; 19:37; 20:22; 26:15, 43. On the phenomenon of Zoharic biblical quotations differing from the Masoretic text, see Vol. 7, p. 8, n. 24.

In the verse from Micah, *from Shittim to Gilgal* refers to Israel's crossing the Jordan. See Joshua 3:1, 14-4:20. On the verse from Micah, see *Zohar* 3:203b.

2. Woe, that we cry out... God called out to Israel, pleading with them to remember His kindness toward them and to turn back to Him, but Israel disregarded the divine plea. Consequently, when they were punished and then cried out to God, He disregarded them.

On נַל (na) as signifying "nothing but a plea," see *Mekhilta, Amaleq (Beshallah)* 2; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 17:14; *Sifrei*, Numbers 80, 103, 134; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 3:25; BT *Berakhot* 9a, *Sotah* 10b, *Sanhedrin* 43b, 89b; *Tanḥuma, Vayera* 22, *Toledot* 11, *Tsav* 13.

The full verse in Psalm 137 reads: *Remember, O YHVH, the Edomites, on the day of Jerusalem, saying: "Raze it, raze it to its foundation!"* This verse refers to the time when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians with the encouragement of their Edomite allies. The verse in Psalm 106 reads: *Remember me, O YHVH...*

3. Balak was wiser... According to a midrashic tradition, King Balak was a greater sorcerer than Balaam, whom he hired to curse Israel. See *Tanḥuma, Balaq* 4, 11; *Tanḥuma (Buber), Balaq* 6; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 20:7, 18.

On an action below arousing an action above, see above, [pp. 41-42](#), [n. 122](#). On word and action, see above, [p. 133](#), [n. 230](#).

4. Balak was a supreme sorcerer... See the preceding note.

Rabbi Yehudah distinguishes between two types of sorcery: קסם (*qesem*), “divination,” and נחש (*naḥash*), “omen.” The former requires action on the part of the sorcerer, whereas the latter requires only observing the omen and reciting an incantation. See *Zohar* 1:164b, 167a; 3:207a, 211a, 299b. In the closing sentence, “them” refers to the sorcerers.

5. Not so, holy Israel... They do not rely on any kind of sorcery, but rather are linked with holiness.

On the verse in Isaiah, see *Zohar* 1:83b; 3:70b, 122a. On the verse in Numbers, see *Zohar* 1:167a; 3:207a, 211a.

6. In divination, Balak was greater... So when he sent his elders to Balaam, they *went with divination in their hand*, seeking to convince Balaam to join forces with them by contributing his expertise in omens.

According to a rabbinic tradition, Balaam knew how to determine the precise moment each day when God becomes angry. By cursing at that moment, he could effectively doom Israel. See BT *Berakhot* 7a: “Does the blessed Holy One express wrath? Yes, for it has been taught: *God rages every day* (Psalms 7:12). How long is His rage? One moment. And how long is one moment? One fifty-eight-thousand-eight-hundred-and-eighty-eighth of an hour. This is a moment, and no creature can determine it precisely—except for the wicked Balaam, of whom is written *He knows the mind of the Most High* (Numbers 24:16). Now, even the mind of his animal [i.e., his donkey] he did not know, so how could he know *the mind of the Most High*? Well, this teaches that he knew how to determine that precise moment in which the blessed Holy One is angry. This corresponds to what the prophet said to

Israel: *My people, remember now what Balak king of Moab plotted, [and what Balaam son of Beor answered him... that you may know the saving acts of YHVH]* (Micah 6:5). What is meant by *that you may know the saving acts of YHVH*? Rabbi El'azar said, "The blessed Holy One said to Israel, "Know how many saving acts I performed for you in the days of the wicked Balaam. For if I had been angry, no survivor or escapee would have remained of the enemies of Israel [a euphemism for the people of Israel themselves]."" This corresponds to what Balaam said to Balak: *How can I curse whom God has not cursed, how can I doom whom YHVH has not doomed?* (Numbers 23:8). This teaches that all those days He did not rage."

On this Talmudic passage, see *Sanhedrin* 105b, *Avodah Zarah* 4b; Rashi on Numbers 24:16; *Zohar* 3:63b, 113a, 119a-b, 206b, 208a, 210a; *ZH* 54c.

7. Wicked one, My children have anticipated you... God tells Balaam that Israel knows how to nullify his curses. Various elements of worship in the Tabernacle and the Temple undo the power of any divination, while those elements relating to the Torah and prayer undo the power of omens (which depend on speech and incantation).

On the distinction between divination and omen, see above, [note 4](#). On the power of incense to nullify wrath, see Numbers 17:11-13. The "two altars" include the sacrificial altar and the altar for incense. On "the table of the Presence" and its twelve loaves of bread, see Exodus 25:23-30; Leviticus 24:5-9. *The basin* was for the priests to wash their hands and feet.

8. Surely there is no omen in Jacob... Balaam realized that his powers of sorcery were ineffective against Israel, who are shielded by God.

9. Therefore, Remember נָא (na), please... On this sense of *na*, see above, [note 2](#).

10. From Shittim to Gilgal... Rabbi Yehudah wonders what *Shittim* and *Gilgal* have to do with the story of

Balaam, who failed to curse Israel because God protected them. He explains that when the Israelites rejected God at Shittim by *whoring with the daughters of Moab* and then worshiping the Moabites' false gods, they were stripped of divine protection and punished. (See Numbers 25:1-5, immediately following the Balaam narrative.)

In the verse in Micah, *Shittim* refers to the place where Israel encamped before marching to the Jordan River, and *Gilgal* refers to the site east of Jericho where they camped after crossing the river. (See Joshua 3:1, 14-4:20.) Gilgal became a sacred site, but later its cult aroused the wrath of the prophets Hosea and Amos. For the full verse in Micah, see above at [note 1](#).

[11. Why all this?...](#) Why did God remind Israel of all these things?

[12. Lodge here tonight...](#) Balaam's response to the elders sent by King Balak who asked him to curse Israel. Rabbi Yehudah explains that Balaam mentioned *tonight* because that is the time when heavenly gates are shut and demonic forces roam the world. Balaam was in regular nightly contact with the highest prince of the left side, apparently Samael.

See *Zohar* 3:194a. On the wording *as YHVH will speak to me*, see below, [note 16](#). On the image of dogs, see BT *Berakhot* 3a, in the name of Rabbi Eli'ezer: "In the first watch [of the night], a donkey brays; in the second, dogs bark; in the third, a child sucks from its mother's breast, and a woman converses with her husband." See above, [p. 206, n. 2](#).

[13. Similarly, Elohim came to Laban...](#) According to rabbinic interpretation, the name *Elohim* signifies Judgment. (See above, [p. 184, n. 375](#).) In the *Zohar*, this name can refer to harsh and even demonic powers. Laban, who dealt dishonestly with Jacob, invoked the power called *Elohim*. So did Abimelech, king of Gerar, who married Sarah after Abraham told him, *She is my sister* (Genesis 20:2).

On *Elohim* signifying a harsh or demonic power, see *Zohar* 1:111b; 2:96a; 3:8a, 200a, 207a, 208b; *ZH* 78d (*MhN, Rut*); *Minḥat Shai* on Genesis 20:3. Cf. 3:194a. On such a power appearing “more frequently at night,” cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 74:7; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 1:13; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayishlah* 24.

The verse in Genesis 26 reads: *Abimelech king of the Philistines gazed through the window and saw—and there was Isaac playing with [or: fondling] Rebekah his wife.* According to Rabbi Yehudah, the phrase *through the window* alludes to a method of sorcery or astrology—as supposedly in the account in Judges of how Sisera’s mother discovered that her son had been murdered by Jael.

See Judges 4:17-21; *Zohar* 1:140b; 2:172a-b; 3:184b; *Yerahme’el*, ed. Yassif, 6:3; Joseph Albo, *Iqqarim* 4:43; Malbim on Judges 5:28.

On Laban’s expertise in sorcery, see Genesis 30:27; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Rashi, Ibn Ezra and *Sekhel Tov*, ad loc.; *Zohar* 1:126a, 133b, 139b, 158b, 161a, 164b, 166b-167b.

14. he comes to them... Like other such demonic princes, the one called *Elohim* has no fixed place. The clause *Elohim came to Balaam* appears also in Numbers 22:20.

15. Look, it is written Elohim... Which seems to imply holiness. However, Rabbi Yehudah explains that this name includes various forces deriving from Judgment on the left side. Even idolatry is called אלהים אחרים (*elohim aḥerim*), “other gods.” Included in this category are the demonic princes, so they are referred to as *Elohim*.

On the equivocal nature of the name *Elohim*, see Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 1:2; *ZH* 4a (*MhN*). On *Elohim* as alluding to idolatry, see BT *Sanhedrin* 56b, 60b (the latter quoting Exodus 22:19). Cf. *Zohar* 3:194a.

16. That wicked one used to conjure... Balaam would invoke the power known as *Elohim*. However, in his

response to the elders sent by King Balak, he boasted falsely that *YHVH will speak to me*. See *Zohar* 3:200a.

17. Look, [Elohim] appeared by day—with Balak... For example, Numbers 23:4 states that *Elohim encountered Balaam* in the presence of Balak, and this presumably occurred during the day. But Rabbi Yehudah explains that during the daytime Balaam would merely observe an omen—which can also be referred to as *Elohim*. He did so in order to determine the exact moment of God’s anger, so that his curse against Israel would coincide with that anger and thereby be effective. However, on that particular day, Balaam discovered that God displayed no anger, so he gave up trying to observe omens and, instead of cursing Israel, blessed them.

On Balaam’s ability to determine the precise moment of God’s anger, see above, [note 6](#). The full verse in Numbers 24 reads: *Balaam saw that it was good in the eyes of YHVH to bless Israel, and he did not go, as time after time, to encounter omens but turned his face to the desert.*

18. that wicked one knew a place below... Balaam knew how to activate a demonic force stemming from the left side, but on that day he found no such opportunity because God displayed no wrath.

19. If בהקותי (be-*huqqotai*), by My statutes... The term חקקה (*huqqah*), “statute,” alludes to *Shekhinah*, who is associated with “keeping” the statutes and decrees of Torah.

This connection of *Shekhinah* with “keeping” is based on two alternative versions of the Ten Commandments. The first version reads: זכור (*Zakhor*), *Remember, the Sabbath day to hallow it* (Exodus 20:8). The second version reads: שמור (*Shamor*), *Keep, the Sabbath day to hallow it* (Deuteronomy 5:12). For the kabbalist, *zakhor, remember*, suggests זכר (*zakhar*), “male,” signifying the male divine potency (centered in *Tif’eret*), whereas the alternative formulation, *shamor, keep*, signifies the female, *Shekhinah*. See above, [pp. 14-15, n. 42](#).

20. And משפטי (mishpatai), My laws, you keep... Whereas *huqqotai* (*My statutes*) alludes to *Shekhinah* (who is associated with *huqqah*, “statute”), *mishpatai* (*My laws*) alludes to *Tif’eret*, who is known as *Mishpat*, “Justice” (or “Law”). *Tif’eret* and *Shekhinah* are known respectively as Written Torah and Oral Torah.

See below, [note 22](#). The verse in Leviticus actually reads: *If by My statutes you walk, and מצוותי (mitsvotai), My commands, you keep and do them*. Here, the verse is recorded as:... *and משפטי (mishpatai), My laws, you keep*. See Leviticus 25:18; Ezekiel 36:27; *Minḥat Shai* on Leviticus 26:3; above, [note 1](#); *Or Yaqar*; *Haggahot Maharḥu*; Vital; Zacuto; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Ateret Tsevi*; *Nitsotsei Zohar*.

21. משפט (mishpat), a law, of the God of Jacob... This verse demonstrates that *mishpat* refers to *Tif’eret*, who is symbolized by *Jacob*.

Tif’eret and *Shekhinah* are linked with one another, consummating the Divine Name. On the sefirotic significance of the letters of *YHVH*, see above, [p. 83](#), [n. 83](#).

22. Whoever transgresses the decrees of Torah... One who violates the commandments ruins the union of the divine couple and thereby spoils the Divine Name.

Traditionally, חוקים (*huqqim*), “statutes,” are those commandments whose reason is not explained in the Torah, whereas משפטים (*mishpatim*), “laws,” are provided with reasons (or are so obvious that they require no stated reason).

See *Sifra, Aḥarei Mot* 13:10, 86a; *BT Yoma* 67b; *Tanḥuma, Mishpatim* 7; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 19:19; 26:15; Deuteronomy 6:20. On *hoq* and *mishpat* as signifying respectively *Shekhinah* and *Tif’eret*, see *Zohar* 2:40a, 60b; 3:73b.

23. ועשיתם אותם (Va-asitem otam), and you do them... The full verse (as recorded in this passage) reads: *If by My statutes you walk, and My laws you keep, ועשיתם אותם (va-asitem otam), and you do them*. (See above, [note 20](#).) The final

clause seems superfluous, but Rabbi Yehudah construes it as *and you make them*—that is, by fulfilling the commands of Torah one stimulates the union of *Shekhinah* (implied by *My statutes*) and *Tif'eret* (implied by *My laws*), thereby actualizing the divine couple; so “It is as if he made Me!”

See *Zohar* 3:122a; Recanati on Exodus 29:1, 51c, quoting from *Sefer ha-Yiḥud*; Idel, *New Perspectives*, 185. Cf. Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 365.

A less radical midrashic interpretation of the verse appears in *Vayiqra Rabbah* 35:7, based on the “defective” spelling of אָתָם (*otam*), *them*, without the letter ו (vav): “אָתָם וַעֲשִׂיתֶם (*Va-asitem otam*), *and you do them*. Rabbi Hama son of Rabbi Ḥanina said, ‘[God] said to them, “If you keep the Torah, I consider it as though you made [the commandments], as is written: אָתָם וַעֲשִׂיתֶם (*Va-asitem attem*), *and you yourselves make [them]*.’”” See above, [p. 215](#), [n. 20](#); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1160.

24. David made a name... The full verse reads: *David made a name [for himself] when he came back from striking down the Edomites [per Septuagint and several manuscripts] in the Valley of Salt—eighteen thousand of them*. Here, Rabbi Shim’on interprets *David made a name* as meaning that David enhanced and actualized *Shekhinah*, the Divine Name (through whom God becomes known).

David, the ideal king, is associated intimately with *Shekhinah*, or *Malkhut* (Kingdom). On his rising at midnight, see BT *Berakhot* 3b, in the name of Rabbi Shim’on the Ḥasid: “There was a harp suspended above [King] David’s bed. As soon as midnight arrived, a north wind came and blew upon it, and it played by itself. He immediately arose and engaged in Torah until the break of dawn.” See above, [pp. 10–11](#), [n. 32](#).

According to Rabbi Shim’on, the wording in Leviticus 24—*The son of the Israelite woman pierced the Name*—implies that this person impaired the Divine Name. See above, [p. 191](#), [n. 399](#); [p. 193](#), [n. 403](#). On the significance of

David made a name, see *Zohar* 1:116b, 142b; *ZH* 17b (*MhN*).

25. I will give your rains... This promise implies that *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, whom the devoted Israelite has restored, will pour down blessing. Together, they consummate the Divine Name.

See above, [note 21](#). The context in Leviticus (26:3-4) reads: *If by My statutes you walk, and My commands you keep and you do them, I will give your rains in their season, and the land will give its yield and the tree of the field will give its fruit.*

26. why לעשות (la'asot), to do, righteousness and justice?... In the context of the verse, this clause seems redundant, but according to Rabbi Shim'on it implies that one who keeps God's ways עושה (*oseh*), "makes," *righteousness and justice*—that is, he actualizes and completes the blessed Holy One (*Tif'eret*), who is often represented by each element of the compound noun ומשפט צדקה (*tsedaqah u-mishpat*), *righteousness and justice*.

The verse in Genesis, describing God's intimacy with Abraham, reads: *For I have known him, so that he will instruct his children and his household after him: they will keep the way of YHVH to do righteousness and justice.*

27. tsedaqah, charity... In biblical Hebrew this word means "righteousness, justice," while in rabbinic Hebrew it often refers specifically to the righteous act of "charity."

28. a poor person is linked with Judgment... His impoverished state reflects the quality of harsh Judgment, on the left side, and he is associated with *Shekhinah*, who is linked with Judgment and called *Tsedeq* (Righteousness). In a sense, *Shekhinah* is also poor, until She is filled with the flow of emanation from above.

The verse in Psalms links *a poor person* with תפלה (*tefillah*), *a prayer*. Rabbi Shim'on indicates that *tefillah* also means "phylactery" (the singular of tefillin), and *Shekhinah* is symbolized by the *tefillah* (phylactery) of the hand; so this

verse demonstrates the connection between the poor and *Shekhinah*.

Rabbi Shim'on is probably also playing with two senses of the root טַפַּע ('*tf*), which can mean both "to be faint" and "to cover oneself, wrap," as in "wrapping oneself in a tallit" before donning tefillin. See *Zohar* 3:278a (*RM*); *TZ* 6, 22a-b; 11, 26b; 21, 55b. The full verse in Psalms reads: *A prayer of a poor person when he is faint and pours out his plea before YHVH*. On this verse, see also *Zohar* 1:168b; 2:86b; 3:195a.

On the poor person being linked with Judgment, see Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 112. On the significance of tefillin, see above, [p. 211](#), [n. 11](#).

29. One who gives *tsedaqah*, charity... By doing so, a person stimulates *Tif'eret* (who is known as *Tsedaqah* and symbolized by the Tree of Life) to give to *Shekhinah* (known as *Tsedeq*). She is symbolized by the final letter of the name יהוה (*YHVH*), and when the higher *sefirot* (included in *Tif'eret* and symbolized by the first three letters of the Name) unite with Her, then the Name becomes complete and the blessed Holy One is fully actualized.

See above, [notes 23, 26](#); [p. 219](#), [n. 33](#). On the sefirotic significance of the letters of *YHVH*, see above, [p. 83](#), [n. 83](#). On an action below arousing above, see above, [pp. 41-42](#), [n. 122](#).

30. A poor person's place... He "inhabits" the realm of *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the moon), since like a poor person She has nothing of Her own, only what She receives from *Tif'eret* (symbolized by the sun).

On the moon having no light of her own, see Ibn Ezra on Exodus 3:15; David Kimḥi on Genesis 1:16. On this image as applied to *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:20a, 31a, 132b, 179b, 181a, 233b, 238a, 249b; 2:43a (*Piq*), 90b-91a, 142a, 145b, 215a, 218b, 219b; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 338; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 113, 188, 257; idem, *Sheqel*

ha-Qodesh, 68–69 (85–86); idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 381. Cf. BT *Shabbat* 156a.

31. Why is a poor person considered dead?... According to BT *Nedarim* 64b, “Four are considered dead: a poor person, a leper [or: one afflicted with scales], a blind person, and one who is childless.”

Here Rabbi Shim'on relates the dead quality of a poor person to *Shekhinah*. She is symbolized by the Tree of Knowledge, which is also known as the Tree of Death, because when Adam and Eve ate of its fruit, death ensued. When *Shekhinah* is separated from the other *sefirot*, She becomes vulnerable to demonic forces and can transmit death and destruction; so She is then called the Tree of Death.

If a person gives *tsedaqah* to one in need, he stimulates *Tif'eret* (who is known as *Tsedaqah* and symbolized by the Tree of Life) to “revive” that poor person. Simultaneously, he stimulates *Tif'eret* to provide for *Shekhinah* and “revive” Her. Thereby, the Divine Name is restored and consummated.

See above, [p. 219](#), [n. 33](#). On the Tree of Death, see *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 5, p. 24; above, [p. 204](#), [n. 437](#). Cf. Genesis 2:17: *But from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat, for on the day that you eat from it, you will surely die.*

The simple sense of the verset in Proverbs is *Righteousness delivers from death*. But in numerous rabbinic sources, this is construed as *Charity delivers from death*.

On the passage in *Nedarim*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 71:6; *Eikhah Rabbah* on 3:6; BT *Avodah Zarah* 5a; *Tanḥuma*, *Tsav* 13; *Shemot Rabbah* 5:4; Rashi on Exodus 4:19. On the supreme value of *tsedaqah*, see *Tosefta Pe'ah* 4:19; JT *Pe'ah* 1:1, 15b–c; BT *Sukkah* 49b; *Seder Eliyyahu Zuta* 1, 169–71.

32. This applies to *tsedaqah* for its own sake... Only when a person gives *tsedaqah* without ulterior motives (such as recognition and honor) does his deed have cosmic

impact—stimulating *Tif'eret* (known as *Tsedaqah*) to unite with *Shekhinah* (known as *Tsedeq*). The verse in Isaiah is addressed to Assembly of Israel (which here symbolizes *Shekhinah*), implying that by *Tif'eret* (called *Tsedaqah*) She *shall be established*. On the verse in Leviticus, see above, [note 23](#).

33. *I will grant peace in the land...* The full verse reads: *I will grant peace in the land, and you will lie down with none to make you afraid; I will eliminate evil beasts from the land, and no sword will traverse your land.*

34. *Tremble, and do not sin...* Rabbi Yose quotes a midrashic interpretation of this verse. See BT *Berakhot* 5a, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Lakish: "A person should always ירגז (*yargiz*), incite, the good impulse against the evil impulse, for it is said: רגזו (*Rigzu*), *Tremble, and so not sin.*"

Rabbi Yose approves of this teaching, but he proceeds to offer a new one. At night, harsh powers of Judgment roam through the world, so people should *tremble*. They should make no mention of these threatening forces, so as not to stimulate them.

On the passage in *Berakhot*, cf. *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 24:4; *Rut Rabbah* 8:1; *Midrash Tehillim* 4:9. "Dusks" renders רמש (*remash*), an apparently Zoharic verb based on רמשא (*ramsha*), "evening." See *Zohar* 1:34b; 2:36b, 171a, 173a, 198a, 208a; 3:21a, 52b, 149a-b, 166b; *ZH* 7d (*MhN*), 25d (*MhN*), 28b (*MhN*).

35. *I will grant peace in the land...* Rabbi Yose indicates that "this applies above," that is, to the divine couple, the blessed Holy One and *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel). *Peace* alludes to *Yesod*, the divine phallus, who gratifies and soothes *Shekhinah* (symbolized by *the land*).

The verse in Leviticus reads: *I will eliminate evil beasts* [literally: *an evil beast*]. Here Rabbi Yose focuses on the singular sense and identifies this *evil beast* as Agrat daughter of Maḥalat, the Queen of Demons, who terrorizes

at night. The conclusion of the verse guarantees that no human marauders wielding swords *will traverse your land* during the day.

On Agrat daughter of Maḥalat, see BT *Pesaḥim* 112b: “One should not go out alone at night, neither on the eve of Wednesday [fourth day of the week] nor on the eve of Sabbath, because Agrat daughter of Maḥalat goes out together with 180,000 angels of destruction, each empowered to wreak destruction independently.”

See *Pesaḥim* 111a; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:3; *Zohar* 1:55a; *ZḤ* 21c (*MhN*); Baḥya ben Asher on Genesis 4:2; Margaliot, *Mal’akhei Elyon*, 204–5.

On *Yesod* (the phallus) as Peace, see BT *Shabbat* 152a, where Rabbi Shim’on son of Ḥalafta refers to the phallus as “peacemaker of the home.” Cf. *Vayiqra Rabbah* 18:1; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 12:5; *Zohar* 3:31a, 115b.

36. this applies even to a sword of peace... Such as the military power of Pharaoh Necho, who sought to pass through King Josiah’s territory peacefully on his way to aid the Assyrians. Josiah, however, confronted him at Megiddo, and was defeated and killed there.

See BT *Ta’anit* 22a–b (commenting on M *Ta’anit* 3:5): “[‘The alarm is sounded over... evil beasts and the sword.’] ‘And the sword...’ Our Rabbis taught: There is no need to mention a hostile sword, but even a sword of peace. For there was never a more peaceful sword than that of Pharaoh Necho, but even so, thereby King Josiah was felled. ... [Pharaoh Necho’s] *archers shot King Josiah* (2 Chronicles 35:23)... Rabbi Shemu’el son of Naḥmani said in the name of Rabbi Yonatan, ‘Why was Josiah punished? Because he should have consulted Jeremiah and he did not. What did he expound? “*No sword will traverse your land* (Leviticus 26:6). What is meant by *sword*? If you say a hostile sword—well, it is already written *I will grant peace in the land* (ibid.)! So it must mean even a peaceful sword.’” But [Josiah] did not know that his generation was not

deemed worthy [of the blessings promised in Leviticus]. As [Josiah's] soul was expiring, [the prophet] Jeremiah saw that his lips were moving; he thought, "Heaven forbid, perhaps he is saying something improper because of his pain!" He bent down and heard him justifying the [divine] decree against himself, saying *YHVH is righteous, for I have rebelled against His word* (Lamentations 1:18). At that moment, Jeremiah cited over him, *The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of YHVH, [was captured in their traps]* (ibid. 4:20).'"

The concluding bracketed phrase *in their traps* renders *בשחיתותם* (*bi-shhitotam*), which can be understood midrashically as *by their corruption*. This is the sense adopted here by Rabbi Abba.

See JT *Shabbat* 16:1, 15c; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 15:4; *Eikhah Rabbah* 4:23. On the story in *Ta'anit*, see *Tosefta Ta'anit* 2:10; *Seder Olam Rabbah* 24; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:53; *Eikhah Rabbah* (Buber) 1:18; *Targum*, Lamentations 1:18.

According to Rabbi Abba, *no sword will traverse your land* refers to the destructive retinue of Agrat daughter of Maḥalat, while *an evil beast* refers to Agrat herself.

37. If the head of the people is good... Since Josiah was a virtuous king, why were he and his people defeated by Pharaoh Necho?

On the saying quoted here ("If the head of the people is good..."), see *Zohar* 2:36b, 47a, 198a; 3:135a (*IR*). Cf. *Tosefta Ta'anit* 2:5; BT *Eruvin* 41a, *Arakhin* 17a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 42; *Tanḥuma*, *Huqqat* 23; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 19:28; *Zohar* 3:20b.

38. for he did not believe Jeremiah... Who told King Josiah that the people were unworthy of the divine promise *No sword will traverse your land*, and that consequently Josiah should not confront Pharaoh Necho.

Furthermore, the light of *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the moon) was waning and "was about to be blocked" as a result of the destruction of the Temple.

According to the Midrash, just as the moon does not become full until the fifteenth day of its cycle, so it remained incomplete until the glorious reign of Solomon in the fifteenth generation from Abraham. See *Shemot Rabbah* 15:26: “When Solomon appeared, the disk of the moon became full.” By the time of the disastrous reign of King Zedekiah, the moon had completely waned, corresponding to the fact that the Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians and Zedekiah was blinded.

See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:12; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15, 77a; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bo* 15; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 13:14; *Zohar* 1:73b-74a, 150a, 223a, 225b, 238a, 243a, 249b-250a; 2:11a, 28b, 85a (especially), 143a, 145a; 3:40b, 46a, 61a, 74b, 181b, 297a; *ZH* 37d, 83b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 342; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 24, 47. On the precise number of kings after Solomon, see Vol. 4, p. 475, n. 391.

On King Josiah’s failure to trust Jeremiah, see *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:53; *Eikhah Rabbah* (Buber) 1:18. Cf. BT *Ta’anit* 22b (quoted above, [note 36](#)).

39. I will place My Dwelling in your midst... Rabbi Abba associates מִשְׁכָּן (*mishkan*), “dwelling, tabernacle,” with שְׁכִינָה (*Shekhinah*), God’s “indwelling Presence,” and with מִשְׁכּוֹן (*mashkon*), “pledge.” שְׁכִינְתָא (*Shekhinta*) and מִשְׁכוֹנָא (*maskhona*) are the Aramaic equivalents.

The *mishkan* constructed by Israel in the desert, as well as the Temple in Jerusalem, are each a *mashkon*, a “pledge” offered by the people as a guarantee of their loyalty and commitment. See *Shemot Rabbah* 31:10: “The blessed Holy One said, ‘... I have made a stipulation with them: If they sin, the Temple will be seized on their account, as is said: *I will place מִשְׁכְּנִי (mishkani), My Dwelling, in your midst* (Leviticus 26:11). Do not read *mishkani, My Dwelling*, but rather מִשְׁכּוֹנִי (*mashkoni*), *My pledge*.”

Rabbi Abba adds the identification of *mishkan* with *Shekhinah*, who is seized on account of Israel’s sins and

banished into exile. On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see above, [pp. 71-72](#), [n. 49](#).

On the connection between *mishkan* and *Shekhinah*, see *Tanḥuma, Naso 22*, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi, "Once the *mishkan* was erected, *Shekhinah* descended and settled among them."

On the midrashic play on *mishkan* and *mashkon*, see also *Tanḥuma, Mishpatim 11, Vayaqhel 9, Pequdei 2, 4-5, Naso 14; Tanḥuma (Buber), Pequdei 2, Naso 21; Shemot Rabbah 35:4; 51:3, 5; Bemidbar Rabbah 12:14; Zohar 3:114b; ZḤ 65b (ShS)*. The verse in Leviticus reads: *I will place My Dwelling in your midst, and My soul will not loathe you [or: My throat will not expel you]*. See Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 3:2301-2.

[40.](#) *mashkona*, a pledge, surely! This may be compared... By means of a parable, Rabbi Abba now indicates that the pledge is actually offered by God, not Israel. Wishing to dwell with Israel, the blessed Holy One brought them His most precious delight: *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the *mishkan*). She serves as His pledge, guaranteeing that He will never abandon them. Even when Israel is in exile—and the blessed Holy One is far away—*Shekhinah* accompanies Her people. If the blessed Holy One "wants His pledge," He must return to Israel.

See *Zohar 3:114b; ZḤ 65b (ShS); Gikatilla, Sha'arei Orah, 9b*. On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see the preceding note.

[41.](#) He took his bed... Symbolizing both intimacy and stability. See Baer, *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, 1:205: "Besides the house or a small plot of ground remaining to the family, the only asset generally mentioned is the bed, the only permanent item, apparently, of all their property."

[42.](#) I will place My bed in your house... *Shekhinah* is called "bed," indicating Her intimate relationship with the blessed Holy One.

On *Shekhinah* as “bed,” see *Zohar* 1:37a, 225b, 226b, 248b, 250b; 2:5a (*MhN*), 30a-b, 48b, 51a, 133a, 226a; 3:60a, 118b, 119b, 120b, 148b, 210b, 269b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 370; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 62-64 (78-79). Cf. BT *Shabbat* 55b, where it is said that Jacob kept a bed in his tent for *Shekhinah*. See Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *aḥat shel Shekhinah* and *ḥillalta*, and on Genesis 49:4.

According to the eleventh-century Catholic reformer Peter Damian, Mary is the golden couch upon which God, tired out by the actions of humanity and the angels, lies down to rest. See Patai, *The Hebrew Goddess*, 280.

43. They rose at midnight... An opportune time to engage in Torah. See above, [pp. 10-11](#), [n. 32](#).

In Proverbs 3:18, Wisdom is described as *a tree of life*, and this image is frequently applied to Torah. For various interpretations of the wording “for although we are in this place...,” see Vital; *Nefesh David*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

44. Moses took the Tent... Following the grave sin of the Golden Calf, when Israel betrayed God and exchanged His Glory for that of an idol, Moses removed the Tent of Meeting *and pitched it for himself outside the camp*. The Tent was the dwelling place of *Shekhinah* (who is pictured as the divine pledge), and Moses was uncertain whether *Shekhinah* would remain with Israel on earth or depart above.

On *Shekhinah* as God’s pledge, see above, [note 40](#). The expression “exchanged His Glory” derives from Psalms 106:20: *They exchanged their glory for the image of a bull eating grass*. See *Zohar* 2:191a, 237a. On the verse in Exodus, see BT *Shabbat* 88a; *Tanḥuma*, *Ki Tissa* 27; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tissa* 15; *Shemot Rabbah* 45:2-3; *Midrash Tehillim* 25:6; *Zohar* 1:52b, 239a-b; 2:194a-b, 236a.

45. Why Joshua?... Appropriately, he served as the trustee of *Shekhinah* (the divine pledge) because *Shekhinah* is symbolized by the moon, and according to rabbinic

tradition, “The face of Moses was like the face of the sun; the face of Joshua was like the face of the moon.”

See *Sifrei*, Numbers 140; BT *Bava Batra* 75a. On the significance of Joshua not departing *from within the Tent*, see *Zohar* 1:53a; 2:65b-66a, 164a, 194b. The verse in Exodus reads: *He returned to the camp, and his attendant, Joshua son of Nun, נַעַר (na'ar), a deputy [or: attendant, servant, lad, youth], did not depart from within the Tent.*

46. wherever Israel goes in exile, Shekhinah is with them... On this theme, see above, [pp. 71-72](#), [n. 49](#). On *Shekhinah* as being symbolized by *Dwelling*, see above, [note 39](#).

47. My beloved resembles a gazelle... According to midrashic tradition, this verse is spoken by Israel about the blessed Holy One, who comes to gaze upon His people. Here, Rabbi Yitshak indicates that the blessed Holy One comes to gaze not only upon them but also upon *Shekhinah*, His pledge.

On the verse, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 115; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:9; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:8; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15, 71b-72a; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:2. The concluding word in the verse, הַחַרְכִּים (*ha-ḥarakim*), can be rendered *the lattices* or *the crevices*.

48. This may be compared to a king... For related parables, see *Bahir* 51 (76); *Zohar* 2:189a-b; 3:6a-b, 74a-b, 297b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 122-23. For midrashic parables of God divorcing (or intending to divorce) Israel, see *Sifra*, *Millu'im (Shemini)* 1:5, 43d; *Sifrei*, Numbers 131; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 32:1; *Devarim Rabbah* 1:2; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 2:15.

On the term *matronita*, see the Glossary. “Chinks” renders the neologism קוּסְטֵי (*quste'i*), whose precise meaning is uncertain. See *Derekh Emet*; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David*, s.v. *qusta kutlei*.

49. So with Israel... Actually, the parable and its analogy do not correspond directly. In the parable the

pledge is the son, who guarantees the king's faithfulness and love for his queen (*matronita*). In the analogy the pledge is *Shekhinah* (*Matronita*), who guarantees the blessed Holy One's love for Israel, the son. The reader is left wondering: Who is a pledge for whom? What is the relationship between Israel and *Shekhinah* (who is known as Assembly of Israel)?

See *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. Cf. Vol. 5, pp. 291–92, n. 284; and Maimonides' remarks on the design of esoteric parables in *Guide of the Perplexed* (ed. Pines), 1, Introduction, p. 8.

Song of Songs 2:8 reads in full: *The voice of my beloved!* [Or: *Hark! My beloved!*] *Here he comes, leaping over mountains, bounding over hills.* This verse immediately precedes *My beloved resembles a gazelle, etc.*, on which see above, [note 47](#).

[50. behind our wall—in synagogues...](#) See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:9; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:8; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15, 72a; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:2.

On the need for windows in a house of prayer, see BT *Berakhot* 34b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: “A person should only pray in a house with windows, as is said: *There were windows in the upper chamber open toward Jerusalem [and three times a day he knelt on his knees and prayed and offered praise before his God]* (Daniel 6:11).” See Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *ḥallonot*; *Zohar* 2:59b (*Piq*), 251a (*Heikh*).

[51. on that day...](#) When the blessed Holy One comes to gaze upon Israel, namely on the new moon and Sabbath and festivals. (See above at [note 47](#).) The verse from Psalms is included in *Hallel*, recited on new moons and festivals.

[52. YHVH's discipline, my son, do not spurn...](#) The verse concludes: *and do not despise His reproof*. See Proverbs 13:24; *Midrash Mishlei* 13; *Tanḥuma*, *Shemot* 1; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:1. Cf. Deuteronomy 8:5; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 32; BT *Berakhot* 5a.

53. I have loved you... The passage reads: “I have loved you,” says *YHVH*. And you ask, “How have You loved us?” “Is not Esau Jacob’s brother,” declares *YHVH*, “yet I have loved Jacob, and Esau I have hated, and I have made his hills a desolation.”

Rabbi Yose explains that because God loves Jacob (that is, Israel), He disciplines them, guiding them toward goodness; whereas He hates Esau and therefore abandons him to his own wickedness. In rabbinic literature Edom often represents the Roman Empire, and in medieval literature it often represents Christian dominion. See *Zohar* 2:17b (*MhN*).

54. ואל תקוץ (ve-al taqots), and do not despise... Rabbi Yose associates תקוץ (*taqots*) with קוץ (*qots*), “thorn.”

See *Zohar* 3:8a, 42b; Bahya ben Asher on Deuteronomy 21:23. Cf. JT *Megillah* 3:6, 74b; *Devarim Rabbah* 4:1; *Soferim* 12:1; *Zohar* 3:114b.

“Thorns” renders גובין (*gubbin*), “pits,” here apparently a misspelling of כובין (*kubbin*), “thorns,” resulting from either scribal error, a phonetic interchange of כ (*kaf*) and ג (*gimel*), or playful variation. See *Zohar* 2:103b; 3:24b, 42b.

55. When Righteousness is aroused... When *Shekhinah* (known as *Tsedeq*, “Righteousness”) is aroused by human sin, numerous forces issue from Her to punish those below.

“Dazzling aspects” renders סטרי טהירין (*sitrei tehirin*). *Tehirin* derives from the Aramaic root טהר (*thr*), meaning “brightness, noon.” One class of demons is named טיהרי (*tiharei*), “noonday demons.”

See Psalms 91:6 and Rashi, ad loc.; *Targum*, Song of Songs 4:6; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Numbers 6:24, Deuteronomy 32:24; *Zohar* 1:125a-b, 130b, 198b, 200a, 232b (*Tos*), 237b; 2:130a, 195b, 205a, 207a; 3:62b, 73b (*Mat*), 266a; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 320. The Hebrew root טהר (*thr*), “pure,” lends this demonic name a euphemistic tone.

56. Beneath them are other chieftains... These demonic subordinate forces strike below and then return

above to obtain authorization to punish further. Then they enter their abode to be recharged with the redness of Judgment.

The number thirty-nine (“forty-minus-one”) corresponds to the total number of lashes that a rabbinical court is authorized to inflict. See Deuteronomy 25:3; M *Makkot* 3:10; *Zohar* 1:148a (*ST*); 3:194a; *ZH* 55a.

On the progression “descend,... ascend, and obtain authorization,” cf. the account of Satan’s activity in BT *Bava Batra* 16a: “He descends and leads astray, ascends and arouses wrath, obtains authorization and seizes the soul.”

“Fiery sparks” and “their sparks” render טפסין (*tifsin*) and טפסי (*tifsei*) respectively. In the *Zohar* טפסא (*tifsa*) sometimes means “glowing ember, burning coal.” See above, [p. 218, n. 28](#).

The verse in Genesis records God’s promise after the Flood to never again destroy the world. See *Zohar* 1:70a; 3:54a. The full verse in Leviticus reads: *If even with these you do not heed Me, I will go on to chastise you sevenfold for your sins.*

[57.](#) **שבע (Sheva), Sevenfold...** Even one full measure of punishment would be unbearable. On the verse in Psalms, see *Zohar* 3:185b.

[58.](#) **Rather, what does Scripture mean...** Rabbi Yose reads the word *sheva* hyperliterally as *seven*—referring to *Shekhinah*, last of the seven lower *sefirot*. She is also known as *Shemittah*, the Sabbatical year (literally “release”), when debts are remitted and the land is “released” (that is, left uncultivated). *Shekhinah* executes divine punishment but also conveys forgiveness and “release” from guilt. On *Shekhinah* as the Sabbatical year, see above, [p. 208, n. 6](#).

[59.](#) **She is called Sheva, Seven...** This name refers to *Shekhinah* when She functions independently. However, when She is joined to *Binah* (the Divine Mother), She is called שבע בת (*Bat Sheva*), “Bathsheba,” literally “Daughter of Seven”—

alluding to Her Mother, *Binah*, who includes and generates all seven lower *sefirot*. Empowered by *Binah*, *Shekhinah*—who is called *Malkhut* (Kingdom)—reigns over the world below, manifesting the Kingdom.

Shekhinah is also called באר שבע (*Be'er Sheva*), “Beersheba,” literally “Well of Seven”—apparently because She receives the flow of emanation from seven *sefirot* (*Binah* through *Yesod*), or because She is both a “well” and the “seventh” of the lower *sefirot*. Furthermore, *Shekhinah* is known as Well of Isaac, since She is influenced by *Gevurah*, symbolized by Isaac.

The phrase “to liberate completely” alludes to the liberation of Israelite slaves (or indentured servants), which took place after six years of servitude (associated here with the start of the Sabbatical year). See above, [pp. 208–9](#), [n. 6](#).

On *Shekhinah* as *Be'er Sheva*, see *Zohar* 1:147a–b, 152b; 3:22b, 52b; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 6a.

60. *I will chastise you, I Myself..* The first clause refers to demonic forces, through whom God will deliver punishment. The wording *I Myself* apparently alludes to the blessed Holy One, while *Sheva* (*Seven*) designates *Shekhinah*. Possibly, *I Myself* also alludes to *Shekhinah*, who is known as אני (*Ani*), *I*, because through Her God reveals Himself, declaring “I am.”

See *Bahir* 45 (66–67); Nahmanides on Leviticus 26:16; *Zohar* 3:115b. On *Shekhinah* as *Ani*, see *Zohar* 1:6a–b, 65b, 204b; 2:236b; 3:49b, 151a, 178b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 380 (and Wolfson’s [notes 8–9](#)). Cf. Vol. 4, p. 264, n. 231.

For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the other chieftains, see above, [note 56](#).

61. *So I Myself..* God decides to share in Israel’s exile. On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see above, [pp. 71–72](#), [n. 49](#). The full verse in Isaiah reads: *Thus says YHVH: Where is your mother’s bill of divorce by which I sent her away? Or which*

of My creditors was it to whom I sold you off? Behold, it is for your sins that you were sold, and for your crimes your mother was sent away. On this verse, see Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 60; *Zohar* 1:237a; 2:189b; 3:8a, 74b-75a, 102b. On the phrase “masters of fiery sparks,” see above, [note 56](#).

62. For a palace is not fit for a king... Cf. *Eikhah Rabbah* 5:19: “Is there a king without a queen?” See *Zohar* 3:5a, 69a, 77b.

63. ושב יהוה אלהיך (Ve-shav YHVH Elohekha), YHVH your God will return... See BT *Megillah* 29a, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yohai: “Come and see how beloved are Israel in the sight of the blessed Holy One! Wherever they went in exile, *Shekhinah* accompanied them. When they were exiled to Egypt, *Shekhinah* was with them.... When they were exiled to Babylon, *Shekhinah* was with them.... And even when they are destined to be redeemed, *Shekhinah* will be with them, as is said: ושב יהוה אלהיך את שבותך (Ve-shav YHVH Elohekha et shevutekha), *YHVH your God will return with your captivity* (Deuteronomy 30:3). The verse does not read והשיב (ve-heshiv), *will restore*, but rather ושב (ve-shav), *will return*. This teaches that the blessed Holy One will return with them from amidst the exile.”

The full verse in Deuteronomy reads: *YHVH your God will restore your fortunes [or: will return your captivity] and have compassion on you [or: and take you back in love]. He will return and gather you from all the nations where YHVH your God has scattered you.* According to the midrashic reading, the word את (et) in the clause ושב יהוה אלהיך את שבותך (Ve-shav YHVH Elohekha et shevutekha), *YHVH your God will return your captivity*, is construed not as signaling the direct object (*your captivity*), but rather as meaning *with*, thereby yielding the radical reading *YHVH your God will return with your captivity*. See above, [pp. 71-72](#), [n. 49](#).

64. These are the words of the covenant... The full verse reads: *These are the words of the covenant that YHVH*

commanded Moses to seal with the Children of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant that He sealed with them at Horeb.

Since the preceding verses in Deuteronomy (28:15–68)—as well as the similar passage in Leviticus 26:14–43—consist of curses for disobedience, Rabbi Ḥiyya wonders why such threats are referred to as דברי הברית (*divrei ha-berit*), *the words of the covenant*, which seems to imply divine protection and care. They should rather be called דברי גבורה (*divrei gevurah*), *words of power*, that is, words of discipline and chastisement deriving from *Gevurah* (Power), on *Din* (Judgment).

65. מפי הגבורה (*mi-pi ha-gevurah*), **from the mouth of Power...** In BT *Megillah* 31b, Abbaye distinguishes between the list of curses in Leviticus 26 and the later list in Deuteronomy 28: “The former [curses] are stated in the plural [i.e., addressed to all Israel] and Moses uttered them מפי הגבורה (*mi-pi ha-gevurah*), from the mouth of [Divine] Power [i.e., conveying God’s speech]; the latter are stated in the singular and Moses uttered them מפי עצמו (*mi-pi atsmo*), from his own mouth [i.e., in his own formulation and in his own name].” For example, the list in Leviticus reads: *If you [plural] do not heed Me* (Leviticus 26:14), conveying divine speech, whereas the list in Deuteronomy reads: *It shall be, if you [singular] do not heed the voice of YHVH your God...* (Deuteronomy 28:15).

On the passage in *Megillah*, see *Zohar* 3:7a, 261a, 265a. On the phrase *mi-pi ha-gevurah*, “from the mouth of Power,” see Vol. 4, p. 439, n. 262; Vol. 7, pp. 27–28, n. 86.

66. **Both these and those were words of the covenant...** Both series of divine threats (in Leviticus and Deuteronomy) can be characterized as *words of the covenant*. Even though the former derived *mi-pi ha-gevurah*, “from the mouth of [Divine] Power,” they still reflect *the covenant*—which symbolizes both *Yesod* (the divine phallus,

associated with the covenant of circumcision) and His partner, *Shekhinah*.

Yesod is known as Righteous One, while *Shekhinah* is referred to as Judgment, because She is influenced by the *sefirah* of *Din* (Judgment). Divine goodness issues from *Yesod*, whereas “evil” or punishment is conveyed by *Shekhinah*, who is also called *Tsedeq*, “Righteousness.” The final clause refers to the union of *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*, the two components of Covenant.

On *Yesod* as Righteous One, see above, [pp. 68–69](#), [n. 43](#). For various interpretations of this paragraph, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

67. זָכוֹר וּשְׁמוֹר (*Zakhor ve-shamor*), **Remember and Keep...** In the first version of the Ten Commandments, the wording is: זָכוֹר (*Zakhor*), *Remember, the Sabbath day to hallow it* (Exodus 20:8). The second version reads: שְׁמוֹר (*Shamor*), *Keep, the Sabbath day to hallow it* (Deuteronomy 5:12). According to a rabbinic tradition, “*Zakhor, Remember, and shamor, keep, were both spoken in a single utterance.*”

For the kabbalist, *zakhor, remember*, suggests זָכָר (*zakhar*), “male,” signifying the male divine potency (*Yesod* or *Tif’eret*), whereas the alternative formulation, *shamor, keep*, signifies the female, *Shekhinah*. Here, Rabbi Yose indicates that these male and female aspects are “bound as one.” The male aspect is associated with day, the female with night. In the closing sentence, “this place” refers to the joint site of *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*.

On *zakhor (remember)* and *shamor (observe)* being spoken simultaneously, see *Mekhilta, Bahodesh* 7; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 20:8; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 233; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 5:12; JT *Nedarim* 3:2, 37d; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 27a. On *zakhor* and *shamor* as respectively male and female, see above, [pp. 14–15](#), [n. 42](#).

68. Therefore Sabbath... is called covenant... Reflecting the union of the male and female aspects of *covenant*.

The context in Exodus (31:16–17) reads: *The Children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations, an eternal covenant. Between Me and the Children of Israel it is a sign that in six days YHVH made heaven and earth and on the seventh day He ceased and was refreshed.*

69. I will grant peace... Alluding to *Yesod*, the divine phallus, who gratifies and soothes *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the land).

See BT *Shabbat* 152a, where Rabbi Shim'on son of Halaftha refers to the phallus as “peacemaker of the home.” Cf. *Vayiqra Rabbah* 18:1; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 12:5; *Zohar* 3:31a. See above, [note 35](#). The full verse in Leviticus reads: *I will grant peace in the land, and you will lie down with none to make you afraid; I will eliminate evil beasts from the land, and no sword will traverse your land.*

70. שבע (sheva), sevenfold... Alluding to *Shekhinah*, who is called both *Sheva* (*Seven*) and *Tsedeq* (*Righteousness*). She will convey the divine punishment and chastisement. She shares with *Yesod* the designation *Covenant*. See above, [notes 58, 66](#).

71. וְאִף גַּם זֹאת (Ve-af gam zot) Yet even this, too... According to Rabbi Yose, *ve-af* (*yet even*) includes *Tif'eret*, who shares in Israel's suffering. He is similarly referred to earlier in this chapter of Leviticus by the phrase *af ani* (*I Myself, or even I*).

See above, [note 60](#). On the rabbinic interpretation of *af*, see *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 1, pp. 11, 13; *Midrash Aggadah*, Leviticus 26:44.

72. Gam, Too—to include Assembly of Israel... Here the word *גַּם* (*gam*), “also, too,” serves to include *Shekhinah* (known as *Assembly of Israel*). Rabbi Yose underscores the point by referring to Her kabbalistic name *zot, this*.

On the rabbinic interpretation of *gam*, see *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 1, pp. 11–13; *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:14; JT *Berakhot* 9:5, 14b. On *Assembly of Israel* as a title of

Shekhinah, see above, [p. 11](#), [n. 32](#). On *Shekhinah* as *zot*, see above, [p. 211](#), [n. 11](#). On *Shekhinah* accompanying Israel in exile, see above, [pp. 71-72](#), [n. 49](#).

73. for if I do not redeem them... Until Israel is redeemed, there can be no complete union between the *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*, the two components of the divine covenant. See above, [note 66](#).

74. the verse should read *I will not strike them or kill them*... The verbs *strike* and *kill* seem more appropriate to the following Hebrew word: לְכַלּוֹתָם (*le-khallotam*), *so as to destroy them*. However, Rabbi El'azar focuses on the precise spelling of this word in the Masoretic text: לְכַלְלָתָם (*le-khallotam*)—without the letter ו (vav)—which enables him to read it as לְכַלְלָתָם (*le-khallatam*), *because of their Bride*. *Shekhinah* is the Bride of the blessed Holy One, sharing in Israel's exile and intimately linked with them. Because He yearns for Her, He can never *reject them or loathe them*.

On the spelling לְכַלְלָתָם (*le-khallotam*), see *Minḥat Shai*, ad loc. Cf. Vol. 7, p. 8, n. 24.

75. the tanners' street... Notorious for its foul odor.

See BT *Qiddushin* 82b: “The world cannot exist without a perfume-maker and without a tanner. Happy is one who is a perfume-maker by trade, and woe to him who is a tanner by trade!” According to M *Ketubbot* 7:10, if a woman is married to a tanner, she can demand a divorce.

76. just to hear this word... Of Torah. Similar exclamations appear in rabbinic literature and often in the *Zohar*. See above, [p. 130](#), [n. 223](#).

77. A son honors his father... Rabbi Yose expounds this verse in honor of Rabbi El'azar (the devoted and virtuous son of Rabbi Shim'on), whose profound teaching he just heard from Rabbi Ḥiyya.

On the specific elements of honoring one's parents, see BT *Qiddushin* 31b: “What is meant by honoring [one's

father and mother]?... Providing food and drink, clothing and covering him, leading him in and out.”

In insisting that one should honor his father after he has died, Rabbi Yose may be interpreting the word *וְעַתָּה* (*et*) in the command *Honor וְעַתָּה (et) your father*. This tiny word is usually an accusative particle with no clear independent sense. However, already in rabbinic times, Nahum of Gimzo and his disciple Rabbi Akiva taught that the presence of *et* in a biblical verse amplifies the apparent meaning. Here, Rabbi Yose may be indicating that *et* extends the obligation to honor one’s father beyond his lifetime.

If a person continues to live virtuously after his father has died, he thereby honors his father, and God watches over his father’s soul in heaven and seats him upon a throne of honor.

On the significance of *et*, see BT *Pesaḥim* 22b, *Ḥagigah* 12a–b. On a deceased father’s soul being rewarded for his son’s virtuous conduct, see *Zohar* 3:171a; *ZḤ* 49b, 84c (*MhN, Rut*). Cf. *Zohar* 3:144b (*IR*).

On the passage in *Qiddushin*, see *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 8; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 20:12; *Sifra, Qedoshim* 1:10, 87a; *Tosefta Qiddushin* 1:11; JT *Pe’ah* 1:1, 15c; *Qiddushin* 1:7, 61b; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 23–24, 12a.

78. For example, Rabbi El’azar... Whose teaching Rabbi Yose just heard.

1. YHVH spoke to Moses... The context (Numbers 1:1-2) reads: *YHVH spoke to Moses in the Desert [or: Wilderness] of Sinai in the Tent of Meeting on the first of the second month in the second year after their going out from the land of Egypt, saying, "Count the heads of all the community of the Children of Israel..."*

2. God created the human in His image... Adam reflected the splendor of the *sefirot* and of the lower worlds, and all creatures feared him.

The image of Adam's light extending "from one end of the world to the other" recalls two midrashic motifs. The first one appears in *Vayiqra Rabbah* 14:1, in the name of Rabbi Yishma'el (or Shemu'el) son of Naḥman: "When the blessed Holy One created Adam, He created him as an unformed mass, and he extended from one end of the world to the other."

The second motif appears in *Vayiqra Rabbah* 11:7 (in the name of Rabbi Yehudah son of Rabbi Simon): "With the light created by the blessed Holy One on the first day, a person could gaze and see from one end of the world to the other."

On Adam's splendor, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 11:2; 12:6; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 20:2; BT *Bava Batra* 58a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 4:4; 12:1; 26:3; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 14, 62a; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 8:2; *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 6; *Aḥarei Mot* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 18, 25; *Aḥarei Mot* 3; *Huqqat* 17; *Midrash Mishlei* 31:30; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 13:12.

On Adam's original cosmic dimensions, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:1; 14:8; 21:3; 24:2; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 8, 42; BT *Ḥagigah* 12a, *Sanhedrin* 38b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 11; *Tanḥuma, Tazri'a* 8; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Tazri'a* 10; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 23, 115a; 46, 187b; above, [p. 20](#), [n. 59](#). On the primordial light, see above, [p. 56](#), [n. 5](#).

On the human as a microcosm, see *Tanḥuma, Pequdei* 3; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 31; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 1:4; Donnolo, *Sefer Ḥakhmoni*, 63d-66b; Joseph ibn Zaddik,

Sefer ha-Olam ha-Qatan; Zohar 1:90b, 134b, 186b; 2:23b, 75b; 3:48a. On the creatures' fear of, and subservience to, Adam, see above, [p. 205](#), [n. 438](#).

The full verse in Genesis reads: *God created the human in His image; in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them.*

3. Since it says *God created the human in His image...* The continuation seems redundant: *in the image of God He created him.* But Rabbi Abba explains that the two clauses allude respectively to the male and female aspects of the original androgynous human, which reflect the sefirotic parents, *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*. The male aspect included the female potency, and vice versa.

On the androgynous nature of the original human, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 14:1: "Rabbi Yishma'el son of Naḥman said, 'When the blessed Holy One created Adam, He created him androgynous; and He sawed him and gave him two backs, one on this side and one on that.' Rabbi Shim'on son of Lakish said, 'When the blessed Holy One created Adam, He created him *דו פרצופין* (*du partsufin*), with two faces; and He sawed him and gave him two backs, a back for the male and a back for the female.'" See above, [pp. 18-19](#), [n. 54](#). Cf. above, [pp. 169-70](#), [n. 327](#).

4. He contemplated wisdom... In his pristine state, Adam pondered supernal wisdom. But when he sinned by eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, the human and divine faces (or configurations) diminished, wisdom abandoned him, and he focused merely on mundane, physical matters.

Cf. BT *Ḥagigah* 12a: "Rabbi El'azar said, 'Adam extended from earth to heaven.... As soon as he sinned, the blessed Holy One placed His hand upon him and diminished him, as is said: *Behind and in front You formed me, and You set Your palm upon me* (Psalms 139:5).' Rabbi Yehudah said in the name of Rav, 'Adam extended from one end of the world to the other.... As soon as he sinned, the

blessed Holy One placed His hand upon him and diminished him, as is said: *You set Your palm upon me.*”

5. he engendered sons... Namely, Cain and Abel. After Cain killed Abel, he was condemned to wander the world, and his descendants were eventually destroyed in the Flood. With the birth of Adam and Eve’s third son, Seth, the world was more firmly established; from him descended generations of the righteous.

The phrase “from above and below” may refer respectively to the origins of Cain and Abel. See *Pirquei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 21 (according to David Luria’s emendation, based on *Yalqut Shim’oni*, Genesis 35): “The serpent-rider [Samael] copulated with her and she conceived Cain. Afterward her husband, Adam, copulated with her and she conceived Abel.” Thus, Cain originated partly “from above,” that is, from the fallen angel Samael; whereas Abel originated “below,” from the union of Adam and Eve. Or, Abel’s soul originated “from above,” from a holy source, whereas Cain’s soul originated “below,” from the demonic Samael.

Alternatively, “from above and below” may refer to both Cain and Abel together, who according to one midrashic tradition were twins. In a number of passages, the *Zohar* indicates that Cain was formed from both the serpent’s slime and Adam’s seed. From the fallen angel Samael (identified with the serpent), Cain inherited traits of the upper world; from Adam, he inherited traits of the lower world. As opposed to Cain, who reflected an impure aspect, Abel reflected holiness; but Abel’s fetus was infected by his brother’s impurity.

On Samael’s (or the serpent’s) role in engendering Cain, see above, [p. 45](#), [n. 130](#). Cf. BT *Shabbat* 145b-146a, in the name of Rav Yosef: “When the serpent copulated with Eve, he injected her with זוהמא (*zohama*), filth [or: slime, lust].” See above, [p. 127](#), [n. 214](#).

On Cain's human and angelic traits, see Vol. 7, p. 520, n. 520. On Cain and Abel's being twins, see above, [p. 45](#), [n. 130](#). On their shared origins "from above and below," see also Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:117; Scholem, *Le-Ḥeḡer Qabbalat R. Yitshaq ben Ya'aqov ha-Kohen*, 136–38, 190–91. On the clause "they did not settle with one another in the world," see *ibid.*, 191.

Seth's birth is described in Genesis 5:3: *Adam lived a hundred and thirty years and he engendered in his likeness, according to his image, and called his name Seth.* According to a midrashic interpretation, Seth alone was in Adam's likeness, unlike both Cain and Abel. See BT *Eruvin* 18b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 22; Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 1:7; *Zohar* 1:55a; 2:167b–168a, 231b; *ZḤ* 8c–9b.

See *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:12: "He called his name שֵׁת (*Shet*), *Seth*, because upon him the world הוּשְׁתָּה (*hushtat*), was founded." See *Midrash Aggadah*, Genesis 4:25; Numbers 7:13.

Here Rabbi Abba plays on *hushtat*, "was founded," and אִשְׁתִּיל (*ishetil*), "was sown." See *Zohar* 1:36b, 72a, 78a, 82a, 231a; 2:48b, 222a; *ZḤ* 28a (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 74–75 (95); Liebes, *Peraqim*, 372–73; Vol. 6, p. 273, n. 31.

6. until Abraham came... The three virtuous patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—symbolize the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, representing respectively the right and left divine arms and the trunk of the sefirotic body. Abraham, as it were, grasped the tottering world with his right hand; then Isaac, with his left hand; and finally Jacob supported the world completely. See *Zohar* 1:86b; *ZḤ* 19b (*MhN*).

7. it did not take root... Until Jacob engendered twelve tribes and the seventy souls who descended to Egypt. Finally, when God gave the Torah to Israel at Mount Sinai and the Dwelling (or Tabernacle) was erected, the world attained perfection.

On the number of Jacob's descendants who went down to Egypt, see Genesis 46:26-27; Exodus 1:5; Deuteronomy 10:22; Sarna, *Exodus*, on 1:5.

On Torah as being vital to the continued existence of the world, see BT *Shabbat* 88a, in the name of Resh Lakish: "The blessed Holy One stipulated a condition with the works of Creation, saying to them: 'If Israel accepts the Torah, you will endure. If not, I will return you to *chaos and void* (Genesis 1:2).'" See *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 1. Cf. M *Avot* 1:2; BT *Shabbat* 119b.

Cf. BT *Pesaḥim* 68b, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "Were it not for Torah [which must be studied day and night], heaven and earth would not endure, as is said: *Were it not for My covenant with day and night, I would not have established the laws of heaven and earth* (Jeremiah 33:25)."

See BT *Shabbat* 33a, *Nedarim* 32a, *Sanhedrin* 99b, *Avodah Zarah* 3a; *Ester Rabbah* 7:13; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 7, p. 139; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 18, p. 105; *Pirḳei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 16; *Tanḥuma, Noah* 3, *Ha'azinu* 3; *Pesiḳta Rabbati* 21, 109b; *Shemot Rabbah* 47:4; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 10:1.

On the correspondence between the Dwelling and the world, see Vol. 5, p. 191, n. 18. On the phrase "became fragrantly firm," see above, [p. 36](#), [n. 104](#).

8. Once Torah and the Dwelling were established... Once the Torah was given at Mount Sinai and the Dwelling was erected, God instructed Moses to conduct a census (as initially described in Numbers 1:2-4). The census determined the precise number of adult male Israelites, who would fulfill the commands of Torah. The phrase "troops of the Dwelling" probably refers to the Levites, who maintained the Dwelling; they were counted separately (as described in Numbers 3-4).

9. Every entity that needs to be settled... Nothing is firmly established until it is mentioned and counted.

The clause “Torah and Dwelling do not separate from one another” may refer to the placement of the two stone tablets in the Ark. (See Deuteronomy 10:1-5; 1 Kings 8:9. Cf. Deuteronomy 31:26.) Torah symbolizes *Tif’eret*, while the מִשְׁכָּן (*mishkan*), “Dwelling,” symbolizes *Tif’eret’s* intimate partner, *Shekhinah*.

10. Therefore their forces are enumerated... The Israelites and Levites were counted, so as to be recognized by *Tif’eret* and *Shekhinah*. “Those others who are not counted” includes females, any Israelite male under the age of twenty, and any Levite male under the age of one month. See Numbers 1:2-3; 3:15, 39. Cf. 4:46-48; 8:24-26.

Rabbi Abba wonders why the opening verse of Numbers specifies *in the Desert of Sinai*, since *the Tent of Meeting* is obviously located there. He explains that *the Desert of Sinai* alludes to Torah, which was given there (and which symbolizes *Tif’eret*), while *the Tent of Meeting* refers to the Dwelling (symbolizing *Shekhinah*).

11. On the first of the second month in the second year... Both *the second month* and *the second year* allude to the same entity—*Yesod*, who is the second *sefirah*, counting from below—so “all is one.” *Yesod* illumines *Shekhinah* (who is symbolized by the moon), so He is appropriately called *the month of זִיב (ziv)*, “Glow.” Once the Torah had been given and the Dwelling had been erected, the divine couple united and “all worlds were in perfection.”

The verse in Kings describes the beginning of the construction of Solomon’s Temple, which parallels the erection of the Dwelling. On the significance of the name *Ziv*, see BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 11a.

12. After their going out from the land of Egypt... Referring back to the first month, which symbolizes *Shekhinah*, the first *sefirah*, counting from below. Israel was redeemed from Egypt “in (or by) the first month,” that is, through the power of *Shekhinah*.

13. YHVH זכרנו יברך (zekharanu yevarekh)... According to its simple sense, the word זכרנו (*zekharanu*), *is mindful of us*, derives from the root זכר (*zkhr*), “to remember, be mindful.” But Rabbi Yitshak construes it as *zekharenu, our males*, based on the noun זכר (*zakhar*), “male.”

See Ibn Ezra (quoting Moses Gikatilla) and David Kimḥi on Psalms 115:12; *Zohar* 1:233a-b; *ZH* 46a-b. The context in Psalms (115:12-14) reads: *YHVH is mindful of us—may He bless. May He bless the house of Israel, may He bless the house of Aaron. May He bless those who revere YHVH, the small with the great. May YHVH grant you increase, both you and your children.*

14. Here you are today... The context in Deuteronomy (1:10-11) reads: *YHVH your God has multiplied you, and here you are today as numerous as the stars of the heavens in multitude. May YHVH, God of your fathers, add to you a thousand times more than you are, and bless you as He has spoken to you.*

15. he will be the first to be punished... This is apparently based on the idea that praise stimulates “the evil eye,” whose malevolent power can be countered only by offering (and confirming) a blessing. See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*; and the following two notes.

16. The blessing should be given generously... “Generously” renders בעינא טבא (*be-eina tava*), “with a good eye, benevolently, generously.” The converse adverb, “grudgingly,” renders בעינא בישא (*be-eina bisha*), “with an evil eye, stingily, grudgingly.”

The notion of blessing generously recalls a midrashic interpretation of a verse in Proverbs 22:9: טוב עין הוא יברך (*ṭov ayin hu yevorakh*), *He that has a generous eye will be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor.* See BT *Sotah* 38b, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu’a son of Levi: “We give the cup of blessing for the recital of Grace after Meals only to one who has a generous eye, as is said: *He that has a generous eye יבורך (yevorakh), will be blessed, for he gives of his bread*

to the poor. Do not read *yevorakh*, *will be blessed*, but rather *יְבָרֵךְ* (*yevarekh*), *will bless*.”

On God desiring love of the heart, cf. BT *Sanhedrin* 106b: “The blessed Holy One desires the heart.” See Vol. 5, p. 440, n. 703.

17. Blessing from above does not settle... See BT *Ta’anit* 8b: “Blessing is not found in anything weighed, measured, or counted, but only in that which is hidden from the eye.”

In the ancient Near East it was commonly believed that counting humans was dangerous, apparently because determining an exact number of individuals would set them up as vulnerable targets for evil forces. The story of King David’s ill-fated census in 2 Samuel 24, which triggers a plague, turns on this belief. The danger of a census could be averted by paying a “ransom” for each threatened life as a donation to the sanctuary. See the description of the earlier census in Exodus 30:12: *When you count the heads of the Children of Israel according to their numbers, every man shall give ransom for his life to YHVH when they are counted, that there shall be no plague among them when they are counted.* The following verse specifies the “ransom” as half a shekel. Here, Rabbi Yitshak implies that the shekels—not the people—were counted.

See Alter, *The Five Books of Moses*, on Exodus 30:12. On the passage in *Ta’anit*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 64:6; BT *Bava Metsi’a* 42a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 10:6; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 25, 127b; *Tanḥuma, Re’eh* 14; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Re’eh* 12; *Zohar* 1:5a, 64b, 202a; 2:187b, 219a, 221b, 225a, 227b; *Or Yaqar*.

18. the house of Israel—the women... Who were not included in the census. See above, [note 10](#).

On *the house of Israel* signifying “the women,” cf. *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 2, where the similar phrase *the house of Jacob* (Exodus 19:3) is interpreted as referring to the women. See *Zohar* 1:233a; and also M *Yoma* 1:1, where the

phrase *his house* [or: *household*] (Leviticus 16:6) is taken to mean “his wife.”

19. the house of Aaron... Namely, the priests, who convey divine blessing to the people. On their blessing “with love of the heart,” see the wording of the liturgical blessing recited by the priests before blessing the congregation: “... and who has commanded us to bless His people Israel with love.”

Rabbi Yitshak adds another possible meaning of *the house of Aaron*—that it includes the priests’ wives. See the preceding note.

20. The small... Who were also not included in the census. See above, [note 10](#).

21. a place where blessings issue... Namely, *Yesod*, who conveys the blessed flow of emanation to *Shekhinah* and, through Her, to all worlds below. He is the second *sefirah*, counting from below, so He is symbolized by *the second month*, which is known as זִיב (Ziv), “Glow,” since *Yesod* radiates the divine light. See above, [note 11](#).

Yesod is also known as *Zion*, as in the verse from Psalm 134. The phrase “one matter” means that both *Zion* and *Ziv* allude to the same *sefirah*, *Yesod*. The full verse in Psalm 133 reads: *Like the dew of Hermon that descends upon the mountains of Zion, for there YHVH ordained blessing, everlasting life.*

22. one holy supernal tree... *Yesod*, who nourishes *Shekhinah* and all the lower worlds. The cosmic tree of *Yesod* is rooted in, and sustained by *Binah*, “the place of all blessings.” When the people of Israel are worthy, they are nourished from *Yesod*, “the place where all those blessings issue.” This process is indicated by the verses in Psalms, where *Zion* symbolizes *Yesod*.

23. This is radiance of the world... *Yesod* illumines *Shekhinah*, who spreads light to all the worlds. When *Yesod* is aroused, sefirotic union ensues and peace extends everywhere.

The verse in Deuteronomy reads: *YHVH from Sinai came and from Seir He shone upon them, He radiated from Mount Paran and appeared from Ribebboth-Kodesh.*

24. Every man with his unit... This second chapter of Numbers describes the encampment and marching formation of the Israelite tribes, with the Tent of Meeting in the center, surrounded by the camp of the Levites, which is itself surrounded by the other tribes, arranged in a protective square with three tribes on each side.

The full verse reads: *Every man with his unit [or: by his banner], with insignia for his father's house, shall the Children of Israel camp; at a distance, around the Tent of Meeting, they shall camp.*

25. How beloved is Torah... God yearns to hear words of Torah, which is identified as the Divine Name.

Cf. BT *Shabbat* 63a: "Rabbi Abba said in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Lakish, 'When two disciples of the wise listen to one another in *halakhah*, the blessed Holy One listens to their voice, as is said: *You who dwell in the gardens, companions listen for your voice; let me hear!*'" See Vol. 7, p. 75, n. 230.

On Torah as God's Name, see above, [p. 7](#), [n. 23](#). On the study of Torah ensuring the defeat of one's enemies, see BT *Gittin* 7a; *Yalqut Shim'oni*, 2 Samuel, 145; *Nitsotsei Zohar*.

26. The commandments of Torah are exalted... Each *mitsvah* that a person fulfills rises to heaven and presents itself before God.

Cf. BT *Avodah Zarah* 2a, 4b (referring to the testimony of *mitsvot* in the afterlife); and M *Avot* 4:11, in the name of Rabbi Eli'ezer son of Ya'akov: "A person who performs a single *mitsvah* acquires one defender; a person who commits a single transgression acquires one accuser." See above, [p. 17](#), [n. 50](#).

According to an essential principle of Kabbalah, "By an action below is aroused an action above." See above, [pp. 41-42](#), [n. 122](#).

Rabbi El'azar interprets the verse in Isaiah as applying to one who "holds fast" to Torah, which is pictured as מעוּזי (*ma'uzi*), *My refuge*. Such a person will *make peace* both above and below—referring respectively to heavenly peace and earthly peace, or to peace in various sefirotic realms.

See BT *Sanhedrin* 99b, in the name of Rabbi Alexandri: "Whoever engages in Torah for its own sake makes peace among the family above [i.e., the angels] and among the family below [i.e., humanity], as is said: *Or let him hold fast to My refuge, that he may make peace with Me; peace he will make with Me.*" Cf. *Zohar* 3:14b.

The association of מעוּזי (*ma'uzi*), *My refuge*, with Torah is based on the midrashic identification of עֹז (*oz*), *strength*, with Torah. See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 3; Vol. 7, p. 76, n. 234.

27. Rejoice with Jerusalem... True joy is possible only when Israel abides in the Holy Land (and specifically in Jerusalem), since only there does *Tif'eret* unite completely with *Shekhinah* (who is symbolized by the Holy Land and Jerusalem). Reading the verse hyperliterally, Rabbi El'azar construes it as וגִּילוּ בָּהּ (*ve-gilu vah*), *and be glad in her*—that is, only when you are residing *in* Jerusalem.

See BT *Berakhot* 31a, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "It is forbidden for a person to fill his mouth with laughter in this world, as is said: *Then will our mouth fill with laughter and our tongue with glad song* (Psalms 126:2). When? At the time when *they will say among the nations: 'Great things has YHVH done with these'* (ibid., 3)." See *Zohar* 1:114a (*MhN*), 127a (*MhN*); 3:45b, 56a.

Cf. M *Sotah* 9:12, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a: "Ever since the day the Temple was destroyed, not a single day passes without a curse, dew has never descended as a blessing, and flavor has been eliminated from fruit." See Vol. 7, pp. 96–97, n. 294.

28. rejoicing in a Babylonian royal castle... While Israel dwelled in exile in Babylon.

The phrase “royal castle” renders בֵּי טְרוֹנָיָא (*bei teronya*), “house of sovereignty.” *Teronya* derives from Greek *turannis*, “sovereignty.” See *Targum Yerushalmi* and Rashi, Numbers 31:10; *Zohar* 1:92b; *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Bei’ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 179, s.v. *teroniqa*; Luria, *Va-Ye’esof David*, s.v. *turna*; *Nitsotsei Orot*.

29. Rabbi El’azar follows his approach... His statement above that Israel should rejoice only when they are in the Holy Land matches his reportedly having linked the same phrase—*Rejoice with Jerusalem*—with the verse in Psalm 100: *Serve YHVH with joy*. Rabbi El’azar may be alluding to two designations of *Shekhinah*: *Jerusalem* and *joy*.

30. One verse says... The declaration *Serve YHVH with joy* seems to contradict another verse: *Serve YHVH with awe*. See *Midrash Tehillim* 100:3; *Zohar* 3:56a, 165a; above, [note 27](#).

31. Alternatively, Serve YHVH with awe... The term *awe* designates *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel), especially when She participates in the people’s exile. On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see above, [pp. 71–72](#), [n. 49](#).

32. But look at what is written... According to Rabbi Yehudah, the verse in Isaiah implies that Israel *shall leave* exile *with joy*—that is, with *Shekhinah*. So even in exile She is called *joy*, not *awe*.

See *Zohar* 3:8b, 212b. The verse in Isaiah (which describes Israel’s “leaving” the Babylonian exile) reads in full: *Indeed, you shall leave with joy and be led in peace. The mountains and hills will break into jubilation before you, and all the trees of the field will clap hands.*

33. as long as She is in exile... Rabbi El’azar explains that *Shekhinah* is not called *joy* until the blessed Holy One begins to redeem Her from exile.

34. four camps of Assembly of Israel... The arrangement of the twelve Israelite tribes in four divisions symbolizes the four camps of angels surrounding *Shekhinah* (who is known as Assembly of Israel). Her twelve angelic

forces are themselves pictured as “tribes” or “boundaries,” which correspond “to the pattern above,”—that is, to the twelve potencies surrounding *Tif’eret*.

“Boundaries” renders תְּחֻמֵּינ (teḥumin), “boundaries, limits, dominions.” The phrase “twelve boundaries” recalls the twelve גְּבוּלֵי אֶלְכָסוֹן (gevulei alakhsan), “diagonal borders” (edges of a cube), mentioned in *Sefer Yetsirah* 5:1. See above, [p. 121](#), [n. 199](#).

On the relation between *Shekhinah* and the twelve tribes, see *Zohar* 1:155a, 157b-158a, 159b, 174a, 225b, 231b, 240b-241a, 246a-b, 248a; 2:104b-105a, 229b-230a; 3:62a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 8. For the full verse in Numbers, see above, [note 24](#).

35. *There tribes ascend, the tribes of Yah...* The twelve tribes of Israel correspond to the twelve angelic forces surrounding *Shekhinah*, who ascend to the twelve potencies surrounding *Tif’eret*—whose full name is *Tif’eret Yisra’el* (Beauty of Israel).

The name יה (Yah), symbolizing *Hokhmah* and *Binah*, testifies to *Israel*—that is, to *Tif’eret Yisra’el* (Beauty of Israel) and to His twelve “tribes” or potencies. Appropriately, the two letters of יה (Yah), appear respectively at the end and beginning of several of the tribal names: הַרְאֻבֵנִי (ha-Re’uveni), *the Reubenite*; הַשִּׁמְעוֹנִי (ha-Shim’oni), *the Simeonite*. The cosmic Tree of *Tif’eret* is surrounded by these “tribal” potencies.

The verse in Psalms describes the twelve tribes of Israel making pilgrimage to Jerusalem. It reads: *There tribes ascend, the tribes of Yah, עֲדוּת (edut), a statute* [literally: *a testimony*], *for [or: to] Israel, to praise the name of YHVH*. On the sense of *testimony to Israel*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 79:7; *BT Qiddushin* 70b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:6; *Midrash Tehillim* 122:4-5. On the sefirotic significance of *testimony*, see *Zohar* 2:221b, 229b; 3:78a, 213b; *ZH* 26d, 45b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 285 (and Wolfson’s n. 2).

36. *The image of their face...* In Ezekiel's vision each of the four living beings carrying the heavenly throne had four faces: a human face at the front, the face of a lion on the right, the face of a bull on the left, and the face of an eagle at the back. Rabbi El'azar indicates that the three animal faces were somehow included in the human face, as implied by the opening of the verse.

According to Greenberg (*Ezekiel*, 45), the peculiar formulation of the verse reflects the sequence of observation. The onlooker (on any side) was confronted by a human face, flanked by two animal faces on its right and left. Finally, from what could be seen on the heads of the rest of the creatures, the onlooker inferred that in back of the human face confronting him was an eagle's face.

On the all-inclusive nature of the human image, see *Zohar* 1:18b-19a, 44a (*Heikh*), 71b; 2:73a (*RR*), 74a, 80b, 178a (*SdTs*), 211b; 3:48a-b, 60b, 240b. Cf. Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 3:1; Vol. 7, p. 303, n. 153; above, [note 2](#).

37. *Michael to his right...* The four archangels surround the figure on the heavenly throne. Correspondingly, in the Sinai Desert, *Shekhinah* inhabited the Dwelling in the center, while the tribes surrounded Her in four camps (of three tribes each).

Each of these four tribal camps was designated by one tribal unit: Judah on the east, Reuben on the south, Ephraim on the west, and Dan on the north. The wording "two on this side, two on that" apparently combines south (Judah) and east (Reuben) as one "side" (corresponding to southeast), and north and west with another "side" (corresponding to northwest). See below.

On *Shekhinah* being in the center of the heavenly array, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 4. On the parallel between the arrangement of the heavenly throne and the arrangement of the tribal units, see *Pesiqta Rabbati* 46, 188a-b; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 2:10.

38. As soon as two units set forth... According to Numbers 10:11-28, when Israel journeyed through the desert, the unit of Judah set out first (along with two other tribes), followed by the disassembled Dwelling (carried by two Levitical clans), then by the unit of Reuben (along with two other tribes), then by the sacred objects of the Dwelling (carried by a third Levitical clan), then by the unit of Ephraim (along with two other tribes), and finally by the unit of Dan (along with two other tribes).

Here Rabbi El'azar seems to construe the earlier description (in Numbers 2:17) as implying that the Dwelling was carried *midway between the camps*, that is, between the first two tribal units (with four other tribes) and the last two tribal units (with four other tribes). See Milgrom, *Numbers*, on 2:17. This verse reads in full: *The Tent of Meeting, the camp of the Levites, shall journey in the midst of the camps. As they camp, so shall they journey, each in position, by their units.*

39. There are four camps... Each of the four angelic camps (headed by one of the archangels) included three angels (or angelic groups), totaling twelve. Similarly below, along with each of the four tribal units assembled two other tribes, totaling twelve.

40. The unit of the camp of Judah... This unit of three tribes (headed by Judah) camped to the east of the Dwelling and set out first. The unit headed by Reuben camped to the south of the Dwelling and set out next (following the disassembled Dwelling). The combination of east and south yields southeast, which designates the first corner of the altar on which the priest sprinkled the blood of the purification offering.

See M *Zevahim* 5:3: "The blood [of the purification offering] needed to be applied in four sprinklings. How? [The priest] went up the ramp [of the altar], proceeded around the circuit, and came to the southeast horn [or: corner], then the northeast, the northwest, the southwest."

See *Zohar* 2:256b (*Heikh*); 3:120a. Cf. *M Yoma* 5:5; *Tamid* 7:3; *Sefer Yetsirah* 5:1; *Zohar* 1:120b; 2:24a. On the arrangement of the tribes and of the heavenly throne, see above, [notes 37-38](#). The clause “The unit of the camp of Judah journeyed first” is a paraphrase of Numbers 10:14.

41. The camp of Dan, to the north... This unit of three tribes (headed by Dan) camped to the north of the Dwelling. The unit headed by Ephraim camped to the west. These two directions combine to form northwest, designating the third corner of the altar on which the priest sprinkled the blood. See the preceding note. On this passage, see *Peirush Ḥayyat, Ma’arekhet ha-Elohut*, 166a-b.

42. the Holy Name... Whose letters Rabbi El’azar proceeds to explore.

On the sefirotic significance of the letters of *YHVH*, see above, [p. 83](#), [n. 83](#). For various interpretations of the following passage, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

43. ׃ (Yod)—east... The letter ׃ (*yod*) signifies the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah*, the beginning of emanation of divine light, here associated with the east. South symbolizes *Ḥesed*, which emerges beneath *Ḥokhmah*.

44. ה (He)—south... The letter ה (*he*) symbolizes the Divine Mother, *Binah*, who is associated with south because She gives birth to *Ḥesed*, symbolized by this direction. The generation of *Ḥesed* is initiated by *Ḥokhmah*, the Divine Father (symbolized by *yod*).

45. From he are suspended south, north... From Mother *Binah* emerge *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah* (who are symbolized respectively by south and north), and *Tif’eret*, who balances these two polar opposites.

The sefirotic pair of *Gevurah* and *Ḥesed* (symbolized by north and south) can also be said to emerge from Father *Ḥokhmah*—symbolized by *yod* and associated here with east.

46. ׀ (vav)—in the center... The letter ׀ (*vav*) symbolizes *Tif'eret*, the Divine Son, situated between *Gevurah* and *Ḥesed* (north and south).

On the alignment of one's bed, see BT *Berakhot* 5b, in the name of Rabbi Yitshak: "Whoever places his bed between north and south will be granted male children." See Rashi and *Tosafot*, ad loc.; *Zohar* 1:250b; 3:119b-120a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 370; *Nitsotsei Orot*, *Zohar* 3:119b, n. 2; *Nitsotsei Zohar*.

47. From upper ה (he)... From *Binah* emerge *Gevurah* on the left (symbolized by north) and *Ḥesed* on the right (symbolized by south), with the Divine Son, *Tif'eret* (symbolized by the letter *vav*) between them. *Shekhinah*, represented by the final letter of יהוה (YHVH), is symbolized by west.

On the direction associated with *Shekhinah*, see BT *Bava Batra* 25b, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi: "*Shekhinah* is in the west." On *Shekhinah* never moving from the Western Wall of the Temple, see below, [note 75](#).

48. south is joined with east... South, symbolizing *Ḥesed*, is joined with east (associated with Father *Ḥokhmah*) and suspended from there. From Mother *Binah* is suspended *Gevurah*, symbolized by north. See above, [notes 43-45](#).

49. The corners of the altar were circled so... When the priest sprinkled the blood of the purification offering. See M *Zevahim* 5:3 (quoted above, [note 40](#)): "The blood [of the purification offering] needed to be applied in four sprinklings. How? [The priest] went up the ramp [of the altar], proceeded around the circuit, and came to the southeast horn [or: corner], then the northeast, the northwest, the southwest."

Here the first corner of the altar on which the blood was sprinkled—the southeast corner—symbolizes the point at which *Ḥesed* (symbolized by south) is linked with *Ḥokhmah* (associated with east).

50. Northeast... This next corner on which the priest sprinkles the blood symbolizes the transmission of the light of *Hokhmah* (associated with east) to *Gevurah* on the left (symbolized by north), as conveyed by *Hesed* on the right (symbolized by south). Thereby the harsh quality of the left side is assuaged by, and “included in,” the right side.

51. Northwest... This next corner of the altar symbolizes the connection between *Gevurah* (symbolized by north) and *Shekhinah* (symbolized by west).

52. Southwest... This final corner of the altar symbolizes the union between *Hesed* (symbolized by south) and *Shekhinah* (symbolized by west). Just as *Hesed* depends on the primordial point of *Hokhmah* (associated with east) and draws from it, so *Shekhinah* follows the lead of *Hokhmah*, joining with *Hesed*.

The polar opposites *Hesed* and *Gevurah* are pictured respectively as the right and left sefirotic hands (or arms), and in the description of the divine romance (based on Song of Songs) *Shekhinah* is first held by *his left hand* and then embraced by *his right*.

53. This mystery I have learned... Rabbi El’azar conveys a teaching that he heard from his father, Rabbi Shim’on. The blessed Holy One places *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the bed) between *Gevurah* and *Hesed* (symbolized respectively by north and south), and *Shekhinah* is joined to the Divine Son, *Tif’eret*. One should imitate God by placing his bed between north and south, thereby focusing his intention on the sefirotic process, the realm of faith.

The clause “Assembly of Israel, who is illumined...” means that *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel) is illumined by Her spouse between *Gevurah* and *Hesed*.

On *Shekhinah* as “bed,” see above, [p. 238](#), [n. 42](#). On the alignment of one’s bed, see above, [note 46](#).

54. one should display his actions... In all of one’s actions, a person should imitate, and thereby stimulate, the sefirotic process.

On the need to manifest action—and the principle “By an action below is aroused an action above”—see above, [pp. 41–42](#), [n. 122](#).

[55. His father-in-law...](#) On Rabbi El’azar’s father-in-law, see above, [p. 27](#), [n. 78](#); [p. 72](#), [n. 51](#).

[56. he has no fear in that world...](#) Such a person will not be vulnerable in the afterlife (“in that world”) to any harsh accusers.

Rabbi El’azar’s father-in-law says that since he is now related to El’azar and to El’azar’s father, Rabbi Shim’on, he too has no fear. See *Or Yaqar*.

[57. Your father and your mother will rejoice...](#) The continuation of the verse seems redundant: *she who bore you will be glad*. But Rabbi El’azar’s father-in-law explains that the first half of the verse alludes to the divine parents of Rabbi El’azar’s soul: the blessed Holy One (*Tif’eret*) and Assembly of Israel (*Shekhinah*). The conclusion of the verse refers to Rabbi El’azar’s biological mother: *she who bore you*.

This interpretation of *father* and *mother* is based on a passage in BT *Berakhot* 35b, in the name of Rabbi Ḥanina son of Papa: “Whoever enjoys this world without reciting a blessing—it is as if he robs the blessed Holy One and Assembly of Israel, as is said: *He who robs his father and mother and says, ‘It is no crime,’ is partner to a destroyer* (Proverbs 28:24)—*father* is none other than the blessed Holy One... and *mother* is none other than Assembly of Israel.”

In this Talmudic passage, Assembly of Israel apparently refers to a supernal hypostasis (the mother of Israel), as it does regularly in Kabbalah, designating *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 2:124b, 193b, 250a (*Heikh*), 262a (*Heikh*); 3:44b, 270b (*Piq*); Idel, *Kabbalah and Eros*, 27. Elsewhere in the *Zohar* (as here), the couple mentioned in Proverbs 23—*Your father and your mother will rejoice*—alludes to *Tif’eret* and *Shekhinah*. See 3:55a, 61b, 156a, 240b; Moses de León, *Sefer*

ha-Rimmon, 217, 349 (and Wolfson's notes). Cf. *Zohar* 2:82a (RM), 84a, 85a, 90a; 3:74a, 77b, 197b, 213a, 277b (RM). On the conclusion of the verse in Proverbs 23, see *Zohar* 3:156a, 240b.

In M *Ta'anit* 3:8, the verse in Proverbs 23 is applied to Honi the Circle-Drawer [the miracle-worker], who brought rain in a time of drought. See Vol. 7, p. 404, n. 140. On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, [p. 11](#), [n. 32](#).

58. As for Rabbi Shim'on... Where is he referred to? In the preceding verse in this same chapter of Proverbs.

59. Alternatively, *The father of a righteous son...* Now the first half of the verse refers to Rabbi El'azar's biological father, Rabbi Shim'on, while the second half includes an allusion to his spiritual father, the blessed Holy One. This interpretation is based on the fact that (according to the Masoretic text) the concluding verb is read aloud as *yismah* (שמח), *will rejoice*, but written with an additional *vav* (ו): *ve-yismah* (וּשְׂמַח), *and will rejoice*. The letter *vav*, whose numerical value is six, symbolizes *Tif'eret* (the blessed Holy One) together with the five *sefirot* surrounding Him (*Hesed* to *Yesod*). On the spelling *ve-yismah*, see *Minḥat Shai* on Proverbs 23:24.

60. In Your hand I entrust my spirit... According to BT *Berakhot* 5a, Abbaye recommends that each night before going to bed scholars should recite "a verse of compassion, such as *In Your hand I entrust my spirit. You redeem me, O YHVH, God of truth.*" Traditionally, this verse is included in the nightly recital of *Shema* before sleep. The verse reads: *In Your hand I entrust [or: commend, commit, deposit] my spirit...*

61. Have you ever seen someone... It does not befit the king's honor to hold someone's deposit.

62. As soon as night enters... During the day, *Shekhinah* and *Tif'eret* rule the world together, whereas at night *Tif'eret* ascends to the higher *sefirot*, leaving *Shekhinah* to rule the

world alone. *Tif'eret* is symbolized by the Tree of Life and characterized by Compassion, while *Shekhinah* is identified with the Tree of Knowledge and characterized by Judgment. The Tree of Knowledge is also known as the Tree of Death, because when Adam and Eve ate of its fruit, death ensued. When *Shekhinah* is separated from *Tif'eret*, She conveys Judgment, becomes vulnerable to harsh forces, and can transmit death; so She is then called the Tree of Death. Human sleep provides a taste of death.

On the Tree of Death, see *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 5, p. 24; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:375-76. Cf. Genesis 2:17: *But from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat, for on the day that you eat from it, you will surely die.*

On sleep as a taste of death, see BT *Berakhot* 57b: "Sleep is one-sixtieth of death." See *Zohar* 1:36a-b, 53b, 169b, 184b, 207a; 2:173a, 195b, 215b; 3:120b-121a, 156b, 234b, 260a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 52-53.

63. A person must anticipate... Before sleep, a person must entrust his soul to *Shekhinah*. Based on his unworthy or sinful conduct during that day, he actually deserves to die; but by offering his soul as a pledge he avoids such punishment and is revived from his "taste of death" every morning.

The stipulation that a creditor should return a pledge reflects a medieval halakhic discussion. According to the Torah, if someone defaults on a loan, the creditor can seize certain possessions of the debtor to pressure him to repay. However, the creditor may not seize a hand mill, which is necessary for preparing food, or a widow's garment. If he takes a poor person's night cover, he must return it every evening. See Exodus 22:25-26; Deuteronomy 24:6, 12-13, 17. Cf. Ezekiel 18:16; Amos 2:8; Job 22:6; 24:3.

From these biblical passages, rabbinic scholars deduced that it is forbidden to take as a pledge "anything by which daily food is prepared" (M *Bava Metsi'a* 9:13).

Some authorities extended this restriction to include anything used by the debtor to earn his livelihood. See Jacob ben Asher, *Tur, Hoshen Mishpat* 97. Cf. *Tosefta Bava Metsi'a* 10:11; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Malveh* 3:5.

Maimonides indicates that one should “return the pledge to [a needy person] when he needs it and take it back when he does not need it.” This formulation fits the passage here, in which *Shekhinah* receives the soul each night as a pledge, when on the verge of sleep a person surrenders his soul (including his normal, waking consciousness). Then each morning, as he awakens, he discovers the pledge restored.

According to one medieval Ashkenazic *taqqanah* (regulation), it is forbidden to keep books as a pledge, so as not to hinder the study of Torah. Remarkably, Rabbenu Tam expanded this prohibition to include all pledges: “It is incumbent upon all Israel and all their seed forever not to distraint any pledge for any claim.”

Here the *Zohar* adopts Rabbenu Tam’s extreme view, stating that the creditor should not distraint the pledge, which was given to him on trust. Any creditor who insists on keeping a pledge permanently is suspected of betraying his holy heritage and mission.

On the medieval *taqqanah* and Rabbenu Tam’s expansion, see Finkelstein, *Jewish Self-Government in the Middle Ages*, 213; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 37–38. On the spiritual sense of returning the pledge, see *Pesiqta Rabbati* 31, 143a; *Zohar* 3:198b; *ZH* 89a–b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 53–54; idem, *Maskiyyot Kesef*, 11 (104b); *TZ* 5, 142b. Cf. *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 307; *ZH* 18b–c (*MhN*). On the symbolic death experienced in reciting the *shema* before sleep, see Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 45.

64. Similarly with that Tree... *Shekhinah* obtains the souls of all those who sleep, and even though they are

indebted to Her on account of their daily failings, She returns their pledged souls in the morning.

65. This Tree should not really return... *Shekhinah* (the Tree of Death) needs to be balanced and sweetened by *Tif'eret* (the Tree of Life) before She can restore the pledged soul and bring the sleeping human back to life. In the final sentence, "that Tree" refers to the Tree of Life.

66. many people who wake up in the night... When *Shekhinah* (the Tree of Death) dominates the world. However, She restores their soul in the middle of the night, enabling them to wake up so that they can engage in the nightly study of Torah, thereby *seeking God*. Anyone who fails to rise and study cannot claim that he would have if only he weren't captivated by slumber and temporarily deprived of his soul.

On the midnight ritual of studying Torah, see above, [pp. 10-11](#), [n. 32](#). The full verse in Psalms reads: *YHVH looks down from heaven upon humankind to see if there is מַשְׁכִּיל (maskil), an enlightened one [or: someone discerning], seeking God*. Both philosophers and kabbalists described themselves by the term *maskil*. See *Zohar* 2:2a: "The *enlightened* are those who contemplate the secret of wisdom." Originally, *maskil* may have designated the community of those who shared the vision of the seer Daniel.

See *Bahir* 95 (139); *Zohar* 1:15b-16a; 2:23a; *ZH* 58c (*QhM*), 93d-94b (*Tiq*); Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 224; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 383-84; Liebes, "Zohar ve-Eros," 73-75.

67. This surely applies to Israel... Who have an intimate relation to *Shekhinah* and are encouraged to study Torah in the middle of the night. But what about the other nations: how are they related to *Shekhinah* and why should they awake during the night?

The clause "whom I have seen in the same manner" could refer generally to Gentiles waking up at night, but it

may allude as well to the midnight vigil common among Christian monks from early medieval times. See above, [p. 10, n. 32](#); *Zohar* 1:92b; Vol. 2, pp. 82-83, nn. 632-35.

[68. How can I curse whom God has not cursed?...](#)

Uttered by the pagan soothsayer Balaam to King Balak, after Balaam failed to curse Israel.

In the sefirotic realm there are both right and left sides. The right is characterized by Love and Compassion, while the left conveys Strict Judgment, which can hypertrophy into evil and impurity. Here, “right” and “left” refer respectively to the entire realm of holiness and the demonic domain.

But as above, so below, where humanity is divided into Israel (representing holiness) and the nations (dominated by the impure spirit). Furthermore, just as there are ten holy sefirotic rungs, so there are ten lower rungs on the left. These demonic potencies are sustained only by *Shekhinah*, who is “the head” of all angelic and demonic forces. Being the head, She controls the demonic tail; so the other nations, under the sway of this tail, are indirectly conducted by *Shekhinah*. This apparently explains why Gentiles likewise wake up at night, as does Israel for the holy purpose of studying Torah. Or it explains why Christian monks keep the midnight vigil. See the preceding note.

On the image of the head and tail, see below, [note 72](#). Cf. Judah Halevi’s depiction of Israel and the nations as respectively the heart and the body. See his *Kuzari* 2:35-44. On the innate distinction between Jews and Gentiles, see also *Kuzari* 1:27-47, 95, 102-11. For parallel medieval Christian views of the demonic nature of Jews, see Trachtenberg, *The Devil and the Jews*.

The formulation “As it is above, so below” reflects Hermetic teaching. See *Secretum secretorum*, ed. Robert Steele, *Opera hactenus*, fasc. 5, 262: “There is no doubt

that the lower from the higher and the higher from the lower produces wonders from one single operation.”

Such interdependency is a cardinal principle of Kabbalah. See *Zohar* 1:38a, 57b–58a, 129a, 145b, 156b, 158b, 172a, 205b; 2:15b (*MhN*), 20a (*MhN*), 48b, 82b, 144a–b, 186b, 195b, 231b, 251a (*Heikh*); 3:40b, 45b, 65b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:273. Cf. the frequent kabbalistic saying, “By an action below is aroused an action above.” See pp. 41–42, n. 122; above, [note 54](#).

The full verse in Numbers reads: *How can I curse whom God has not cursed, how can I doom whom YHVH has not doomed?*

69. Balaam wielded all those lower crowns... Balaam the sorcerer knew how to draw power from the demonic crowns, and he saw that all of them—specifically the lowest crown, identified here as the tail—were dependent on *Shekhinah* (the head). He wanted to curse Israel, by evoking a demonic force, but on those days he could not succeed because *Shekhinah* (known as *Ei*) displayed no harsh Judgment.

According to a rabbinic tradition, Balaam knew how to determine the precise moment each day when God becomes angry. By cursing at that moment, he could effectively doom Israel. See BT *Berakhot* 7a: “Does the blessed Holy One express wrath? Yes, for it has been taught: *God rages every day* (Psalms 7:12). How long is His rage? One moment. And how long is one moment? One fifty-eight-thousand-eight-hundred-and-eighty-eighth of an hour. This is a moment, and no creature can determine it precisely—except for the wicked Balaam, of whom is written *He knows the mind of the Most High* (Numbers 24:16). Now, even the mind of his animal [i.e., his donkey] he did not know, so how could he know *the mind of the Most High*? Well, this teaches that he knew how to determine that precise moment in which the blessed Holy One is angry. This corresponds to what the prophet said to

Israel: *My people, remember now what Balak king of Moab plotted, [and what Balaam son of Beor answered him... that you may know the saving acts of YHVH]* (Micah 6:5). What is meant by *that you may know the saving acts of YHVH*? Rabbi El'azar said, "The blessed Holy One said to Israel, "Know how many saving acts I performed for you in the days of the wicked Balaam. For if I had been angry, no survivor or escapee would have remained of the enemies of Israel [a euphemism for the people of Israel themselves]."" This corresponds to what Balaam said to Balak: *How can I curse whom God has not cursed, how can I doom whom YHVH has not doomed?* (Numbers 23:8). This teaches that all those days He did not rage." See above, [p. 225](#), [n. 6](#).

70. Although we have established this EI... This particular divine name usually designates *Hesed*, but since *Shekhinah*—or *Malkhuta* (Kingdom)—includes the qualities of the higher *sefirot*, She assumes their names. Specifically, She is also called *EI*, indicating that She conveys to the world the goodness and *hesed* (loving-kindness) stemming from *Hesed*.

However, *Shekhinah* also transmits the opposite divine quality: Strict Judgment. Whenever this attribute operates in the world, the verse in Psalms pertains: ואל (Ve-EI), *And God, rages every day*.

On this verse, see *Zohar* 1:8a, 91a, 177a; 248b-249a; 2:147a, 251 (*Heikh*); 3:30b, 176b-177a. On *EI* normally signifying *Hesed*, see *Zohar* 1:16b, 17b, 94a; 3:11a, 23b, 30b, 65a; *Gikatilla, Sha'arei Orah*, 76b-78b. Cf. *Mekhilta, Shirta* 3; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:2; *ZH* 30c.

71. אל שדי (EI Shaddai)... The etymology and meaning of the name *Shaddai* are unclear. According to a midrashic interpretation, it alludes to God's original command to limit the expansion of the universe. See BT *Hagigah* 12a, in the name of Resh Lakish: "I am the one ש (she), who, said to the world: די (Dai), Enough!"

In the *Zohar*, *Shaddai* designates *Yesod*, who conveys the flow of emanation through *Shekhinah* to all those below,

thereby providing satisfaction, or *dai*, “enough.” The compound name *El Shaddai* refers to *Shekhinah* unified with *Yesod*.

The concluding sentence means that as *Shekhinah* is aroused, so is the demonic power below—or specifically, so are Gentiles aroused and awakened from sleep in the middle of the night. See above, [notes 67-68](#).

On the midrashic interpretation of *Shaddai*, see also *Bereshit Rabbah* 5:8; *Tanḥuma, Ḥayyei Sarah* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 11; *Pirḳei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 3. On the application of this interpretation specifically to *Yesod*, see *Zohar* 2:257a (*Heikh*); 3:11b.

72. Her sound will move like a snake... In this time of exile *Shekhinah* is *like a snake*. More specifically, She is represented by the snake’s head, bent low to the dust. This head, however, controls the snake’s entire body, including the tail, which symbolizes the lowest demonic crown. Just as the snake’s tail can strike a passerby, so do the other nations—“who are attached to the [demonic] tail”—dominate Israel.

The *Zohar* sometimes interprets the verse in Amos as implying that *Shekhinah* (*Virgin Israel*, who has *fallen*) will not *rise again* on Her own, but the blessed Holy One Himself will raise Her. See BT *Berakhot* 4b; above, [p. 62, n. 26](#)

The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *Do not look [or: stare] at me for I am blackish, because the sun has scorched [or: gazed upon] me. My mother’s sons were incensed at me, they made me keeper of the vineyards; my own vineyard I did not keep.* Here the verse is spoken by *Shekhinah*, who before going into exile protected and cultivated Israel (*my own vineyard*), while the other nations of the world were nourished from the remnants. But now in exile, *Shekhinah* keeps other nations (or vineyards), so that Israel may be nourished from the remnants. See *Zohar* 2:266a (*Heikh*); 3:45b, 209b.

On this paragraph and its Gnostic parallel, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:469; 474, n. 103. The image of the snake striking with its tail recalls the sea serpent. See *Zohar* 2:27b; TZ 13, 29b. Cf. *Zohar* 1:2b.

73. If I had asked nothing in the world... Rabbi Yehudah was deeply troubled by the Gentile domination of Israel, so he is overjoyed to learn from Rabbi El'azar how and why this tragic process functions.

Rabbi Yehudah's exclamation ("If..., it would be enough for me!") imitates others in rabbinic literature and the *Zohar*. See above, [p. 130](#), [n. 223](#). Here, the expression "it would be enough for me" recalls the midrashic interpretation of יְשׁוּ (Shaddai) as "the one שׁ (she), who, said to the world: 'דַּי (Dai), Enough!'" See above, [note 71](#). On being overjoyed at asking a question and "gaining" its answer, see *Zohar* 3:5a, 100b, 159b.

74. Three patriarchs are called סגולה (segullah), treasure... The patriarchal triad (below) of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob symbolizes the sefirotic cluster (above) of *Hesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*. The word *segullah* suggests סגול (segol), the name of a sublinear vowel sign consisting of a triangle of three points: ∴.

The triad of *Hesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* is also represented by the three divisions of the people: priests, Levites, and Israelites.

75. The Tent of Meeting, the camp of the Levites... As the Israelites dismantled their camp and set out on each stage of their journey through the Sinai, the unit headed by Ephraim proceeded on the west of the disassembled Dwelling. This direction is intimately associated with *Shekhinah*.

See BT *Bava Batra* 25b, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi: "*Shekhinah* is in the west." On *Shekhinah* never moving from the Western Wall of the Temple, see *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:31; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemot* 10; *Shemot Rabbah* 2:2; *Midrash Tehillim* 11:3; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:2;

Zohar 2:5b (*MhN*), 116a (*RM*). Cf. *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:9; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15, 73b.

The term ימה (*yammah*), literally “seaward,” implies “toward the Mediterranean Sea,” i.e., to the west. The context in Numbers (2:17–18) reads: *The Tent of Meeting, the camp of the Levites, shall journey in the midst of the camps. As they camp, so shall they journey, each in position, by their units. The unit of the camp of Ephraim by their divisions to the west* [literally: *seaward*]... On the question of whether the Israelites journeyed in a straight line or in rectangular formation, see *Baraita di-Mlekhet ha-Mishkan* 13; *JT Eruvin* 5:1, 22c; Rashi on Numbers 10:25.

76. He blessed them on that day... The context describes Jacob’s blessing of Joseph’s two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. The simple sense of *By you shall Israel bless* is that the future generations will invoke the names of Ephraim and Manasseh as paradigms of divine blessing. But here the *Zohar* alters the meaning of the unusual clause *shall Israel bless*. If the verb were written in the passive voice (*shall be blessed*), then *Israel* would refer to the people Israel, who are to be blessed in the future by the formula *May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh*. However, the active voice (*shall bless*) suggests that *Israel* alludes to the divine Israel: *Tif’eret Yisra’el* (Beauty of Israel), who is called Israel the Elder. He receives the blessing from above and conveys it to those below solely *by you*—referring to both *Shekhinah* and Ephraim (who camps and journeys in the west alongside *Shekhinah*).

The association between Ephraim and *Shekhinah* is strengthened by the link between אפרים (*Ephraim*) and the root פרה (*prh*), “to be fruitful”—a root that appears in the verse attributed here to *Shekhinah* (who is known as *El Shaddai*): *I am El Shaddai. פרה (Pere), Be fruitful, and multiply.*

In midrashic literature the title Israel the Elder refers to Israel the patriarch (Jacob), as opposed to the people Israel. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:11; *Zohar* 1:233a; 2:4a, 43a

(*Piq*), 216a; 2:160b; 3:126a, 262b–263a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 42–43 (51).

On the sefirotic interpretation of *shall Israel bless*, see *Zohar* 1:233a; 2:9a; 3:130a (*IR*). On *El Shaddai* as a name of *Shekhinah*, see above, [note 71](#). The full verse in Genesis reads: *He blessed them on that day, saying, “By you shall Israel bless, saying, ‘May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh’”—and he put Ephraim before Manasseh.* The concluding clause refers to the fact that although Manasseh was Joseph’s firstborn, Jacob *put* Ephraim first in the blessing.

77. [Jacob] saw *Shekhinah* by [Ephraim’s] side... And so he said, *By you (shall Israel bless)*—referring both to *Shekhinah* (who will convey the blessing from the divine Israel) and to Ephraim, who camps and journeys in the west alongside *Shekhinah*.

But how could Jacob see anything, when Genesis describes him as blind? Well, he perceived the presence of *Shekhinah* by Her fragrance.

On the question of how Israel could see anything, see *Leqah Tov* and *Sekhel Tov*, Genesis 48:8; *Zohar* 1:227b. Cf. Vol. 3, p. 369, n. 352. The context in Genesis 48 (13–14) reads: *Joseph took the two of them—Ephraim with his right hand to Israel’s left, and Manasseh with his left hand to Israel’s right—and brought them near him. Israel stretched out his right hand and he placed it on Ephraim’s head, yet he was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh’s head—he crossed his hands—though Manasseh was the firstborn.*

78. He saw that he is in the west... Jacob saw that Ephraim was destined to camp and journey in the west alongside *Shekhinah*. This direction locates Her between north (symbolizing the divine left hand, *Gevurah*) and south (symbolizing *Hesed*, the right). First the left hand holds Her head, then the right embraces Her. *Shekhinah* is also pictured as the divine bed, lying between north and south. The

phrase *bed of Solomon* implies here the union between *Shekhinah* and King *Tif'eret*, pictured as King Solomon.

On the alignment of one's bed, see BT *Berakhot* 5b, in the name of Rabbi Yitshak: "Whoever places his bed between north and south will be granted male children." See above, [note 46](#). On *Shekhinah* as "bed" and *bed of Solomon*, see above, [p. 238, n. 42](#).

The context in Song of Songs 3 (7-8) reads: *Here is the bed of Solomon! Sixty warriors surrounding it, of the warriors of Israel—all of them skilled with a sword, expert in war, each with his sword on his thigh because of fear in the night.*

79. Whoever recites A praise of David three times daily... According to BT *Berakhot* 4b, "Rabbi El'azar son of Avina says, 'Whoever recites *A praise of David* three times daily is assured of being a son of [that is, "a member of," or "admitted to"] the world that is coming.'"

Shekhinah is known as *praise* (and intimately associated with King David), so by reciting this psalm, one stimulates Her union with *Tif'eret*, between *Gevurah* on the north and *Hesed* on the south. See *Zohar* 3:226a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 85.

80. accepts upon himself the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven... Through prayer. Normally, "accepting the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven" pertains to the beginning of the *Shema*—*Hear, O Israel! YHVH our God, YHVH is one!* (Deuteronomy 6:4). By reciting these words, a person acknowledges the existence of the one God and accepts the heavenly yoke.

See M *Berakhot* 2:2, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Korḥah: "Why does [the first paragraph of] the *Shema* precede [the second paragraph, beginning:] *It shall be if you [indeed] listen [to My commands]* (Deuteronomy 11:13)? Well, so that one will first accept upon himself the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven and afterward accept upon himself the yoke of the *mitsvot*."

Here the *Zohar* associates “accepting the yoke” with the early part of the daily service, known as *Pesukei de-Zimra* (Verses of Song). This section consists almost entirely of psalms, including Psalm 145: *A praise of David*. Following are Psalms 146–150, each of which begins and ends with *Hallelujah*, producing a total of ten *Hallelujahs*, corresponding to the ten sefirotic crowns, which themselves are symbolized by the letters of *YHVH*. The final psalm (150) includes “ten praises”—namely הללו (halelu), *praise* (in the opening verse) plus nine instances of הללוהו (haleluhu), *praise Him* (in the following verses).

See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 64 (and Wolfson’s [note 2](#)), 378. On the number of praises, cf. *Zohar* 2:232a. On the sefirotic significance of the letters of *YHVH*, see above, [p. 83](#), [n. 83](#).

[81. sublimity of sequence of praise...](#) The early part of the service culminates in the recital of the Song at the Sea, celebrating God’s deliverance of Israel at the Red Sea: *Then sang Moses and the Children of Israel this song to YHVH...*

The Kingdom of Heaven represents *Malkhut* (Kingdom), or *Shekhinah*. The phrase “comprising all” may allude specifically to the past and future aspects of the biblical clause אז ישיר (az yashir), which can be translated *Then [Moses] sang*, or *Then [Moses] will sing*.

See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:1; BT *Sanhedrin* 91b; *Tanḥuma, Beshallah* 10; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Beshallah* 13; *Zohar* 2:54a (Vol. 4, pp. 277–78, nn. 274–75); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 65.

[82. Then, at the conclusion...](#) Later, after the *Shema* and the *Amidah*, Psalm 145 (*A praise of David*) is recited again. This second recitation joins *Shekhinah* (known as *praise*) to *Ḥesed*, the divine right hand, associated with the morning. Later, in the afternoon prayer of *minḥah*, the third daily recitation of Psalm 145 joins Her to *Gevurah*, the divine left hand, associated with the afternoon. Thereby, *Shekhinah*

is placed between north (symbolizing *Gevurah*) and south (symbolizing *Hesed*), to join with the trunk of the divine body, symbolized by *Tif'eret*.

The Aramaic verb אָשְׂרֵי (*ashrei*), “he places,” also alludes playfully to Psalm 145, which in the liturgy is often called *Ashrei*, after the first word in both Psalms 84:5 and 144:15, which are paired and prefaced to it: *Ashrei, Happy, are those who dwell in Your house. They will ever praise You. Selah. Ashrei, Happy, the people who has it so, happy the people whose God is YHVH!* On the effect of reciting Psalm 145 three times daily, see above, [note 79](#).

[83. The unit of the camp of Ephraim to the west...](#) This unit of tribes (including also Manasseh and Benjamin) journeyed on the west, the direction symbolizing *Shekhinah*. On the south journeyed the unit of Reuben (including also Gad and Simeon); on the north journeyed the unit of Dan (including Asher and Naphtali). These two directions symbolize respectively *Hesed* and *Gevurah* (the right and left sefirotic arms), and fittingly Ephraim’s direction (west) lies between them. See above, [note 75](#).

[84. A mystery known to our brethren who dwell in the south...](#) The mysterious message transmitted to them addresses them as “sentinels of [the sefirotic] lamps” who seek to unify the divine potencies. They are directed to accept upon themselves the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven (by reciting the psalms and praises mentioned above). Thereby they can enter the realm of *Hesed* (symbolized by the south). They should proceed to bind all the sefirotic directions together and then abide in the south.

The circling of the various directions recalls the Mishnaic description of the priest circling the directions of the altar. See above, [note 40](#); and the following passage here.

The phrase “our brethren who dwell in the south” apparently refers to a group of kabbalists. The Talmud links the figure of Rabbi Shim’on son of Yoḥai (the leader of the

Zoharic Companions) with the south. According to BT *Yevamot* 62b, after thousands of Rabbi Akiva's students died, "he came... to our Rabbis in the south and taught them," and one of these disciples was Rabbi Shim'on. See *Zohar* 3:10a, 269a; *Or Yaqar*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1186. For the phrase "who dwell in the south," see *Targum Yonatan*, Obadiah 1:9, 19.

"Sentinels" renders טסטירא (*tastira*), a neologism that may be based on טסורא (*tesora*), which appears in JT *Ketubbot* 11:3, 34b, as a corruption of סנטירא (*santeira*), "guardsman." See Vol. 1, p. 132, n. 189; *Or Yaqar*. Cf. *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 179, s.v. *tastiru*.

"Matrix" renders טופסרא (*tufsera*), which derives from Greek *tupos*, "form, shape, figure, pattern, mold, matrix." See *Zohar* 1:20b; *Or Yaqar*; *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 178-80, s.v. *tufsira*, *tafsera de-qitra*, *tifsa*; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David*, s.v. *tifsa*, *tafserei*, *tafsirei*; *Derekh Emet*.

85. A mnemonic for conjugal union... Rabbi El'azar asks his father for a mnemonic device that indicates how to proceed in unifying the divine couple. On this passage, see *Peirush Hayyat, Ma'arekhet ha-Elohut*, 31a-b, 166b-167b.

86. they have been scattered... The teachings of Kabbalah have begun to spread.

As a mnemonic, Rabbi Shim'on offers (and gradually explains) a short description from the Mishnah (*Zevahim* 5:3) of how the priest should sprinkle the blood of the purification offering upon the altar: "The blood needed to be applied in four sprinklings. How? He went up the ramp [of the altar], proceeded around the circuit, and came to the southeast horn [or: corner], then the northeast, the northwest, the southwest." See above, [notes 40, 49](#).

87. But one cannot do so... Rabbi El'azar wonders how a person can begin the process of unification except by first approaching *Shekhinah*, or *Malkhut* (Kingdom), and accepting upon himself "the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven." It would seem impossible, or unwise, to begin by

approaching the south (as in “the southeast corner”), which symbolizes *Ḥesed*, far up the sefirotic ladder. On accepting upon oneself “the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven,” see above, [note 80](#).

88. I have told you everything... Rabbi Shim'on insists that his mnemonic includes a solution to his son's challenging question. According to the Mishnah, the priest first came לקרן דרומית מזרחית (*le-qeren deromit mizrahit*), “to the southeast horn” of the altar. In the Hebrew text the noun *qeren*, “horn,” precedes the adjective *deromit-mizrahit*, “southeast,” and Rabbi Shim'on explains that “horn” symbolizes *Shekhinah* (or *Malkhut*, the Holy “Kingdom”). So the priest does begin with *Shekhinah*, and then proceeds to דרומית “the south”—here Rabbi Shim'on focuses first on the initial element of the compound *deromit mizrahit*, “southeast.” South symbolizes *Ḥesed*, first of the six *sefirot* whose core is *Tif'eret*, identified with the Tree of Life.

At this point, the intention of the priest (and of anyone seeking to unify the *sefirot*) should be to join *Tif'eret* to His Father, *Ḥokhmah*, who is represented by the direction east. So “southeast” alludes to the union of *Tif'eret* (associated with *Ḥesed* on the south) and *Ḥokhmah* (east). The potency of all the lower *sefirot* (beginning with *Ḥesed* on the south) derives from *Ḥokhmah*.

On *Shekhinah* as “horn,” see *Zohar* 1:96a; 2:123a, 179a (*SdTs*); 3:19b, 34a, 92b, 99a, 154a. On *Ḥokhmah* as “east,” see above, [note 43](#).

89. East—joined with north... According to the Mishnaic mnemonic, the next priestly station is the northeast corner of the altar, which symbolizes the perpetual union of *Ḥokhmah* (symbolized by east) and *Binah* (symbolized here by north). She conveys streams of emanation to the lower *sefirot*, as implied now by the verse in Psalms.

The simple sense of the verset is: וצפונך (*U-tsfunekha*), *As for Your treasured ones—fill their belly*. Alternatively, it can

be rendered *U-tsfunekha*, *With Your hidden treasure, you fill their belly*. Here, Rabbi Shim'on playfully reads it as *u-tsfonekha*, *And your north, will fill their belly*.

On *Binah* as “north,” see the following note. On the perpetual union of *Hokhmah* and *Binah*, see above, [p. 151](#), [n. 277](#). For the full Mishnaic passage, see above, [note 86](#).

90. As for Her being called צפונית (tsefonit), north... The term צפון (*tsafon*), “north,” suggests צפון (*tsafun*), “hidden,” alluding to the concealed nature of *Binah*. Also, although the Divine Mother is joyful and compassionate, She generates *Gevurah*, or *Din* (Judgment), who is usually referred to as “north.” When *Binah* manifests what is within Her, *Gevurah* (north) issues along with *Hesed* (south).

91. Then ‘the northwest’... The location of the third horn of the altar symbolizes the union of the Female *Binah* (symbolized by north) and Her Daughter, *Shekhinah* (symbolized by west and by the horn). This mother and daughter parallel Father *Hokhmah* and His Son, *Tif'eret*.

The phrase “with no further qualification” renders סתם (*setam*), “unspecified, unidentified, uncharacterized, unqualified, anonymous, in a general sense, simply.” Here it apparently distinguishes צפון (*tsafon*), “north,” from the “qualified” direction מערבית צפונית (*tsefonit ma'aravit*), “northwest.” The “unqualified” direction north may refer to *Gevurah*, whereas the element “north” in “northwest” alludes to *Binah*. For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On *Shekhinah* as horn, see above, [note 88](#).

92. Then one should join Her to the south... The location “southwest” signifies the union of *Hesed* (symbolized by south) and *Shekhinah* (west). *Hesed* represents the right arm of the divine body, whose trunk is *Tif'eret*.

93. this horn—three times... Apparently referring to the three-fold daily recitation of Psalm 145, which is associated with *Shekhinah*. Its opening verse—*A praise of David*—alludes to Her doubly, since She is called *praise* and

is intimately associated with King David. By reciting this psalm (along with other psalms) in the early morning service, a person accepts upon himself the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven—namely the yoke of *Shekhinah*, or *Malkhut* (Kingdom). The second recitation of the psalm toward the end of the morning service stimulates the embrace of *Shekhinah* by *Hesed*, the right arm. The third recitation at the beginning of the afternoon service stimulates Her embrace by *Gevurah*, the left arm. See above, [notes 79, 80, 82](#).

The sequence of circling the altar (and of contemplating the *sefirot*) must be followed precisely according to the Mishnaic formula: southeast, northeast, northwest, southwest—each corner (or “side”) symbolizing a sefirotic pair.

94. What prompted David... Why did David the Psalmist compose this particular psalm as an alphabetical acrostic? And why is it missing a verse that begins with the letter ו (*vav*)? And why is it recited as part of *Taḥanun*, when a person prostrates himself completely?

Actually, Psalm 25 is also missing verses that begin with two other letters: ב (*bet*) and ק (*qof*). See *Zohar* 3:307b (*Tosefet*); *ZH* 42a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 84–85; *Haggahot Maharḥu*.

The phrase “all the other praises” is hyperbolic. The acrostic Psalm 34 is also missing a verse that begins with *vav*, while Psalm 145 famously lacks a verse beginning with נ (*nun*).

Taḥanun (Supplication) is recited on most weekdays immediately following the cantor’s repetition of the *Amidah*. It includes a confession of sins and a petition for grace. This prayer is also known as *nefilat appayim* (falling upon the face, prostration), and originally it was recited in this position, though later it became customary to recite *Taḥanun* in a seated (or half-seated) posture with lowered head and one’s face buried in the bend of the arm. Here, the *Zohar*

reflects the Sephardic version of *Taḥanun*, which features Psalm 25.

On *Taḥanun* and *nefilat appayim*, see JT *Ta'anit* 2:4, 65d; *Avodah Zarah* 4:1, 43d; BT *Megillah* 22a-b, *Ta'anit* 14b; *Bava Metsi'a* 59b; *Zohar* 2:128b-129a, 200b, 202b; 3:176b, 241b; ZH 42a-b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 83-85; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:969-71; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 52-53; Hallamish, *Ha-Qabbalah*, 474-85.

95. This is a sublime mystery... As night begins, *Shekhinah* dominates the world under the aspect of the Tree of Death, and all inhabitants fall into sleep, tasting death. If a person surrenders and entrusts his soul to *Shekhinah* before sleep, She returns it faithfully in the morning, even though according to strict justice he does not deserve it back, on account of his unworthy conduct during the preceding day.

On the nightly pledge of the soul, see above, [notes 63-66](#). On *Shekhinah* as the Tree of Death, see above, [note 62](#). The phrase “hanging with death” renders דתלייא ביה מותא (*de-talya beih mota*), which can also be translated as “upon which death depends.” See *Zohar* 1:246a.

On sleep as a taste of death, see above, [note 62](#), quoting BT *Berakhot* 57b: “Sleep is one-sixtieth of death.”

96. adorns himself with tefillin, and covers himself... With a tallit. Near the beginning of the morning service appear various biblical and rabbinic passages on daily sacrifices and incense. By reciting these, one purifies himself, in preparation for accepting upon himself the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven by singing *Pesukei de-Zimra* (Verses of Song), consisting mostly of David’s psalms. Eventually, by reciting the *Shema* and the *Amidah*, one unites the divine couple.

The verb אשרי (*ashrei*), “places,” alludes playfully to the prayer *Ashrei*, recited as part of *Pesukei de-Zimra*. See above, [note 82](#). On accepting the heavenly yoke, see above, [note 80](#).

According to medieval (and modern) practice, first one enwraps himself in the tallit and then dons tefillin, though here Rabbi Shim'on mentions the latter first. Below (at [note 98](#)), he describes putting on the tallit first and then tefillin. See *Zohar* 3:175b; *Haggahot Maharḥu*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 45-46; above, [p. 12](#), [n. 34](#). Cf. Rashi on BT *Sukkah* 46a, s.v. *mitsvot harbeh*.

97. mystery of the matter... To be effective, prayer must be uttered, but it also requires a preliminary physical act. This act itself should be prayerful, sincerely motivated from within.

The phrase “an interior act” renders עובדא בגויה (*ovada begaveih*), “an act within him (or it),” apparently meaning “motivated sincerely from within.” For an alternative interpretation, see *Or Yaqar*.

On the need to manifest action—and the principle “by an action below is aroused an action above”—see above, [pp. 41-42](#), [n. 122](#). On spoken or silent recitation of the *Amidah*, see BT *Berakhot* 24b, 31a; *Zohar* 1:209b-210a; 2:202a (Vol. 6, pp. 150-51, n. 123); 3:294b (*IZ*); *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 60.

98. purify himself first... Cleanse himself by relieving himself and then washing his hands. Then he can begin to accept upon himself the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven by putting on the tallit and binding himself with tefillin.

The *tefillah* (phylactery) of the hand symbolizes *Shekhinah*, while the *tefillah* of the head symbolizes *Tif'eret*. By tying the knot of the first *tefillah* on the left arm (supposedly closer to the heart), one stimulates the divine left arm to embrace *Shekhinah*.

See BT *Berakhot* 14b-15a, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: “One who wishes to accept upon himself the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven completely should relieve himself, wash his hands, don tefillin, recite *Shema*, and pray [the *Amidah*], This is the complete Kingdom of Heaven.”

The full verse in Song of Songs 2 reads: *His left hand beneath my head, his right embracing me.* Cf. *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:6; see *Zohar* 3:54b-55a. The full verse in Song of Songs 8 reads: *Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm. For love is fierce as death, jealousy cruel as Sheol; its sparks are sparks of fire, a flame of Yah.* See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 8:6; *Zohar* 3:54b.

On the passage in *Berakhot*, see *Zohar* 3:260a. On the significance of tefillin, see above, [p. 211](#), [n. 11](#). The heart is actually in the center of the thorax directly behind the sternum. The reason it is often thought to be on the left-hand side is that the left ventricle is considerably larger than the right, so it sits a little farther to the left than the right ventricle does to the right.

99. purify himself with sacrifices... By reciting the passages about sacrifices, which parallels the purging of one's body. Then he accepts upon himself the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven by reciting *Pesukei de-Zimra* (Verses of Song), which parallels the act of donning the tallit. See above, [notes 80](#), [96](#).

100. Then tefillah of the hand... Following *Pesukei de-Zimra*, the main part of the daily morning service consists of the *Shema* and its blessings ("the *tefillah* [prayer] recited seated") and the *Amidah* ("the *tefillah* [prayer] recited standing"). Here, Rabbi Shim'on associates "the *tefillah* recited seated" with the "*tefillah* [phylactery] of the hand," both of which symbolize *Shekhinah*. The other phylactery ("tefillah of the head") parallels "the *tefillah* recited standing," both of which symbolize *Tif'eret*. See *Zohar* 1:132b; 2:131b-133a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 79.

The rituals acts preceding prayer (such as donning tallit and tefillin) correspond to verbal prayer. Complete prayer requires both action and utterance. See above, [note 97](#).

101. if one spoils the act... Then the prayer cannot be conveyed above, and the person has failed doubly: in influencing the divine realm and in fulfilling the *mitsvah* of prayer.

102. When a person performs genuine prayer... And succeeds in unifying the *sefirot*, he ensures a flow of blessing. Following the *Amidah*, one should recite *Taḥanun* and prostrate himself completely in a symbolic death pose. As mentioned above ([note 100](#)), the *Amidah* symbolizes *Tif'eret*, who is pictured as the Tree of Life. Having completed this prayer, one “has separated from the Tree of Life,” and now should surrender his soul to *Shekhinah*, who is pictured as the Tree of Death. As he first awoke that morning, She returned his pledge of the soul (deposited the previous night when he went to sleep). Now in *Taḥanun* he confesses his sins, offers supplication, and surrenders his soul once again.

In *ZH* 42a, the death pose of *Taḥanun* is described as playing dead—like a monkey in the forest trying to deceive a threatening predator. See Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 184, n. 154.

On *Taḥanun*, see above, [note 94](#). On the nightly pledge of the soul, see above, [notes 63–66](#). The full verse in Genesis reads: *Jacob finished instructing his sons, and he gathered his feet into the bed, and he expired, and was gathered to his people.* See *Targum Onqelos*, Genesis 49:33. Here, the bed symbolizes *Shekhinah*. See above, [p. 238, n. 42](#).

103. That is why it has no ו (vav)... Rabbi Shim'on had asked why the acrostic Psalm 25 (recited during *Taḥanun*) was missing a verse beginning with the letter *vav*. (See above at [note 94](#).) Now he explains that *vav* (whose numerical value is six) symbolizes *Tif'eret* (known as the Tree of Life), together with the five *sefirot* surrounding Him (*Hesed* to *Yesod*). Since this psalm is addressed to *Shekhinah* (the Tree of Death), it is inappropriate for any of its verses to begin with the letter symbolizing the Tree of Life. By

surrendering one's soul during *Taḥanun*, as if he were dying, a person can be purged of even the most grievous iniquity, such as profaning God's name.

According to various rabbinic sources (which quote the verse from Isaiah), the sin of profaning God's name can be purged only by death. See *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 7; *Tosefta Yoma* 4:8; *JT Yoma* 8:9, 45b-c; *Sanhedrin* 10:1, 27c-d; *Shevu'ot* 1:6, 33b; *BT Yoma* 86a; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 29; *Midrash Mishlei* 10:1. Cf. *BT Ta'anit* 11a; *Pirḳei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 38; *Tanḥuma, Vayeshev* 2; *Zohar* 2:273a (*Tosafot*); 3:44b; *ZH* 35c, 42a-b.

104. This restoration... The act of surrendering one's soul during *Taḥanun* must be performed with devotion. Furthermore, a person should cultivate the skill of earnestly swaying God to forgive sin. Insincere words lead to the ultimate punishment by the Tree of Death.

The expression למפתי למאריה (*le-miftei le-mareih*), "to entice (or seduce, persuade, propitiate, sway, win over, win the favor of) his Lord," derives from rabbinic sources. See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:4 (variants); *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 23:4; *Midrash Tehillim* 19:17; *Sekhel Tov*, Exodus 12:3, p. 96; *Zohar* 1:41a; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 184, n. 154.

The verse in Psalm 78 reads: ויפתוהו (*Va-yfattuhu*), *They beguiled [or: deceived, flattered, enticed] Him, with their mouths, and with their tongues they lied to Him.* The line *To You, YHVH, I lift my soul* appears at the beginning of Psalm 25, recited during *Taḥanun*.

105. when he prepares himself for this... To surrender his soul during *Taḥanun*.

"To unify the Holy Name" means to unify the *sefirot* by contemplating the letters of *YHVH*. On the sefirotic significance of these letters, see above, [p. 83](#), [n. 83](#).

106. If I have come into the world... Similar exclamations appear in rabbinic literature and often in the *Zohar*. See above, [p. 130](#), [n. 223](#).

107. ***Your people, all of them righteous...*** The full verse reads: *Your people, all of them righteous, will inherit the land forever—sprout of My planting, work of My hands, that I may be glorified.*

1. The beginning of this verse... The first part of this verse could imply that the person has committed a sin, though God does not reckon it as such; whereas the conclusion seems to say that he is completely sinless. On the verse, see *Zohar* 2:24b.

2. During the prayer of *minḥah*... In the afternoon, the quality of Judgment dominates, symbolized by the patriarch Isaac, who according to rabbinic tradition instituted the afternoon prayer. His *sefirah*—*Gevurah*, also known as *Din* (Judgment)—is pictured as the divine left arm, which reaches out “to receive” and hold *Shekhinah* (symbolized by night). Once She is aroused, all the forces that guard the openings between the divine realm and the lower realm are stimulated, and humans fall into sleep, tasting death.

On afternoon as a time of Judgment, see *Zohar* 1:95b, 132b, 182b, 230a; 2:21a (*MhN*), 36b, 88b, 156a; 3:64a, 129a (*IR*), 288b (*IZ*), 293a (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 87; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:963–64.

On the patriarchs instituting prayer, see BT *Berakhot* 26b: “Rabbi Yose son of Rabbi Ḥanina said, ‘The patriarchs instituted the prayers.’... Abraham instituted the morning prayer.... Isaac instituted the afternoon prayer.... Jacob instituted the evening prayer.” See JT *Berakhot* 4:1, 7a–b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:9.

On sleep as a taste of death, see BT *Berakhot* 57b: “Sleep is one-sixtieth of death.” See above, [p. 267](#), [n. 62](#).

3. At precisely midnight... Then *Gevurah* is aroused (as it was in the afternoon), and *Shekhinah* (the Holy Rose) exudes fragrance and offers praise to Her spouse, the blessed Holy One. This is the time when the devoted awaken and praise God, thereby stimulating the divine union. In the morning, *Ḥesed* (the divine right arm) embraces *Shekhinah*, and the union is consummated. On the midnight ritual of the kabbalists, see above, [pp. 10–11](#), [n. 32](#).

4. When people are asleep... And thereby experience a taste of death, the soul ascends and occupies a place appropriate to her worthiness. She proceeds to testify about the person's actions during the day that just ended.

Every word that a person speaks rises to heaven, and any sinful or malicious word is inscribed upon him. On words splitting the heavens, see *Zohar* 2:201a; 3:31b, 55a, 61a, 105a, 260b, 294a-b (*IZ*).

In the verse from Micah the simple sense of *her who lies in your bosom* is "your wife," but here Rabbi Abba is alluding to the soul, based on BT *Hagigah* 16a: "Perhaps you will say, 'Who testifies against me?'... The Sages say, 'A person's soul testifies against him, as is said: *From her who lies in your bosom guard the doors of your mouth*. What is it that lies in a person's bosom? You must admit it is the soul.'"

See Rashi on the verse in Micah; *Zohar* 1:92a; 2:186a. On the soul's nightly journey, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 14:9, in the name of Rabbi Me'ir: "This soul fills the body, and when a person sleeps she ascends, drawing down life from above." See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 34; *Midrash Tehillim* 11:6; *Zohar* 1:83a, 121b, 130a, 183a, 200a; 2:195b; 3:67a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:809-14.

Now the apparent contradiction between the two parts of the verse in Psalms is resolved. *Happy is the person to whom YHVH reckons no iniquity*. When? When his spirit reports to God no sinful, deceitful word or deed: *in his spirit is no deceit*.

5. When a man or woman... The full verse reads: *When a man or woman commits any of the human sins, committing a sacrilege against YHVH [or: betraying YHVH by infidelity; betraying the trust of YHVH; breaking faith with YHVH], and that person feels guilt*. The simple sense of *human sins* is "sins of one person against another."

The Kenites were a tribe of migratory metalsmiths who were annexed to Judah. The verse in Judges describes a

tribal unit of the Kenites headed by Heber, which separated from the other Kenites. The full verse reads: *Heber the Kenite separated מִקַּיִן (mi-qayin), from the Kenites [literally: from Cain], from the sons of Hobab, father-in-law of Moses, and he pitched his tent until Elon-beza-ananim, which is near Kedesh.* Hobab is another name for Jethro, Moses' father-in-law.

According to the verse in Samuel, King Saul gave the Kenites friendly warning before attacking the Amalekites, who generations earlier had attacked the Israelites after they came out of Egypt. (See Exodus 17:8-16; and Deuteronomy 25:17-18.) In Samuel, the nature of the *kindness* that the Kenites did for Israel is uncertain. However, according to rabbinic sources this refers to Jethro the Kenite's *kindness* in hosting Moses (who was equivalent to all of Israel) in Midian (see Exodus 2).

In the question "Why was he called *the Kenite*?" the pronoun "he" refers (at least primarily) to Jethro (who is called *the Kenite* in Judges 1:16), rather than to Heber the Kenite, Jethro's descendant. This substitution of Jethro for Heber accords with the rabbinic tradition that Heber is actually one of Jethro's many names. The concluding quotation of the verse in Genesis demonstrates simply that *Kenite* refers to a people, namely one of the peoples that occupied Canaan.

On Jethro's *kindness*, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 34:8; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 16, p. 303; BT *Berakhot* 63b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:5; *Midrash Shemu'el* 18:3; *Pirquei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 44 (and the marginal [note 9](#)); David Kimḥi on 1 Samuel 15:6; *Zohar* 3:9a (Vol. 7, p. 44, n. 134).

On Jethro as *the Kenite*, see also *Mekhilta, Amaleq (Yitro)* 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 18:1; *Sifrei*, Numbers 78; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 35; BT *Berakhot* 63b; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemot* 11; *Zohar* 1:28b (TZ); 2:195a; 3:9a. On Jethro being identified with Heber, see *Mekhilta, Amaleq*

(*Yitro*) 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemot* 11 (and Buber's [note 58](#)); *Midrash Aggadah*, Exodus 6:25; Rashi on Exodus 18:1.

6. he made קנא (*qinna*), a nest... Jethro the קיני (*qeini*), Kenite, made קנא (*qinna*), “a nest,” in the desert—that is, he secluded himself in order to study Torah. He *separated from Cain* [or: *the Kenites*, the people named after Cain] and devoted himself to God, converting to the true faith.

See *Zohar* 3:9a. On Jethro's and his descendants' devotion to Torah, see also *Sifrei*, Numbers 78; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 62; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 12:5; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 16, pp. 304–5; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan A*, 35; *Shemot Rabbah* 27:8; *Zohar* 3:196b; *ZḤ* 13D (*MhN*). On Jethro's conversion, see *Mekhilta, Amaleq (Yitro)* 1–2; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 18:27; *Sifrei*, Numbers 78; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 9:6.

7. Happy is the person... One who devotes himself to Torah attracts a holy spirit, whereas one who acts corruptly attracts an impure spirit. Numerous demonic spirits derive from Cain, who was the first murderer.

On Cain's demonic quality, see above, [p. 45](#), [n. 130](#). On his demonic descendants, see *Zohar* 1:9b, 36b, 54a–b, 178a–b; 3:76b, 87a. Cf. 3:143b (*IR*). On the verse in Isaiah, see *Zohar* 1:83b; 3:70b, 112b.

“Damagers of the World” renders נזקי עלמא (*nizqei alma*), “damages of the world,” playing on מזיקי עלמא (*mazziqei alma*), “demons of the world.”

8. Jethro was originally an idolatrous priest... Since he originally served the Other Side, Jethro drew upon himself a demonic spirit. But eventually he *separated from the Kenites*—and thus *from* (the demonic) *Cain*—and clung to God.

The full verse in Leviticus reads: *If by My statutes you walk, and My commands you keep*, ועשיתם אותם (*va-asitem otam*), *and you do them*. Here, the *Zohar* construes the last clause as *and you make them*—that is, by fulfilling the commands of Torah (which are linked with the *sefirot*) one

stimulates the flow of emanation, thereby actualizing the union of the divine couple above and sustaining the world below. See above, [p. 215, n. 20](#); [p. 230, n. 23](#).

On Jethro's being an idolatrous priest, see Exodus 2:16; 3:1; 18:1 (all describing him as *priest of Midian*); *Shemot Rabbah* 1:32; *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 11, *Yitro* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Yitro* 5; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 35, 161a; 40, 167b; *Zohar* 2:13b; 3:196b–197a.

On Jethro's being called *the Kenite*, see above, [note 5](#). On the phrase *separated from Cain*, see *Zohar* 1:28b (TZ); 3:216b (RM); TZ 69, 119a. On Jethro's spiritual transformation, see also above, [note 6](#).

9. And whoever transgresses... Such an act disrupts the divine union and thereby diminishes the flow of blessing to the worlds below.

The abbreviated parable derives from *Vayiqra Rabbah* 4:6, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "This may be compared to people on a ship, one of whom took a drill and began drilling beneath him. His fellow travelers said to him, 'Why are you doing that?' He replied, 'Why do you care? Aren't I drilling under myself?' They said to him, 'Because you're flooding the ship for all of us!'"

In other words, an individual's sin can have grave consequences for all. Similarly, the biblical phrase *any of the sins of humanity* now implies that a person's own sin has such an effect that it is considered to have been committed by all of *humanity*. Furthermore, human sin impairs the divine realm, *committing a sacrilege against YHVH*.

Cf. the rabbinic saying "All of Israel ערבים (*arevim*), are responsible [or: are surety], for one another" (and thus bound to prevent wrongdoing). See *Sifra, Beḥuqqotai* 7:5, 112b; *Eikhah Rabbah* (Buber) 3:33; BT *Sanhedrin* 27b, *Shevu'ot* 39a–b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 7:8; *Tanḥuma, Nitsavim* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Nitsavim* 5; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 10:5; Rashi on Leviticus 26:37. In *Seder Eliyahu*

Rabbah 12, p. 56, this saying is explicated by a similar seafaring parable.

On “damaging above,” see BT *Sanhedrin* 74a (in the name of Rabbi Shim’on son of Yoḥai); *Zohar* 2:26b; 3:8a, 16b, 66a, 79a, 297a–b. The phrase “sitting side by side” is a conjectural rendering of דסטרין (*de-satrin*), based on the root סטר (*str*), whose nominal form means “side” and whose verbal form appears in Geonic literature in the sense of “to move aside.” See Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic*, 799a; cf. Scholem.

10. But they, like Adam, have violated the covenant... When Adam sinned by eating of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, he inflicted death upon himself and upon all, and also disrupted the sefirotic union above. Now, anyone who sins is *like Adam*, damaging himself and all others and damaging above—as implied by the verse in Numbers: *When a man or woman commits any of חטאת האדם (ḥattot ha-adam), the sins of Adam.*

On the nature and consequences of Adam’s sin, see above, [p. 41](#), [n. 121](#). The verse in Hosea reads: *But they, כאדם (ke-adam), like Adam [or: like humans], have violated the covenant.* The verse in Isaiah reads: *He will swallow up death forever. My Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces and remove the disgrace of His people from the whole earth—for YHVH has spoken.*

11. Committing a sacrilege against YHVH... The name YHVH signifies Compassion, and whoever sins abandons this quality and instead draws on harsh Judgment. Thereby he causes a defect in the Holy Name itself, as implied by the wording *committing a sacrilege against YHVH*. Wickedness and sin also doom many of the righteous, who perish by the indiscriminating forces of destruction that are unleashed.

On the wicked turning Compassion into Judgment, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 33:3, in the name of Rabbi Shemu’el son

of Nahman: “Woe to the wicked, who turn the Attribute of Compassion into the Attribute of Judgment!”

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 73:3; *Zohar* 2:63a; 3:15b, 30b, 65a, 79a, 137b (*IR*), 207b. Cf. above, [p. 133](#), [n. 229](#). On *YHVH* signifying Compassion, see above, [p. 184](#), [n. 375](#).

12. from Usha to Lydda... Usha was a town in Lower Galilee. Lydda (or Lod) is located in the coastal plain. Cf. *Nitsotsei Zohar*, n. 11, on *Zohar* 2:169b. On the importance of engaging in Torah while walking or traveling, see above, [p. 2](#), [n. 4](#).

13. If a man opens a pit... Rabbi Yitshak reasons as follows: If, in the case of an animal who falls into an uncovered pit, the negligent owner of the pit is liable, then all the more so, if a person sins intentionally and thereby harms the world, he should certainly be punished. But why, then, is there the possibility of *teshuvah* (“turning back” to God, repentance)? How can this make restitution for the harm inflicted by sin?

The context in Exodus (21:33–34) reads: *If a man opens a pit or if a man digs a pit and does not cover it, and an ox or a donkey falls into it, the owner of the pit shall make restitution, restoring silver to its owner, and the carcass shall be his.*

The passage in Numbers concerns a person who has illicitly appropriated another’s property and then denied it under oath. The context (Numbers 5:6–7) reads: *When a man or woman commits any of the human sins, מעל ביהוה למעל (lim’ol ma’al ba-YHVH), committing a sacrilege against YHVH [or: betraying YHVH by infidelity; betraying the trust of YHVH; breaking faith with YHVH], and that person feels guilt, they shall confess the sin that they committed, and for his guilt he shall restore its principal, and one-fifth he shall add to it, giving it to him whom he wronged.* Rabbi Yitshak interprets וְהָשִׁיב (ve-heshiv), and he shall restore, as alluding to *teshuvah*.

14. Well, surely this benefits them... The sinner's act of *teshuvah* benefits him and the whole world, because he thereby restores *Binah*, the Divine Mother, who is known as *Teshuvah*. His sin had damaged Her, or interfered with Her flow of emanation to the lower *sefirot* and to all the worlds; now his act of *teshuvah* mends everything. On *Binah* as *Teshuvah*, see above, [p. 64](#), [n. 31](#).

15. When you are in distress... A person's act of *teshuvah* is most effective before judgment is executed against him, before he is *in distress*, because once Judgment prevails, it must be completed. Still, even after its completion, a person can "restore all worlds" by turning back to God.

The context (Deuteronomy 4:30–31) reads: *When you are in distress and all these things find [or: befall] you in the end of days [meaning here: in future days; in time to come], you shall return to YHVH your God and heed His voice. For YHVH your God is a compassionate God; He will not abandon you and will not destroy you and will not forget your fathers' covenant that He swore to them.* The phrase *and all these things* refers to the punishment of exile described in the preceding verses.

16. In the end of days—what does this mean here?... In prophetic literature, this phrase refers to the culmination of history, but that sense does not fit the context in Deuteronomy. Rabbi Yehudah explains that here it alludes to *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel), who is the last of the seven lower *sefirot*, the cosmic "days." She shares Israel's suffering in exile, as implied now by the verse: *when you are in distress and all these things befall you* באחרית הימים (*be-aḥarit ha-yamim*), *with the end of days*—that is, along with *Shekhinah*, whose own restoration depends on Israel's *teshuvah*.

On the overwhelming power of *teshuvah*, see JT *Pe'ah* 1:1, 16b: "Nothing can withstand any master of repentance." The formulation here matches Maimonides,

Mishneh Torah, Hilkhoh Teshuvah 3:14: “Nothing can withstand *teshuvah*.” See *Zohar* 2:106a; 3:76a, 78b; *ZH* 19d (*MhN*).

On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, [p. 11](#), [n. 32](#). On *Shekhinah* as *the end of days*, see *Zohar* 1:234b; 2:189b; 3:270a. On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see above, [pp. 71-72](#), [n. 49](#).

17. Even Assembly of Israel is called *Teshuvah*... Normally, *Binah* is called *Teshuvah*, and She alone is Supernal *Teshuvah*; but the name *Teshuvah* (“turning back, returning”) can also refer to *Shekhinah* (who is called Assembly of Israel). This name applies to Her when *Tif'eret*—known as *Rahamim* (Compassion)—“turns back” to Her, stimulating Her to “return” to the angelic forces beneath Her and the lower worlds.

The finest act of *teshuvah* consists in turning back to God at the moment of death, “when one’s soul is surrendered” to *Shekhinah*. On *Teshuvah* as a name of *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 2:106b.

18. Woe to the wicked one, woe to his neighbor See *M Nega'im* 12:6; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 9; *BT Sukkah* 56b; *Tanḥuma, Bemidbar* 12, *Qoraḥ* 4; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bemidbar* 13, *Qoraḥ* 8; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 3:12; 18:5.

19. Because Jonah refused... To obey God’s command to go to the wicked city of Nineveh and proclaim judgment upon its inhabitants. Instead Jonah fled and booked passage on a ship sailing to Tarshish, thereby endangering all the others aboard, who nearly died as a result of a tempest sent by God. To save themselves, the sailors threw Jonah into the sea; but after being swallowed by a huge fish, he cried out to God from its belly, and was spewed onto dry land. Then he proceeded to Nineveh and stimulated its multitudes to engage in *teshuvah*, thereby saving them.

The near death of all those aboard the ship illustrates the maxim: “Woe to the wicked one [namely Jonah], woe to

his neighbor!” The verse in Jonah reads: *Out of my distress I called to YHVH, and He answered me; from the belly of Sheol I cried, and You heard my voice.* The verse in Psalms reads: *From confinement [or: From the straits; In distress] I called to Yah....*

[20.](#) **THE SECTION OF THE STRAYING WIFE** Numbers 5:11–31 contains the law relating to a wife whom her husband suspects of adultery. In such a case, he brings her to the sanctuary, where she undergoes a trial by ordeal. The priest makes her drink a potion consisting of sacred water to which have been added dust from the sanctuary floor and a parchment containing a curse (whose written letters dissolve in the water). The curse spells out the consequences: if she is guilty, her genital area will distend and she will be unable to conceive. If, however, the water has no effect on her, she is declared innocent and she will be blessed with seed. See Milgrom, *Numbers*, 37.

[21.](#) **אִישׁ אִישׁ (Ish ish), Any man, whose wife strays...** What does this passage (concerning a wife suspected of adultery) have to do with the preceding one (concerning the illicit appropriation of property)? The two are linked by the idiom לַמַּעוֹל מֵעַל (lim’ol ma’al), “to betray by infidelity; betray trust; break faith; commit a sacrilege.” See above, [note 13](#).

Numbers 5:12 reads: *Any man whose wife strays, בו מעל (U-ma’alah vo ma’al), betraying him by infidelity [or: betraying his trust; breaking faith with him].* Numbers 5:6 reads in full: *When a man or woman commits any of the human sins, למעל מעל ביהוה (lim’ol ma’al ba-YHVH), betraying YHVH by infidelity [or: betraying the trust of YHVH; breaking faith with YHVH; committing a sacrilege against YHVH], and that person feels guilt.* The simple sense of *human sins* is “sins of one person against another.”

[22.](#) **why ish ish, a man, a man...** The expression *ish ish*—literally *a man, a man*—means *any man*, but Rabbi El’azar focuses on the hyperliteral sense. For him, this implies a

man who is truly a *man*—that is, who is satisfied with his own wife and does not seek out any other woman.

See *Bemidbar Rabbah* 9:3. Cf. BT *Avodah Zarah* 19a: “Happy is the man who reveres YHVH (Psalms 112:1)... Rabbi Yehoshu’a son of Levi said, ‘Happy is one who overpowers his impulse like a *man*.’” See *Zohar* 2:128a. Cf. M *Avot* 4:1, in the name of Ben Zoma: “Who is mighty? One who subdues his impulse.”

On the doublet *ish ish* in this verse, see also *Sifrei*, Numbers 7; *Sifrei Zuta*, Numbers 5:12; BT *Sotah* 24a, 27a; *Tanḥuma*, *Naso* 5; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Naso* 9; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 9:1-2, 4, 28; *Leqaḥ Tov*, Numbers 5:12; Rashi on Numbers 5:12.

23. *ומעלה בו מעל (U-ma’alah vo ma’al), Betraying him by infidelity...* The verse could read simply *ומעלה בו (u-ma’alah vo), betraying him*; why is the word *מעל (ma’al), by infidelity*, added? Why the need for two expressions of betrayal? Because, Rabbi El’azar explains, one alludes to *Shekhinah* above (known as Assembly of Israel), and one to the husband below. An adulterous wife betrays not only her spouse but also *Shekhinah*, to whom all women are linked.

See *Bemidbar Rabbah* 9:8; *Midrash ha-Gadol*, Numbers 5:12. Cf. *Tosefta Sotah* 2:3; *Sifrei*, Numbers 8; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 9:2, 9-10, 12-13; *Tanḥuma*, *Naso* 2, 5; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Naso* 4, 9. For the wording in Numbers 5:12, see above, [note 21](#).

24. Why to the priest?... Why does the suspicious husband bring his wife to the priest, rather than to court? Because the priest (who symbolizes *Ḥesed*) prepares *Shekhinah* for Her union with *Tif’eret*. If the wife has, in fact, committed adultery, *Shekhinah* is tainted, and the priest must restore Her.

On the priest (or Aaron the priest) as *שושבינא (shoshevina)*, “the best man (or intimate friend),” of *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 2:49b, 3:20a (RM), 53b, 176b, 177b, 180b, 275b. On the term *Matronita*, see the Glossary.

25. He shall slaughter... The full verse reads: *He shall slaughter the male of the herd before YHVH, and the sons of Aaron, the priests, shall present the blood and dash the blood around the altar, which is at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting.*

According to the simple sense of the verse, the subject of *He shall slaughter* is the person bringing the ascent offering, not the priest. Rabbi El'azar explains that since the priest symbolizes *Hesed*, he is forbidden here to engage in the violent act of slaughtering, which corresponds to *Din* (Judgment), because such an act would damage his *sefirah*. But why, then, does the suspicious husband bring his wife to the priest to render judgment?

Actually, in general the priest is certainly allowed to slaughter, although non-priests are also permitted to do so. On the wording *he shall slaughter* (in Leviticus 1:5), see *Sifra, Nedavah* 4:2, 6a; BT *Berakhot* 31b, *Yoma* 27a, *Zevahim* 32a, *Menahot* 19a; Rashi, Ibn Ezra, and Nahmanides on Leviticus 1:5; Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1:154. See also 2 Chronicles 29:24; *Sifra, Metsora* 1:1, 70c; M *Pesahim* 5:6; *Yoma* 2:3; *Zevahim* 3:1; *Parah* 3:9; JT *Yoma* 3:8, 40d; *Sheqalim* 4:2, 48a; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 22:7; BT *Pesahim* 64b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:7; *Midrash Shemu'el* 3:6; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:3; *Zohar* 3:145b, 180b.

On this passage, see further Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 531 (and Chavel's note); Bahya ben Asher on Numbers 4:49 (and Chavel's note); Recanati on Exodus 29:2, 51d; *Or Yaqar*; Zacuto; Emden, *Mitpaḥat Sefarim*, 29, 44; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Ateret Tsevi*; David Luria, *Ma'amar Qadmut Sefer ha-Zohar*, 25a; Soncino; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, Leviticus 1:5, n. 124; *ibid.*, 12:145-48; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:57; Katz, *Halakhah ve-Qabbalah*, 50; Scholem; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

26. surely the priest is appropriate for this... He should administer the trial by ordeal to the suspected adulteress because (as explained above at [note 24](#)) he is

“the best man” of *Shekhinah* (or *Matronita*), responsible for preparing Her to unite with *Tif'eret*, and if the wife has committed adultery, *Shekhinah* has been tainted, so the priest must restore Her.

All women of the world reflect the image of *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel) and are closely linked with Her. Consequently, under the wedding canopy a woman receives seven blessings, deriving from the sevenfold abundance of *Shekhinah* (who is the consummation of the seven lower *sefirot*).

On *Shekhinah* as the feminine archetype, see *Zohar* 1:228b: “All females of the world abide in the mystery of *Shekhinah*.” See *Zohar* 2:101a, 102b-103a; 3:125b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:464; 3:1357, 1373, n. 23.

On the seven blessings traditionally recited under the wedding canopy, see *Zohar* 2:102b, 169a-b, 255b (*Heikh*); 3:6a, 44b, 266b; *ZH* 88d-89a (*MhN, Rut*).

27. if you say that he executes judgment—not so... By administering the ordeal, the priest (who symbolizes *Hesed*) is not betraying his quality. If the woman is found innocent of adultery, he thereby succeeds in reconciling her with her husband. If she is found guilty, then it is not the priest but rather the Holy Name that executes judgment against her (as explained below).

On conception by a woman who has been cleared of suspicion, see Numbers 5:28: *If the woman has not been defiled and she is pure, she will be cleared and sown with seed.* On her conceiving a male child, see *Tosefta Sotah* 2:3, in the name of El'azar son of Matya: “If she bore ... females, she now bears males.” See *Sifrei*, Numbers 19; JT *Sotah* 3:4, 18d; BT *Berakhot* 31b, *Sotah* 26a; *Tanḥuma, Naso* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Naso* 1; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 9:25.

On a male child ensuring peace, see BT *Niddah* 31b, in the name of Rabbi Ammi: “As soon as a male comes into the world, peace comes into the world.”

28. The priest does not inject himself... He only administers the trial by ordeal if the suspected adulteress insists on going through the procedure.

On the priest urging the suspected wife to admit her guilt and avoid the ordeal, see M *Sotah* 1:4; *Tosefta Sotah* 1:6; *Sifrei*, Numbers 12; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 18, p. 332; JT *Sotah* 1:4, 16d; BT *Sotah* 7b; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 9:17.

29. The priest writes the Holy Name... The priest writes down a curse, whose letters are dissolved in the potion that the suspected adulteress must drink. If she is guilty, the curse takes effect. The curse itself reads: *May YHVH make you a curse and an imprecation among your people, as YHVH makes your thigh sag and your belly swell. These cursing waters will enter your innards to swell the belly and to sag the thigh* (Numbers 5:21-22).

This formula includes the name *YHVH* twice. Rabbi El'azar indicates that the priest writes the first *YHVH* normally ("straight") and the second one backward: *HVHY* (apparently). The straight spelling signifies Compassion, which is associated with the (normal) name *YHVH*; the backward spelling signifies Judgment. The wording "Judgment by Judgment..." may mean: "The backward spelling conveys Judgment, if the woman is guilty; the forward spelling conveys Compassion, if the woman is innocent. Compassion is effected with the consent of Judgment, and vice versa."

For various depictions of how the two *YHVHS* are written and the meaning of "Judgment by Judgment...", see *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Haggahot Maharḥu*; Zacuto; *Miqdash Melekh*; Elijah Posek, *Divrei Hakhamim ve-Hidotam*, 49a-b; Soncino; *Sullam*; *Nitsotsei Zohar* and the marginal depiction in Margaliot's edition; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

On the entire procedure of the trial by ordeal, see above, [note 20](#). On the exact formula written by the priest, see M *Sotah* 2:3; BT *Berakhot* 15b, *Sotah* 17a; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 4, p. 76 *Tanḥuma*, *Naso* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber),

Naso 1; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 9:36 Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhoh Sotah* 3:8.

On the reversal of letters as signifying Judgment or destruction, see Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush le-Sefer Yetsirah*, 459; *Zohar* 1:67b (Vol. 1, p. 396, n. 418); 2:51b-52a; 3:150b; Joseph ben Shalom Ashkenazi, *Peirush Sefer Yetsirah*, 2:4, 40c-d; *Sefer ha-Peli'ah* 1:51d; Idel, *Golem*, 81-82, 119-120.

In Greek and Hebrew magical texts and curse inscriptions, divine or demonic names were sometimes written backward because it was believed that "writing or reciting backward was more effective than doing so in the normal manner," or that "reversing the order of letters or words led to reversing the natural order of things." See Naveh, "Lamp Inscriptions and Inverted Writing," 41; idem, "Hebrew Graffiti from the First Temple Period," 195-96; Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 111, 116.

According to BT *Sotah* 17b (and *Bemidbar Rabbah* 9:36), if the formula of the curse (to be dissolved in the water) is written backward, it becomes invalid, probably because this turns it into (or makes it seem like) a magical incantation. See Blau, *Das altjüdische Zauberwesen*, 148-49; Posek, *Divrei Hakhamim ve-Hidotam*, 49a.

30. They came to Marah... The place-name מרה (*marah*) means "bitter," referring to the bitterness of the desert springs.

The context in Exodus (15:23-25) reads: *They came to Marah and could not drink water from Marah, for it was bitter. Therefore its name is called Marah. And the people murmured against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" And he cried out to YHVH, and YHVH showed him a tree [or: a piece of wood], and he threw it into the water, and the water turned sweet. There He set him [or: them] statute and law, and there He tested him [or: them].*

31. and there He tested them... According to its simple sense, the verse probably refers to God testing

Israel's faith in His power to provide for their needs in the desert. Here, Rabbi El'azar reveals a deeper meaning: the Egyptians had claimed that they had fathered some of the offspring of Israel, so now God tested the Israelite wives by the water ordeal—making them drink *the waters of bitterness* (Numbers 5:18)—in order to determine whether any of them had committed adultery.

On the verse in Exodus, see *Zohar* 2:40a, 60b-61a, 125b. On the parallel between the incident at Marah and the ordeal by water, see *Zohar* 3:124a-b (*RM*). On the application of the motif of the water ordeal to other biblical events, cf. Vol. 7, pp. 228-29, n. 70 (relating to the story of the Golden Calf).

32. *And he cried out to YHVH...* When Moses cried out to God, He replied that many demonic forces were accusing Israel of unworthiness, so they had to be tested. Moses was instructed to imitate the priestly procedure of the trial by ordeal, by writing down the Divine Name, casting it into the water, and administering the test.

The passage in Exodus records that *YHVH showed him a tree [or: a piece of wood], and he threw it into the water*. According to *Targum Yerushalmi*, ad loc., Moses was told to write the Divine Name on this tree. Elsewhere, the *Zohar* teaches that Moses was told to cast his staff into the water, and this staff was engraved with the Divine Name. See *Zohar* 2:60b (Vol. 4, p. 323, n. 435); *ZH* 30d (*MhN*); Ginzberg, *Legends*, 6:14-15, n. 82. On Moses' staff, see above, Vol. 4, pp. 107-8, n. 137.

According to a rabbinic allegorical interpretation, the *tree* mentioned in Exodus 15:25 alludes to “words of Torah, which are compared to a tree, as is said: *A tree of life is she to those who grasp her...* (Proverbs 3:18).” In Kabbalah the *tree of life* represents *Tif'eret*, who is also symbolized by the Divine Name *YHVH*.

See *Mekhilta*, *Vayassa* 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:25; *Yalqut ha-Makhiri*, Proverbs 3:18; *Tanḥuma* (Buber),

Beshallah 18; *Bahir* 107 (161); *Zohar* 2:60a-b; *ZH* 29c; *Kasher, Torah Shelemah*, Exodus 15:25, n. 261*. On Torah as *tree* and Tree of Life, see also *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 47; BT *Berakhot* 32b, *Arakhin* 15b.

On demonic accusation at Marah, see *Bahir* 107 (161); *TZ* 60, 93a-b. For the context in Exodus, see above, [note 30](#).

33. And from the dust... The potion to be drunk by the suspected adulteress included dust from the sanctuary floor. (See above, [note 20](#).) This dust symbolizes *Shekhinah*, from whom all life originates and to whom all returns, as implied by the verse in Ecclesiastes: *All comes from the dust, and all returns to the dust*. Since *Shekhinah* is tainted by the sin of adultery, She “participates” in the trial by ordeal.

According to a midrashic tradition (in the name of Rabbi Naḥman), “even the globe of the sun” was created from the earth. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:11; *Qohelet Rabbah* and *Qohelet Zuta* on 3:20; *Zohar* 1:170a; 3:34b, 181a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 344.

In *Shemot Rabbah* 13:1, Yosef the Builder explains how God created the earth: “The blessed Holy One took dust from beneath the Throne of Glory and scattered it upon the waters and the earth was formed, and little pebbles in the dust became mountains and hills.” Cf. *Pirquei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 3.

On the concluding clause, see Genesis 3:19: *By the sweat of your brow shall you eat bread till you return to the soil, for from there were you taken, for dust you are and to dust shall you return*.

On *Shekhinah* as dust, see *Zohar* 1:49a, 170a, 249b-250a; 2:23b-24b; 3:34b; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 344-45; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 171; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 57-58, 62 (70-71, 77-78). The full verse in Numbers reads: *The priest shall take holy water in a clay vessel, and from the earth [or: dust, dirt] that is on the floor of the Dwelling*

[or: *the Tabernacle*] *the priest shall take and put it into the water.*

34. If it were written *and from the dust, and nothing more...* Rabbi Yose agrees that *dust* can refer to *Shekhinah*, but here the verse reads *from the dust that is on the floor of the Dwelling*. *Shekhinah* is often referred to as המִשְׁכָּן (*ha-mishkan*), *the Dwelling*, so *the dust that is on the floor of the Dwelling* suggests harsh forces beneath *Shekhinah* who execute Judgment.

The verse in Isaiah refers to God's empowerment of Cyrus, king of Persia: *He delivers nations to him and lets him subjugate kings*. יִתֵּן כַּעֲפָר חָרְבוֹ (*Yitten ke-afar ḥarbo*), *He makes their* [literally: *his*] *swords like dust* [or: *He turns them to dust with his sword*], כִּקֶּשׁ נִדְדַף קֶשְׁתוֹ (*ke-qash niddaf qashto*), *their* [literally: *his*] *bows like windblown stubble* [or: *to windblown stubble with his bow*].

According to a rabbinic interpretation, the triumphant warrior in the verse is Abraham, and the verse describes how he defeated four eastern kings (as recounted in Genesis 14). See *Bereshit Rabbah* 42:3: “*Yitten ke-afar ḥarbo ke-qash niddaf qashto*. Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Neḥemiah [differed]. One said: ‘Abraham threw dust at them, which turned into swords, and stubble, which became arrows.’ The other said, ‘It is not written *Yitten afar, He makes dust*, but rather *ke-afar, like dust*: they threw swords at Abraham, which turned into dust, and arrows, which became stubble.’”

Here Rabbi Yose (apparently drawing on the first midrashic interpretation) construes *Yitten ke-afar ḥarbo* as *He makes dust his sword*—meaning now that the harsh forces of Judgment (pictured as *dust* beneath *Shekhinah*) function as the *sword* of punishment. Similarly, the priest includes these forces of *dust* in the potion to be drunk by the suspected adulteress.

On the passage in *Bereshit Rabbah*, see BT *Ta’anit* 21a, *Sanhedrin* 108b; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli’ezer* 9, pp. 159–60;

Tanḥuma, Lekh Lekha 15; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Lekh Lekha* 19; *Midrash Tehillim* 110:2.

“Archers” renders מאריהון דקיסטין (*mareihon de-qistin*). *Qistin* could be a playful variation on קשתין (*qashtin*), “bows.” Alternatively, *qistin* may derive from a phrase in *Tanḥuma, Shofetim* 14: כלי זיין קסטיא (*kelei zayin qasteya*), in which *qasteya* seems to be a corruption of קסטיריא (*qastiriya*) or קסיטרא (*qasitra*), “tin,” from Greek *kassiteros*, yielding the meaning (in *Tanḥuma*) “tin-plated weapons.” The context there also mentions “catapults,” as does the passage here. Similarly, in *Zohar* 3:84a *qistin* and “catapults” appear together. See above, [p. 23](#), [n. 64](#); *Nitsotsei Orot; Arukh ha-Shalem*, s.v. *qastir; Sullam*.

35. The waters of bitterness... The water of the potion, mixed with dust, is like seawater, and the sea symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who can be bitter when She conveys harsh Judgment. Then Her powers are called *waters of bitterness*.

Seawater is bitter because it derives from this aspect of *Shekhinah*. On the bitterness of seawater, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 9; *ZH* 9a (*MhN*); Scholem.

36. Into this Holy Sea... Sweet rivers of emanation flow into the Sea of *Shekhinah*, where they turn bitter due to Her quality of Judgment. But when these waters spread to the world, they sweeten.

On the association of death with *Shekhinah*, see above, [p. 204](#), [n. 437](#). On the sweetening of seawater, see *JT Avodah Zarah* 2:6, 42a. Cf. *Mekhilta, Beshallah* 4, *Shirta* 6; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:16, 15:7; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 38; *Tanḥuma, Beshallah* 10; *Midrash Tehillim* 114:7, 136:7.

37. Sometimes, a sea of bitter waters... *Shekhinah* alternates between various states. When conveying harsh Judgment, She is bitter. Sometimes She absorbs the flow of emanation from above, but this congeals within Her and does not spread below, due to the unworthiness of humans.

When the warmth of *Hesed* thaws Her frozen waters, they stream to the lower worlds.

On the sea swallowing waters, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 13:9; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 1:7; Rashi on BT *Bekhorot* 9a, s.v. *le-vei veli'ei*. Cf. M *Parah* 8:8, *Miqva'ot* 5:4; BT *Shabbat* 109a. On the Frozen Sea of *Shekhinah* and Her thawing, see *Zohar* 1:29b, 152a, 161b; 2:30a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 341.

38. when the Serpent comes... When the demonic Serpent contaminates *Shekhinah*, Her waters become *cursing waters*. Such an attack on *Shekhinah* can be provoked by a woman committing adultery, so the priest must perform the trial by ordeal in order to execute judgment and restore *Shekhinah* to a state of purity.

On the serpent injecting filth, see BT *Yevamot* 103b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: “When the serpent copulated with Eve, he injected her with זחמא (*zohama*), filth [or: slime, lust]. Israel, who stood at Mount Sinai—their filth ceased. Star-worshipers, who did not stand at Mount Sinai—their filth did not cease.” See above, [p. 127](#), [n. 214](#).

On the restoration of *Shekhinah*, see above, [note 26](#). For the full text of Numbers 5:22, see above, [note 29](#).

39. until she conceives... See above, [note 27](#).

40. By that which she corrupted herself... She succumbed to lust (or the filth of the serpent), so a serpent appears in her womb, and *her belly will swell and her thigh sag* (Numbers 5:27), displaying her shame to all.

According to rabbinic sources, the punishment of the sagging thigh and swollen belly matches the adulteress's sexual crime. See M *Sotah* 1:7; *Tosefta Sotah* 4:10; *Mekhilta, Pisha* 7; *Sifrei*, Numbers 18; *Sifrei Zuta* 5:21; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 18, p. 333; JT *Sotah* 1:7, 17a; *Bereshit Rabbah* 50:8; BT *Sotah* 9b; *Tanḥuma, Beshallah* 6; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 9:18, 23.

41. All women of the world abide in their place... In the realm of the Divine Female, *Shekhinah*. Fittingly, the

adulteress is tried by having to drink the waters of bitterness, which symbolize the harsh Judgment of *Shekhinah*.

See above, [p. 119](#), [n. 193](#). On the intimate connection between women and *Shekhinah*, see above, [note 26](#).

42. *Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine...* Rabbi Hizkiyah teaches that just as a vine does not accept grafting from another species, so a Jewish wife does not accept anyone but her mate.

Cf. JT *Kil'ayim* 1:7, 27b, in the name of Rabbi Levi: "*Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine in the recesses of your house; your children like olive shoots around your table.* Just as olives cannot be grafted [onto another species], so *your children* will include no unworthy offspring." Here, apparently, Rabbi Hizkiyah transplants the simile from the end of the verse (speaking of *olive shoots*) to the beginning (speaking of *a vine*).

See *Zohar* 1:26a (TZ), 115b, 239b; 3:247a (RM); TZ 15, 30b; 69, 111a. Cf. BT *Sotah* 43b; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 36:2; *Midrash Shemu'el* 16; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 6, p. 30. On the passage in JT *Kil'ayim* 1:7, see *Midrash Tehillim* 128:4; cf. JT *Kil'ayim* 1:4, 27a.

On the verse in Psalms, see also *Tanḥuma*, *Vayishlah* 6; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabba* 18, p. 92; *Midrash Tehillim* 128:3; *Zohar* 1:84b, 238a; 2:170b-171a. On the dove's faithfulness to its mate, see BT *Eruvin* 100b; *Zohar* 3:61a, 240b-241a; ZH 31c.

43. What is meant by פוריה (*poriyah*), *fruitful*... Rabbi Hizkiyah quotes the verse in Deuteronomy to demonstrate that the root פרה (*prh*) implies vigorous growth and fertility. That verse reads in full: *Beware lest there be among you a man or a woman, a clan or a tribe, whose heart turns away today from YHVH our God to go worship the gods of those nations, lest there be among you a root bearing fruit of hemlock and wormwood.*

44. not outside on the street... Where a woman might betray her husband, who represents *Yesod*, the divine

phallus, symbolized by the covenant of circumcision. Since every woman is rooted in *Shekhinah*, she is linked with *Yesod*.

The subject of the verse in Proverbs is *the alien woman* mentioned in the preceding verse. See *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 18, pp. 331-32; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 21, 107a; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 9:2; *Zohar* 2:112a. For the restrictive reading of *in the recesses of your house*, see *Tanḥuma, Vayishlah* 6; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabba* 18, p. 92; *Midrash Tehillim* 128:3; *Zohar* 1:84b, 115b; 2:170b-171a.

45. to expose the hair of her head... Even at home. Such immodest behavior inflicts great damage, including the invasion of the home by a demonic spirit (“an alien element”).

See the story about the pious woman Kimḥit in *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 26:10: “Kimḥit had seven sons, and all of them served as the high priest. The sages came to visit her and asked, ‘What good deeds do you possess [to merit this]?’ She replied, ‘I swear that the rafters of my house have never seen the hair of my head.’”

In contrast to the esteemed rank attained by Kimḥit’s sons, the children of an immodest woman will be merely mediocre. On the story of Kimḥit, see JT *Yoma* 1:1, 38d; *Megillah* 1:9, 72a; *Horayot* 3:4, 47d; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 20:11; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan A*, 35; BT *Yoma* 47a; *Tanḥuma, Aḥarei Mot* 7; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Aḥarei Mot* 9; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 2:26.

On this pietistic practice, see also *Zohar* 3:151b; Vital; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Nitsotsei Zohar*. Cf. BT *Berakhot* 24a, in the name of Rav Sheshet: “A woman’s hair is nakedness [i.e., lewd, indecent, licentious, enticing], as is said: *Your hair is like a flock of goats* (Song of Songs 4:1; 6:5).”

46. causes other hair to be exposed... Such immodest behavior exposes harsh forces above, which are pictured as hair. The phrase “tainting her” may apply to the woman or to the Divine Woman (*Shekhinah*)—who is

vulnerable to the harsh forces above, or whose own (harsh) hair is exposed by this immodest female act.

On hair as signifying harsh powers, see *Zohar* 1:217a, 223b, 241b; 3:48b-49a, 60b, 70a, 79a, 131b-132a (*IR*), 140a (*IR*), 151b, 295b (*IZ*); *ZH* 31b; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 119-26. For various interpretations of this paragraph, see *Or Yaqar*; Soncino; *Sullam*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1338; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

The image of “the walls of her house” seeing a woman’s hair derives from the statement attributed to the pious Kimḥit (quoted in the preceding note): “The rafters of my house have never seen the hair of my head.”

“Walls” renders סטרי (*sitrei*), “sides,” a reading preserved in P5 and *Or Yaqar*. The variant סטיר (*setir*) appears in V3 and V22. The standard printed editions and a number of manuscripts (including N10, Pr13, V18, V19) record the Zoharic neologism טסירי (*tesirei*), which sometimes means “specter, spirit,” perhaps derived playfully from the root טוס (*tus*), “to fly.” See *Zohar* 1:17b, 20b, 178a; 2:29a; Recanati on Exodus 20:13, 46c; Luria, *Va-Ye’esof David*, s.v. *tesirin*; Tishby, *Mishnat ha-Zohar*, 2:588; Scholem.

47. hair is harshest of all... Hair represents harsh Judgment, and a woman’s uncovered hair arouses harsh forces, causing damage above (to *Shekhinah*) and below. For various interpretations, see the commentaries listed in the preceding note.

48. a woman must be concealed in the corners of the house... That is, her hair should be covered even *in the recesses of your house*.

On the constancy of olive leaves, see BT *Menaḥot* 53b, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu’a son of Levi: “Why is Israel compared to an olive tree? To inform you that just as leaves of an olive tree do not shed either in summer or in winter, so Israel will never pass away—either in this world or in the world that is coming.” See *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 18, p. 91; *Zohar* 1:115b-116a.

“Blessings from above and ... below” refer respectively to spiritual and physical blessings. *Zion* and *Jerusalem* often symbolize respectively *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*. Rabbi Yehudah interprets the conclusion of Psalm 128:6—*Peace upon Israel!*—as alluding to Holy Israel the Elder. In midrashic literature the title Israel the Elder refers to the patriarch Israel (Jacob), as opposed to the people Israel. Here, this title alludes to *Tif’eret*, known as *Tif’eret Yisra’el* (Beauty of Israel). The exclamation *Peace upon Israel* now implies that the husband of a worthy and modest woman stimulates a tranquil flow of emanation from the highest *sefirot upon Tif’eret Yisra’el*. See *Zohar* 3:13a, 36a. On the phrase Israel the Elder, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:11; above, [p. 273, n. 76](#).

49. If a man acts extraordinarily... The verse reads: *If a man or a woman יפלא לנדר נדר נזיר (yafli lindor neder nazir), acts extraordinarily, making a Nazirite vow [or: explicitly utters a Nazirite vow], להזיר ליהוה (lehazzir la-YHVH), to consecrate himself to YHVH [or: to set himself apart for YHVH].* The Nazirite was forbidden to drink wine or beer or any product of the vine, to eat grapes, to cut his hair, or come in contact with a corpse.

50. Why have I come, when there is no man?... This verse is expounded below.

According to Rabbi El’azar, the wording in Exodus—a *sanctuary*—is “unspecified,” lacking the definite article; so it can imply any synagogue.

See BT *Megillah* 29a: “*I have been for them למקדש מעט (le-miqdash me’at), a small sanctuary [in the lands into which they have come]* (Ezekiel 11:16). Rabbi Yitshak said, “This refers to synagogues and houses of study in Babylon.” See *Targum Yonatan* and Rashi on Ezekiel 11:16; *Zohar* 2:164a-b.

51. Shekhinah arrives early at the synagogue... The first ten males who arrive constitute a minyan (quorum), corresponding to (and symbolically completing) the ten

sefirotic limbs of Primordial Adam. Just as each human being is fashioned as an entire body, so all ten members of the minyan should show up together in the synagogue.

On the value of a person arriving early at synagogue, see BT *Berakhot* 47b: “Rabbi Yehoshu’a son of Levi said, ‘A person should always rise early to go to synagogue so that he will have the merit of being counted in the first ten; since even if a hundred come after him, he receives the reward of them all.’ Would you imagine ‘the reward of them all’? Say rather: He is given a reward equal to that of them all.”

See *Zohar* 1:105a (*MhN*); 2:86a, 131a-b, 250a (*Heikh*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 36-37. On the symbolic significance of a minyan, see *Zohar* 2:164b; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 41. On the presence of *Shekhinah* in a minyan, see *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 11; BT *Berakhot* 6b. Cf. M *Avot* 3:6; BT *Berakhot* 6a (quoted below, [note 53](#)).

52. Once the limbs of the human being were completed... Then each limb was further enhanced as the person developed and grew. Similarly, after the minyan arrives, symbolically completing the sefirotic body, that body is further enhanced by the gradual appearance of the rest of the congregation.

The full verse in Proverbs reads: *In a multitude of people is the king’s glory, and in the lack of a nation is the ruler’s disaster.* See *Zohar* 2:164a-b.

53. But when *Shekhinah* comes early... And does not find a minyan, then *there is no man*—meaning that the sefirotic limbs constituting the body of Primordial Adam are incomplete.

See BT *Berakhot* 6b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: “When the blessed Holy One comes to a synagogue and does not find ten there, He instantly turns angry, as is said: *Why have I come, when there is no man? Why have I called, when none responds?* [... *By My rebuke, I dry up the sea*] (Isaiah 50:2).”

In this Talmudic passage, the wording *no one responds* implies a minyan, since various liturgical congregational responses require such a quorum. Here, Rabbi El'azar focuses on the wording *when there is no man*. See *Zohar* 1:201a; 2:131a-b (offering a different interpretation of *when there is no man*); 3:4b. On the significance of the term *ish, man*, see also Vol. 7, pp. 306-7, n. 164.

54. When the body is completed below... By the minyan, then holiness enters those who are assembled and they resemble the sefirotic body.

On the opposition to mundane speech or conversation during prayer, see *Sefer Ḥasidim* (ed. Wistinetzki), par. 1589; *Sefer Ḥasidim* (ed. Margalioṭ), par. 18; *Zohar* 2:131b, 205b-206a; Ḥallamish, *Ha-Qabbalah*, 401-33.

55. What is meant by if [a man] *yafli*?... The verb פליא (*yafli*) is based on the root פלא (*pl'*), whose basic meaning is “to be different, wonderful, separated, conspicuous.” In the verse from Numbers, *yafli* means *acts extraordinarily* or *explicitly utters*. Here, Rabbi El'azar interprets *yafli* as “separates himself, sets himself apart.” Cf. the biblical verbs based on the related root פלה (*plh*) in Exodus 8:18; 9:4; 11:7; Psalms 4:4, where the sense is “to set apart; treat specially; make a distinction.”

On the Nazirite resembling the sefirotic pattern above, see below, [note 82](#). On the process of purifying or sanctifying oneself, see BT *Yoma* 38b-39a: “Resh Lakish said: ‘... If one comes to defile himself, they open the door for him; if one comes to purify himself, they assist him.’... Our rabbis taught: ‘Do not become impure with them, becoming impure through them (Leviticus 11:43). If one defiles himself slightly, he is defiled greatly; [if one defiles himself] below, he is defiled from above; in this world, he is defiled in the world that is coming.’ Our rabbis taught: ‘You shall hallow yourselves and become holy (ibid., 44). If one sanctifies himself slightly, he is sanctified greatly; below, he

is sanctified from above; in this world, he is sanctified in the world that is coming.’”

See BT *Shabbat* 104a, *Avodah Zarah* 55a, *Menaḥot* 29b. Cf. BT *Makkot* 10b: “Rabbah son of Bar Ḥana said in the name of Rabbi Huna (some say, Rabbi Huna said in the name of Rabbi El’azar), ‘From the Torah, the Prophets, and the Writings it can be demonstrated that one is led on the path one wishes to take.’”

The verse in Numbers reads: *If a man or a woman* נזיר נזיר יפלא לנדר נדר (yafli lindor neder nazir), *acts extraordinarily, making a Nazirite vow* [or: *explicitly utters a Nazirite vow*], ליהוה ליהוה (lehazzir la-YHVH), *to consecrate himself to YHVH* [or: *to set himself apart for YHVH*]. On the Nazirite, see above, [note 49](#).

56. How deeply should a person examine... The passage beginning here (and extending below to [p. 311](#), [n. 67](#)) is a paraphrased and rearranged Aramaic translation of Eleazar ben Judah of Worms, *Yoreh Ḥatta'im*, § 68. See Scholem; cf. *Zohar* 2:199b (Vol. 6, pp. 136–37, nn. 86–87).

The context in Proverbs (1:20–22) reads: *Wisdom cries out in the streets, in the plazas she lifts her voice. At the bustling crossroads she calls, in the gateways of the city she utters her sayings: “How long, fools, will you love foolishness?...”* See *Zohar* 3:58a.

On the proclamation of *Turn back, O wayward children*, see JT *Ḥagigah* 2:1, 77b; *Eikhah Rabbah*, *Petiḥta* 25; BT *Ḥagigah* 15a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 13:11; *Rut Rabbah* 6:4; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 7:8; *Pirḳei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 15.

Cf. *Avot* 6:2, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu’a son of Levi, “Every single day an echo resounds from Mount Horeb [Sinai], proclaiming: ‘Woe to creatures for the humiliation of Torah!’” See above, [p. 1](#), [n. 1](#).

57. he is put in a neck-iron... He falls ill and is confined to bed. While sitting (or lying) there, he is judged, and if during his life he has acted virtuously, then his good deeds advocate on his behalf and he is healed.

See M *Avot* 4:11, in the name of Rabbi Eli'ezer son of Ya'akov: "Whoever performs one *mitsvah* acquires one advocate, and whoever commits one transgression acquires one accuser." See BT *Shabbat* 32a; *Zohar* 2:249a (both quoting the verses in Job). The *ransom* (mentioned in Job) that saves a person from punishment is understood as the merit of his good deeds.

On being ill as being "in a neck-iron," see BT *Shabbat* 32a; *Tanḥuma, Qedoshim* 15; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Qedoshim* 15; *Semaḥot* 1:5; *Zohar* 2:61a; 3:13b. Cf. *Zohar* 2:252a (*Heikh*); 3:299a–b; *ZH* 24d (*MhN*).

"A field forum" renders קונפון (*qunpon*), deriving from Greek *kampos*, Latin *campus*, "level space, plain, field; field of battle, place for physical exercises and assembly." The term (spelled variously) appears frequently in rabbinic literature. For a judicial or punitive context, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:6; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:12; and *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 26; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 3:23; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 31:4; *Devarim Rabbah* 2:6.

58. two beings coming toward him... Two angelic scribes.

The verse in Amos reads: *For behold, He who forms mountains, creates wind, and declares to a human* מה שחו (*mah seiho*).... This concluding phrase is often understood as *what His thought is*. Here, based on a midrashic reading, it implies that all of a person's שיחה (*siḥah*), "conversation"—even his small talk with his wife—is recorded in a heavenly book.

See JT *Hagigah* 2:1, 77a; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 26:7; *Eikhah Rabbah* 3:10; BT *Hagigah* 5b; *Kallah Rabbati* 3:1; *Zohar* 1:218b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 297. Regarding the angels who meet those who are about to die, other sources mention three (or three companies). See above, [p. 56, n. 6](#).

59. every act that he committed... Every deed that a person commits ascends and endures, poised to testify for

or against him, and when he is about to die those very deeds descend and are recorded in his presence, until his judgment is determined in the heavenly court. Cf. BT *Avodah Zarah* 2a, 4b; *Zohar* 1:218b.

60. Three heralds... See above, end of [note 58](#). The phrase “rebellious above” refers to the sinner’s negative effect on the dynamics of the *sefirot*, while “rebellious below” refers to his impact on earth.

For the expression “Better for him if he had never been created!” see *Sifra*, *Beḥuqqotai* 1:5, 110c; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 24:3; JT *Berakhot* 1:2, 3b; *Shabbat* 1:2, 3b; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 35:7; BT *Berakhot* 17a, *Eruvin* 13b; *Derekh Erets*, *Pereq Rabbi Shim’on* 8. Cf. M *Ḥagigah* 2:1: “Whoever contemplates four things, better for him if he had never come into the world: what is above? what is below? what was before? and what will be after? Whoever shows no concern for the glory of his Maker, better for him if had never come into the world!”

61. mourning over the body On the soul mourning over the body, see JT *Mo’ed Qatan* 3:5, 82b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 100:7; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 18:1; BT *Shabbat* 152a; *Tanḥuma*, *Miqqets* 4; *Zohar* 1:122b (*MhN*), 218b–219a, 226a; 2:142a; 3:70a; *ZḤ* 75c, 83a, 83d–84a (all three *MhN*, *Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 396–97.

62. Dumah hastens out... This angel, in charge of souls of the dead, emerges from his abode and initiates the judgment (or punishment) of the grave, known as *ḥibbut ha-qever* (beating in the grave).

The soul and body are judged together since they are jointly accountable for any misdeeds. See the parable concerning the joint responsibility of body and soul in *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:1; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 4:5; BT *Sanhedrin* 91a–b; and also *Zohar* 2:199b; *ZḤ* 83d (*MhN*, *Rut*). On the judgment of body and soul together immediately before death, see *Zohar* 1:65b, 79a, 98a

(*MhN*), 130b, 201b; 3:53a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 393.

On *hibbut ha-qever*, see 3 Enoch 28:10; *Hibbut ha-Qever*, ed. Higger, 258–61; *Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:150–52; 5:49; *Sefer Ḥasidim*, ed. Margaliot, par. 30; *Zohar* 1:185a, 225a; 2:141b, 151a, 199b, 211b; 3:53a.

Dumah, literally “silence,” is a name for the netherworld in the Bible. See Psalms 94:17: *Were not YHVH a help to me, my soul would have nearly dwelt in dumah*. Cf. Psalms 115:17. In rabbinic literature Dumah is the angel in charge of souls of the dead (BT *Berakhot* 18b, *Shabbat* 152b, *Sanhedrin* 94a). In the *Zohar* he retains this role and oversees Hell.

63. When he is caught in the King’s neck-iron... Rabbi Abba returns now to the moments preceding death, when the person is confined to his sickbed. In the original passage (Eleazar of Worms, *Yoreh Ḥatta’im*, § 68), this and the following paragraphs appear earlier and more coherently. See above, [note 56](#).

If the sick person does not have (sufficient) good deeds to advocate for him, then the Angel of Death (“the King’s guard”) confronts him. This angel’s gaze is inescapable; in fact, he is “completely full of eyes.” Other people in the room cannot see the Angel of Death, but so it is with angels. See, for example, Daniel 10:7: *I, Daniel, alone saw the vision; the people who were with me did not see the vision*. This verse is quoted in the original passage (Eleazar of Worms, *Yoreh Ḥatta’im*, § 68). According to BT *Mo’ed Qatan* 28a, both Rav Ashi and Rav Sheshet separately saw the Angel of Death in the street. Cf. BT *Ḥagigah* 4b–5a, *Ketubbot* 77b; *Devarim Rabbah* 9:1.

On the Angel of Death’s fire, see BT *Mo’ed Qatan* 28a. On seeing his drawn sword, see BT *Avodah Zarah* 20b. Cf. *Hibbut ha-Qever*, ed. Higger, 257–58; *Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:150; *Kallah Rabbati* 3:1.

On the Angel of Death (or other angels or demons) being “full of eyes,” see *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:29; BT *Avodah Zarah* 20b; Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§ 29, 33, 40–41, 596, 873; *Hibbut ha-Qever*, ed. Higger, 258; *Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:150, 152; *Kallah Rabbati* 3:1; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:3; *Zohar* 1:148b (ST); 2:202a. Cf. Ezekiel 1:18; 10:12; *Zohar* 2:98b.

64. He makes His angels spirits... The verse in Psalms reads: עושה מלאכיו רוחות משרתיו אש לוחט (*Oseh mal’akhav ruhot, mesharetav esh lohet*), whose simple sense is: *He makes winds His messengers, flaming fire His ministers*. Here, drawing on a midrashic tradition, Rabbi Abba reads the words according to their precise order: *He makes His angels spirits [or: winds]...* But if the *angels* are *spirits*, then how can they possibly be seen? Rabbi Abba explains that when angels manifest on earth, they are clothed in physical form; otherwise, their pure spiritual power would be unbearable to the world. If this principle applies to angels in general, then all the more so to the Angel of Death, who must be encountered by every human being.

On the midrashic interpretation of the verse in Psalms, see *Pirgei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 4; *Tanḥuma, Hayyei Sarah* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayishlah* 22; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:22; 25:2; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 2:4; Jacob ben Sheshet, *Meshiv Devarim Nekhoḥim*, 77; *Zohar* 1:40b (*Heikh*), 58a, 81a (ST), 101a, 144a; 2:10a, 98b, 173a–b, 229b; 3:9b, 152a, 208a; *ZḤ* 10a (*MhN*), 81b (*MhN, Rut*). On spiritual entities manifesting on earth in physical form, see also Naḥmanides on Genesis 18:1; *Zohar* 1:34a, 98b (ST); 2:197a, 231a; *ZḤ* 81a (*MhN, Rut*).

65. Three drops on his sword... See the description of the Angel of Death in *Hibbut ha-Qever*, ed. Higger, 258: “His knife has drops: from one [the person] dies, from one he turns putrid, from one his face turns green.”

Before a person expires, his soul asks leave of each limb. See *Zohar* 1:245a. Cf. 3:54b. Concerning the three

drops on the sword of the Angel of Death, see *Zohar* 2:264a (*Heikh*), 267a (*Heikh*). Cf. *Zohar* 1:148b (*ST*); 3:231b. According to BT *Avodah Zarah* 20b, there is just one bitter drop.

On the heart as “king of the whole body,” see Aldabi, *Shevilei Emunah*, 4:2, 33b; *Zohar* 1:129b (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 336–37; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 127; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 267. Cf. *Sefer Yetsirah* 6:2.

66. *Shekhinah* stands over it... As the person dies, he sees *Shekhinah*.

See *Sifra*, *Nedavah* 2:12, 4a, in the name of Rabbi Dosa: “Scripture states: *No human can see Me and live* (Exodus 33:20). In their lifetime they do not see, but in their death they do!” See above, [pp. 56–57](#), [n. 7](#).

67. How many courts of law... On the first several judgments, see above at [notes 58–62](#). “The judgment of the worm” refers to the decomposition of the corpse. After the soul has completed its term in Hell, it undergoes the last of the seven judgments: wandering through the world until its misdeeds have been completely requited.

The verse in Daniel is part of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. Here concludes the paraphrased translation of Eleazar of Worms, *Yoreh Hatta’im*, § 68. See above, [note 56](#).

68. Bless YHVH, O my soul... Cf. *Va-yiqra Rabbah* 4:7; BT *Berakhot* 10a; *Midrash Tehillim* 103:3; *Zohar* 1:97b (*MhN*).

69. If a man acts extraordinarily... By vowing to abstain from the pleasure of intoxicating drink, the Nazirite anticipates the afterlife, when the soul will escape corporeal existence. On the verse in Numbers, see above, [notes 49, 55](#).

70. From wine and beer... Rabbi Abba wonders why the Nazirite is forbidden not only intoxicating drink such as wine but also grapes themselves. After all, the priest, who is forbidden to drink wine before entering the Sanctuary, is permitted to eat grapes.

On the priest being permitted to consume grapes, see M *Bikkurim* 3:1, 3. The verse in Numbers reads: *From wine ושכר (ve-shekhar), and beer, he shall set himself apart...* On the uncertain meaning of *shekhar*, see Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1:611-12; idem, *Numbers*, 45.

71. separating oneself from Judgment entirely... The Nazirite must abstain even from grapes because these (along with wine and beer) symbolize Judgment on the left side of the *sefirot*. Wine symbolizes *Binah*, from whom issues *Gevurah*—also known as *Din* (Judgment)—symbolized by beer. Grapes symbolize *Shekhinah*, who is influenced by *Din* and gathers all of its forces (along with the entire flow of emanation).

According to a midrashic tradition (in the name of Rabbi Yehudah son of Ila'i), the Tree of Knowledge was actually a grapevine. In Kabbalah the Tree of Knowledge symbolizes *Shekhinah*.

For the midrashic interpretation of Rabbi Yehudah son of Ila'i, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 15:7; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 12:1; *Ester Rabbah* 5:1; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 20:6; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 42, 175a. See also *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 323; *Bereshit Rabbah* 19:5; BT *Berakhot* 40a, *Sanhedrin* 70a-b; *Pirgei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 23; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 10:2, 8; *Zohar* 1:36a-b, 192a; 2:144a, 267b (*Heikh*); 3:158b.

On the nature of Adam's sin, see above, [p. 41](#), [n. 121](#). On the association of wine with *Binah*, see above, [pp. 98-99](#), [n. 132](#).

72. Now, if you say... One might conclude that since the Nazirite abstains from wine, beer, and grapes, which symbolize three *sefirot*, he thereby abandons one or more of these qualities of faith. But that is not so; rather, he must simply avoid any activity that signifies or could arouse Judgment.

73. This mystery I have learned... The Nazirite resembles the highest *sefirah*, *Keter*, who represents pure Compassion with no trace of Judgment. This primordial

realm is known as the Ancient of Days, and according to the biblical description: *The Ancient of Days sat—His garment like white snow, the hair of His head like clean fleece.* So it is fitting for the Nazirite to let his hair grow. See below, [note 82](#).

As explained above ([note 71](#)), wine, beer, and grapes symbolize respectively *Binah*, *Gevurah*, and *Shekhinah*, all associated with the left side, so the Nazirite fittingly abstains from those three varieties of nourishment.

Whereas the hair of the Ancient of Days signifies Compassion, hair on other *sefirot* (especially those on the left side) signifies harsh Judgment. So *Binah*, *Gevurah*, and *Shekhinah* have “no hair hanging.” For various interpretations of this paragraph and the following one, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

On the harsh quality of hair, see above, [note 46](#). On the holiness of hair, see *Zohar* 3:48b, 127b, 128b (*IR*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 292–93; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 117. On Rav Hamnuna Sava (the Elder) and his book, see above, [p. 105](#), [n. 154](#).

The full verse in Numbers reads: *All the days of his Nazirite vow, no razor shall pass over his head; until the days that he has consecrated to YHVH are fulfilled, he shall be holy, letting the hair of his head grow wild [or: loose, untrimmed].*

[74. Wine—Mother](#) ... As explained above ([note 71](#)), wine symbolizes the Divine Mother *Binah*, and beer symbolizes *Gevurah*—also known as *Din* (Judgment)—with which the Levites are linked. When the Levites attained the rung of *Gevurah*, they had to remove their hair, since *Gevurah* has “no hair hanging.” Or, since hair often signifies harsh Judgment, the Levites had to remove their hair in order to minimize such harshness.

See the preceding note. On the Levites removing their hair, see *Zohar* 3:48b, 127b, 151b. The verse in Numbers reads in full: *Thus you shall do to them to purify them:*

sprinkle on them expiation water and have them pass a razor over all their flesh and wash their clothes and purify themselves.

75. Grapes—Lower Mother... Grapes symbolize *Shekhinah*, who is pictured as Lower Mother (compared with *Binah*, the Higher Mother). She gathers in the wine of *Binah* and the beer of *Gevurah*. By abstaining from wine, beer, and grapes, the Nazirite “separates himself from the whole left side.” See above, [note 71](#).

76. Grapes—no hair or beard hanging... Grapes symbolize *Shekhinah*, whose hair signifies harsh Judgment, so it does not hang down profusely. (See above, [notes 73–74](#).) Just as the Divine Female has no hair or beard hanging, so a woman has no beard and cuts her hair after her menstrual period before uniting with her husband.

Conversely, the Nazirite lets his hair grow long and his beard hang, imitating the compassionate Ancient of Days, whose hair is *like clean fleece* and whose beard hangs down. His title, *a Nazirite of Elohim*, indicates that he is separated from the quality of Judgment (associated with the name *Elohim*), which characterizes the three *sefirot* of *Binah*, *Gevurah*, and *Shekhinah*.

According to rabbinic law, seven days following the cessation of menstrual flow, a married woman must immerse in the *miqveh* (ritual bath) before marital relations can resume. It was customary for the woman to pare her nails before immersing. Here Rabbi Abba insists that the menstruant must cut any additional hair that grew during the time of her impurity. See *Zohar* 3:79b; cf. 3:248b (*RM*).

The verse in Judges describes Samson (before he is yet conceived). On *YHVH* and *Elohim* signifying, respectively, Compassion and Judgment, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 26; above, [p. 184](#), [n. 375](#).

77. He shall atone for him... The context in Numbers relates to a Nazirite who accidentally contaminates himself by being near a corpse. In such a case, he must undergo a

rite of purification, bring a sacrificial offering (of two turtledoves or pigeons) to the priest, and begin his Nazirite period again. The verse quoted here describes how the priest atones for him: *The priest shall prepare one as a purification offering and one as an ascent offering, and he shall atone for him, מאשר חטא על הנפש (me-asher ḥata al ha-nefesh), as he has erred in regard to the corpse [or: the (dead) person], and he shall reconsecrate his head on that day.*

Rabbi Abba construes *ha-nefesh* as *the soul*, and explains why the verse employs this form of the noun rather than נפשו (*nafsho*), *his soul*—namely the soul of the contaminated Nazirite—which would seem more fitting. He indicates that the term *ha-nefesh, the soul*, alludes to *Shekhinah* (known as “grapes”), who is sometimes called *nefesh*.

Furthermore, the root חטא (*ḥtʿ*), often applied to sin, has the primary meaning of “to miss, fail to reach.” Rabbi Abba applies this meaning to the verse in Numbers, which now implies that by failing to maintain a state of purity the Nazirite “deprived” or “diminished” *Shekhinah (the soul)* of the emanation from *Binah* and *Gevurah* (wine and beer)—the sefirotic aspects of Judgment that normally flow to Her.

On the clause *as he has erred*, see Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1:229; idem, *Numbers*, 47. On the primary sense of the root *ḥtʿ*, see Isaiah 65:20; Proverbs 8:36; Job 5:24; Judges 20:16; Rashi on 1 Kings 1:21. On Rabbi Abba’s interpretation of this root, see *Zohar* 3:17b (Vol. 7, pp. 108–9, n. 329).

78. If so, why he shall atone for him?... If in this verse the verb חטא (*ḥata*) does not mean *he has sinned*, then why must the priest *atone for him*? Because, Rabbi Abba explains, the Nazirite had originally, as it were, “cast aside” the sefirotic aspects of Judgment by abstaining from wine, beer, and grapes. Now that he is coming to rejoin them, he must be atoned for.

Apparently, the *Zohar* conflates this biblical passage (Numbers 6:9–12, relating to a Nazirite who has contaminated himself) with the following passage (6:13–

21), which describes the ritual and sacrifices required when a Nazirite completes the term of his vow. According to a rabbinic interpretation, the clause in Numbers 6:11—*as he has erred [or: sinned] in regard to the soul*—refers to the Nazirite's sin against his own soul through his act of self-denial. See *Sifrei*, Numbers 30 (and parallels).

79. Samson was a Nazirite of Elohim... As explained above ([note 76](#)), the title *a Nazirite of Elohim* indicates that one is separated from the quality of Judgment (associated with the name *Elohim*). If Samson attained such a pure state, why was he punished by being captured, blinded, imprisoned, and mocked by the Philistines? Because, Rabbi Abba explains, he married a Philistine woman.

On the negative attitude toward Samson's marrying a Philistine, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 85:6; *JT Sotah* 1:8, 17a; *BT Sotah* 10a (and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *she-nitgannah bah*); *Bemidbar Rabbah* 9:24; *Midrash Aggadah*, Genesis 38:13. In *Mishneh Torah*, *Hilkhot Issurei Bi'ah* 13:14, 16, Maimonides insists that the Philistine woman converted before marrying Samson. See Emden, *Mitpaḥat Sefarim*, 29.

The full verse in Malachi reads: *Judah has broken faith; an abhorrent act has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem. For Judah has desecrated the sanctuary of YHVH, which He loves, and has married the daughter of an alien god.* See *Zohar* 1:131b, 238b; 2:3b, 87b; 3:57b, 142a (*IR*), 213a, 266a.

80. he has no share in that world... In the world-to-come, because as he was about to die (by toppling the pillars of the Philistine temple) Samson said, *Let my soul die with the Philistines*—thereby condemning himself to share their eternal death.

A Nazirite is warned not to approach the vineyard so that he will not be tempted to eat grapes, violating his vow. Because Samson approached and consorted with heathens, he eventually violated his Nazirite vow (by having his hair

cut), his immense strength slipped away, and he died tragically.

On Samson coming to vineyards, see Judges 14:5. On the saying “‘Keep away,’ we tell a Nazirite...,” see BT *Shabbat* 13a, *Pesahim* 40b, *Yevamot* 46a, *Bava Metsi’a* 92a, *Avodah Zarah* 17a, 58b–59a; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 10:8; *Zohar* 1:31a; 2:125b. Cf. above, pp. 32–33, n. 96; and M *Avot* 1:1: “Make a fence around the Torah.”

On Samson losing his share in the world-to-come, cf. the view in BT *Eruvin* 19a that an Israelite who has sexual relations with a Gentile will not be redeemed from Hell. See Emden, *Mitpahat Sefarim*, 29.

Margaliot (in *Nitsotsei Zohar*) suggests that Samson’s loss of a share in the world-to-come may be based on the saying “One who commits suicide has no share in the world-to-come.” On the origin of this saying, see Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, Genesis 9:5, n. 31. Cf. *Sekhel Tov*, Genesis 44:34; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot De’ot* 7:3; *Hilkhot Teshuvah* 3:6; *Hilkhot Rotseah* 2:3. The verse in Judges reads: תמות נפשי (Tamot nafshi), *Let me die* [or as construed here in the *Zohar*: *Let my soul die*], *with the Philistines*.

81. What is written about the Levites?... The Levites are associated with *Gevurah*, or *Din* (Judgment), and their “purification” requires the removal of hair (often associated with harsh Judgment), in order to minimize such harshness. Conversely, the Nazirite, who has separated himself from the side of Judgment, lets his hair grow long, imitating the hair of the Ancient of Days (as described immediately below). Thereby he attains holiness.

See above, [note 74](#). On the contrast between the Levites removing their hair to attain purity and the Nazirite letting his hair grow to attain holiness, see *Zohar* 3:48b (Vol. 7, p. 306, n. 163). On the contrast between purity and holiness, see also *Zohar* 3:176b, 180b.

The concluding quotation conflates Numbers 6:5-6, which read in full: *All the days of his Nazirite vow, no razor shall pass over his head; until the days that he has consecrated to YHVH are fulfilled, he shall be holy, letting the hair of his head grow wild. All the days that he sets himself apart [or: consecrates himself] for YHVH, he shall not come near a dead person.*

82. Letting the hair of his head grow wild... By doing so the Nazirite imitates the realm of *Keter*, known as the Ancient of Days, whose white hair (*like clean fleece*) symbolizes pure Compassion.

Cf. above, [p. 51](#), [n. 143](#). The full verse in Daniel reads: *As I watched, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days sat—His garment like white snow, the hair of His head like clean fleece, His throne flames of fire, its wheels blazing fire.*

83. By his very hair... The Nazirite's long hair resembles that of the male lover in Song of Songs (who is often identified midrashically with God).

The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *His head finest gold, his locks תלתלים (taltallim), wavy [or: curly; luxuriant; fronds of a palm], black as a raven.* See *Zohar* 3:132a, 136a, 140a (all *IR*); Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 122.

84. If people only knew... If they perceived the deep significance of the Nazirite's hair and its divine correlation.

Rabbi Shim'on indicates that after these "mysteries of Torah" comes the crowning culmination of Torah—namely *Idra Rabba* (which follows immediately and discusses the divine beard in great detail). Whatever rich insights one gains from that profound section should be dedicated to God.

The original verse in Isaiah refers to the Phoenician city of Tyre (located in south Lebanon), which was the prosperous capital of a city-state extending from Acre to Sidon and including colonies in the Mediterranean. The verse reads in full: *Her profit and fee shall be consecrated*

to YHVH. They shall not be treasured or stored; rather shall her profit go to those who abide before YHVH, that they may eat their fill and cover themselves elegantly.

Rabbi Shim'on's quotation of the beginning of this verse probably alludes to a Talmudic interpretation of its conclusion. See *Pesahim* 119a: "What is meant by עֲתִיק לְמַכְסֵה (limkhasseh atiq), cover themselves elegantly? This refers to one who mekhasseh, conceals, things that עֲתִיק (attiq), the Ancient of, Days concealed. What are those? Secrets of Torah. And some say: This refers to one who reveals things that attiq, the Ancient of, Days concealed. What are those? Reasons of Torah."

See above, [p. 190](#), [n. 397](#). On the Ancient of Days, see above, [note 82](#). On the image of "the crown of Torah," see M *Avot* 4:13, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on. For the plural "crowns of Torah," see *Teshuvot ha-Ge'onim* (ed. Harkavy), §§ 67, 208, 344. Instead of כְּתָרִי (kitrei), "crowns of," some editions read סְתָרִי (sitrei), "secrets of."

The phrase רֵזָא דְרָזִין (raza de-razin), "mystery of mysteries" (or "secret of secrets)," may allude to the section of the *Zohar* called by this name, which deals with physiognomy. See Vol. 4, pp. 392–93, n. 76; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 216, n. 214.

1. It has been taught Here begins אִדְרָא רַבָּא (*Idra Rabba*), *The Great Assembly*. This composition (3:127b-145a) describes a gathering of Rabbi Shim'on and his Companions, in which profound mysteries are expounded concerning the divine configurations of *Arikh Anpin* and *Ze'eir Anpin* (see below, [notes 14, 27](#)).

On *Idra Rabba*, see above, [pages xii-xiii](#). On the term *idra*, see below, [note 4](#). On depictions of the divine anatomy in Jewish mysticism, see Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 16-18; idem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead*, 15-55.

2. How long will we sit on a single-based pillar? Rabbi Shim'on seems to be saying, "How long will we remain with an inadequate, unstable understanding, in which the divine structure is not fully comprehended or not yet balanced?" See below, [note 220](#).

The precise meaning and significance of the question are intentionally unclear and multivalent. The phrase "on a single-based pillar" renders בקי"מא דחד סמכא (*bi-qyama de-ḥad samkha*). *Qeyama* means "pillar," but in the *Zohar* also "status, position." *Samkha* means "support, base, pedestal," but in the *Zohar* also "pillar." The question could thus be rendered: "How long will we sit on a pillar of one pedestal?" or "How long will we stay in the pose of a single pillar?" "How long will we sit on an unstable pillar?" "How long will we stay in an unstable pose?"

Cf. the Companions' question in *ZH* 16a (*MhN*): "How long will we sit בקי"מא חדא (*bi-qyama ḥada*), on a single pillar [or: in a single pose], and be unable to proceed?" On *qeyama* as referring to the event of the *Idra Rabba*, see below, [note 139](#).

The question here may also reflect the famous story (in *BT Shabbat* 31a) of the potential convert who approached Shammai and then Hillel, demanding, "Teach me the whole Torah while I stand on one foot."

On the elements and scope of the question here, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital (in *Hadrat Melekh*); *Qol be-Ramah*; *Emet le-*

Ya'aqov; Addir ba-Marom; Ruah David; Bei'urei ha-Gera; Nitsotsei Orot; Yayin ha-Reqah; Sullam; Sha'arei ha-Idra; Liebes, Peraqim, 359-60; idem, "Ha-Mashiah shel ha-Zohar," 118-32, 204-5, 227-29; idem, Studies in the Zohar, 12-21; Matoq mi-Devash; Hellner-Eshed, Qeri'ah ba-Idra Rabba. On insufficient support and balance, see BT Berakhot 32a; ZH 25c (MhN); Zohar 2:176b (SdTs).

3. Time to act for YHVH... The secrets must be revealed because the generation is violating the Torah. This verse is interpreted below at [note 11](#).

The sentence "Days are few..." is a paraphrase of M *Avot* 2:20, in the name of Rabbi Tarfon: "The day is short, the work is immense, the laborers are lazy, the reward is abundant, and the master of the house is pressing." See below, [note 249](#).

Here "the master of the house" is replaced by "the creditor," on whom cf. M *Avot* 3:16, in the name of Rabbi Akiva: "All is given on pledge, and a net is spread over all the living; the store is open, and the storekeeper gives credit; the ledger is open, and the hand writes; whoever wishes to borrow may come and borrow, but the collectors go around regularly every day and exact payment from the person, whether or not he realizes, and they have authority on which they can rely, and the judgment is true; and all is prepared for the banquet."

On the herald proclaiming, see *Avot* 6:2, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi, "Every single day an echo resounds from Mount Horeb [Sinai], proclaiming: 'Woe to creatures for the humiliation of Torah!'" See above, [pp. 306-7, n. 56](#).

The "Reapers of the Field" are those who harvest secrets of Torah, which can be pictured as sprouting in the field of *Shekhinah*. See *Or Yaqar*; above, [p. 192, n. 401](#). Cf. Matthew 9:37; Luke 10:2: "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few."

Here Rabbi Shim'on indicates that the Companions are only "at the edges of the vineyard," that is, they are still at the margins of Wisdom and have not yet penetrated the secrets. The image of the vineyard recalls "the vineyard at Yavneh," which designates the gathering of the Sanhedrin after the destruction of the Temple at Yavneh (Jabneh), northwest of Jerusalem. According to rabbinic sources, this gathering was called a "vineyard" because the members of the Sanhedrin sat in rows resembling vines in a vineyard. See JT *Berakhot* 4:1, 7d; *Ta'anit* 4:1, 67d; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 8:9-11; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 2:8; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 32-33.

On the verse in Psalms, see *Sifrei Zuta* 27:1; M *Berakhot* 9:5; *Tosefta Berakhot* 6:24; JT *Berakhot* 9:5, 14c-d; BT *Berakhot* 63a, *Yoma* 69a, *Gittin* 60a, *Temurah* 14b; *Midrash Shemu'el* 1:1; *Midrash Mishlei* 5:16; *Midrash Tehillim* 119:57; Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 1, intro; *Zohar* 1:116b, 194a; 2:155b; 3:62b, 128a (IR); Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 19b; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 31, 44-48; idem, "Zohar ve-Eros," 72-73; Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 185.

4. the threshing chamber בֵּי אֲדָרָא (*Bei iddera*), "the threshing house." The term אֲדָרָא (*iddera*) means "threshing floor; barn; chamber." In *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 7:3, the Sanhedrin is described as אֲדָרָא דְאֲזַהְרָה (*iddera de-azharah*), "the threshing floor of enlightenment (or admonishment)," because the members of the Sanhedrin sat in semicircular rows, resembling half the shape of a threshing floor. See M *Sanhedrin* 4:3: "The Sanhedrin was arranged like half of a circular threshing floor so that they could see one another." See also *Targum*, Song of Songs 7:3; and cf. *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:11, where Rabbi Yoḥanan describes nighttime study as "the threshing floor of Torah."

The *Zohar* refers to this section (3:127b-145a) and to the dramatic assembly as *Idra* or *Idra* of Rabbi Shim'on. See 1:217a; 3:79a, 145b, 288a (IZ), 291a (IZ), 292a (IZ), 295a

(*IZ*); cf. 3:58a, 145b. Later copyists and editors called it *Idra Rabba* (The Great *Idra*), to distinguish it from another section (3:287b–296b), which they called *Idra Zuta* (The Small *Idra*), reflecting the smaller number of participants. In these section titles, *idra* (technically, *iddera*) is often understood as “assembly, convocation,” though the sense of “threshing place” still pertains because the Companions gather to thrash out the secrets. See the more general use of the term in *Zohar* 3:148a: “I want to walk behind you and learn some of those sublime words that you taste every day from the Holy *Idra*.” Cf. the statement of David ben Judah he-Hasid (in *Mar’ot ha-Tsove’ot*, 116): “This secret [is clear]... to anyone who has entered the threshing house.”

On the various connotations of the term *iddera*, see Liebes, *Peraqim*, 93–107. On the Sanhedrin as a threshing floor, cf. the image of the vineyard as explained in the preceding note. On the passage in M *Sanhedrin*, see the eschatological description of the threshing floor in *Vayiqra Rabbah* 11:8; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 1:11; *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 29; *Shemot Rabbah* 5:12.

5. wearing coats of mail and lances... The Companions are summoned to engage in the battle of Torah.

The list of their “weapons” includes references or allusions to various *sefirot*. “Counsel” is associated with *Ariḳh Anpin* in *Zohar* 3:133b (*IR*). “Wisdom, understanding, knowledge” correspond to *Ḥokhmah, Binah*, and the hidden, mediating *sefirah* of *Da’at*. (On this triad, cf. Exodus 31:3 and *Targum Onqelos*, ad loc.; and see below, [note 235](#).) The term *הַיְזוּ* (*ḥeizu*) means “vision, appearance,” but in the *Zohar* also “mirror,” sometimes referring to *Shekhinah*, who reflects the higher *sefirot*. (See Vol. 4, p. 79, n. 32.) Alternatively, this term could possibly allude both to *Tif’eret* (together with its extension *Yesod*) and to *Shekhinah*, who are known respectively as “the speculum that shines” and “the speculum that does not shine.” (See Vol. 6, p. 100, n. 119;

pp. 264–65, n. 15.) “Hands” corresponds to *Hesed* and *Gevurah*, the two divine hands (or arms), while “feet” corresponds to *Netsah* and *Hod*, the two divine feet (or legs). The Companions are instructed to draw down, or equip themselves with, sefirotic powers in preparation for spiritual battle.

The phrase “holy ones of the Highest” derives from Daniel 7:18, where it refers to Israel. Here, it refers to the angels, who are eager to hear secrets of Torah. See BT *Hagigah* 14b; *Zohar* 2:14b (*MhN*); 3:135a (*IR*), 138b (*IR*), 143a (*IR*).

On the battle of Torah, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 34, 321; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 32:25; *Seder Olam Rabbah* 25; JT *Ta'anit* 4:6, 69b; *Eikhah Rabbah* 2:4; BT *Shabbat* 63a, *Megillah* 15b, *Hagigah* 14a, *Qiddushin* 24a, 30b, *Sanhedrin* 42a, 93b, 111b; *Rut Rabbah* 4:3; *Tanḥuma*, *Noah* 3, *Vezot Haberakhah* 5; *Midrash Tehillim* 45:6; *Shir ha-Shirim Zuta* 3:8; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:3; 13:10; *Zohar* 1:17b, 226a, 240b; 2:56a, 98a, 110a–b, 111b; 3:42a (*RM*), 59b, 188a–189b, 190b–191a, 278b (*RM*); *ZH* 14a (*MhN*).

“Your equipment” renders תקוניכון (*tiqquneikhon*). The semantic range of the word תקונא (*tiqquna*)—Hebrew תקון (*tiqqun*)—includes: “mending, improvement, correction, perfection, restoration, alignment, preparation, order, arrangement, array, adornment, equipment, enhancement, configuration.” The term *tiqquna* figures prominently throughout *Idra Rabba*. See below, [notes 32](#), [38](#), [84](#). On *tiqqun* as being associated with weapons, see *Targum Onqelos*, Exodus 34: 4, 6. On weapons as an adornment, see, e.g., M *Shabbat* 6:4; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 356.

6. Woe if I reveal!... On the tension between revealing and concealing, see BT *Bava Batra* 89b, where Rabbi Yoḥanan son of Zakkai says, concerning the details of illegal practices, “Woe is me if I say it! Woe is me if I do not say it! If I say it, the deceivers will learn. If I do not say it,

the deceivers will say, ‘Scholars are not expert in our practices.’”

See *M Kelim* 17:16; *Tosefta Kelim (Bava Metsi’a)* 7:9; *Zohar* 2:95a, 123b, 257b (*Heikh*); 3:74b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1086–88. See also *Zohar* 1:11b: “Rabbi Shim’on wept and exclaimed, ‘Woe is me if I speak! Woe is me if I do not speak! If I speak, the wicked will know how to serve their Lord. If I do not speak, the Companions will be deprived of this word.’”

See, as well, *Zohar* 2:100b: “Now what should I do? If I speak—this hidden mystery must not be revealed. If I do not speak, these worthy ones will be left orphaned of this mystery.”

7. The secret of YHVH is for those who revere Him...
So these Companions, who revere God, are worthy of learning the secrets.

“The Holy *Idra* of the Dwelling” designates another assembly of Rabbi Shim’on and the Companions, but there is currently no scholarly consensus on its exact nature or its location in the Zoharic corpus. It has sometimes been identified with *Zohar* 2:122b–123b or with 2:127a–147a. See *Or Yaqar*; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 386, n. 14; idem, *Kabbalah*, 215; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:4; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 101–2; idem, “Ha-Mashiaḥ shel ha-Zohar,” 153–57 and n. 238; idem, *Studies in the Zohar*, 35–37, 177–78, n. 109; Wolfson, “Forms of Visionary Ascent,” 212, n. 17; Huss, *Ke-Zohar ha-Raqi’a*, 92; Sobol, “Ḥativat ha-Idrot,” 234–54; Vol. 5, p. 150, n. 33; p. 192, n. 19.

The phrase “entering and emerging” derives from the famous story of four rabbis who “entered the orchard,” that is, who engaged in mystical contemplation. Only Rabbi Akiva “entered in peace and emerged in peace.” In the *Zohar*, “entering and emerging” refers to a kabbalist who has entered the realm of mystery and emerged unscathed, one who has plumbed the secrets and discovered how to endure and apply them in his life.

See JT *Hagigah* 2:1, 77b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:4 (and cf. *Tosefta Hagigah* 2:4; BT *Hagigah* 14b); *Targum Yerushalmi*, Deuteronomy 33:21; *Zohar* 1:44a (*Heikh*), 112a (*MhN*), 147b (referring to venturing into the demonic realm); 2:176a, 179a (*SdTs*), 213b; 3:141a (*IR*), 144a-b (*IR*), 290a (*IZ*), 292a (*IZ*), 297a; *ZH* 2c (*SO*), 6c (*SO*), 19a (*MhN*), 105a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 345; Liebes, “Ha-Mashiah shel ha-Zohar,” 153-56, and nn. 240-41; idem, *Studies in the Zohar*, 35, 97, 130-31; 178, nn. 110-11; Wolfson, “Forms of Visionary Ascent,” 211-14; Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows from Eden*, 63-67.

The verse in Psalms reads: *The counsel [or: secret] of YHVH is for those who revere [or: fear] Him, and to them He reveals His covenant.* See above, [pp. 82-83](#), [n. 82](#).

8. The Companions were numbered... The nine Companions together with Rabbi Shim'on constitute ten, corresponding to the ten *sefirot*.

9. on my potent breast בתוקפי (*Be-tuqpi*). The word תוקפא (*tuqpa*), means “power, strength,” and also “anger.” In the *Zohar* this word usually means simply “power,” but occasionally it signifies “bosom, breast.” This new sense derives from *Targum Onqelos* on Numbers 11:12, which renders the biblical expression שאהו בחיקך (*sa'ehu ve-ḥeiqekha*), *carry it [the people Israel] in your bosom*, as סובריה בתוקפך (*sovarhi ve-tuqpakh*), “carry it in your strength.” This Targumic rendering is a paraphrase, unless the translator read or imagined the Hebrew בחזקך (*ve-ḥozqekha*), *in your strength*, instead of בחיקך (*ve-ḥeiqekha*), *in your bosom*—a tiny orthographical difference.

Based on this Targumic usage of *tuqpa*, the *Zohar* sometimes employs the word to signify “bosom, breast.” Scholem contends that this is due to a misunderstanding: “The author mistook the Midrashic *interpretation* for a *literal translation!*” However, it seems more likely that the newfangled meaning is due not to ignorance but to linguistic playfulness, so typical of the *Zohar*.

See *Targum Yerushalmi*, Numbers 11:12; *Zohar* 2:9a, 96a-b, 113a-b; 3:206a, 234a; *ZH* 55b, 92c-d (*MhN, Eikhah*); Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David*, s.v. *tuqpa*; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 165, 389, n. 48. Cf. *Zohar* 3:161a-b, 201a.

10. Cursed be the man ... As Rabbi Shim'on prepares to reveal secrets of the divine body, he warns the Companions not to take his words and symbolic images literally. Such a misunderstanding would impute corporeality to God and be tantamount to idolatry.

See Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 2b-3a; *TZ*, intro, 6b. The context in Deuteronomy (27:14-15) reads: *The Levites shall call out and say to every man of Israel in a loud voice: "Cursed be the man who makes a carved or molten image—YHVH's abhorrence, a craftsman's handwork—and sets it up in secret!" And all the people shall call out and say, "Amen."* Here, the *Zohar* quotes the last sentence slightly differently: "And they all called out and said [literally: shall call out and say], 'Amen.'" This rewording may be intended to fit the situation here, recording the assent of the assembled Companions.

11. Time to act for YHVH... In the second half of the verse *Your Torah* refers to "Torah above," namely *Tif'eret*, which is identified with Written Torah and known by the name *YHVH*. Unless this Name and *sefirah* are fittingly enhanced by contemplation, the supernal Torah is violated and nullified. Rabbi Shim'on may be construing the beginning of the verse as *Time to actualize YHVH*. According to *Or Yaqar*, here *YHVH* pertains to *Arikh Anpin*.

The biblical phrase *Your Torah* "is addressed to the Ancient of Days," namely to the primordial realm of *Arikh Anpin*, to whom *Tif'eret* (identified with Torah) belongs. The term the Ancient of Days originates in Daniel 7:9: *As I watched, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days sat—His garment like white snow, the hair of His head like clean fleece, His throne flames of fire, its wheels blazing fire.*

The final sentence indicates a verbal analogy between two verses, one praising Israel and the other praising God. Since both verses contain the same rhetorical question—*Who is like you?*—this implies that Israel and God share uniqueness, and that Israel is empowered to affect and actualize the divine realm. See *Zohar* 3:138b-139a (*IR*).

On the verse in Psalms, see above, [note 3](#). On the parallel between the verses in Deuteronomy and Exodus, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 3; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 355-56; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 33:26; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:16.

For various interpretations of this paragraph, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:156-57; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 44-48; Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*, 213-18; Hellner-Eshed, *Qeri'ah ba-Idra Rabba*.

[12. on the other side...](#) Next to Rabbi El'azar.

Rabbi Shim'on declares that he, his son, and Rabbi Abba constitute “the sum of the whole,” that is, they represent or embody the three columns of divine emanation: center, right, and left (or the three *sefirot*: *Keter*, *Hokhmah*, and *Binah*; or *Hokhmah*, *Binah*, and *Da'at*). By their combined presence, the sefirotic structure has been stabilized.

Cf. above, [note 2](#). See *Pirquei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 3: “By ten utterances was the world created ... and by three are they comprised, namely *Hokhmah*, *Tevunah*, and *Da'at*.” See Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 21; below, [note 235](#). On the ten utterances by which the world was created, see *M Avot* 5:1; Vol. 7, p. 65, n. 200.

Cf. Rabbi Shim'on's bold claim in BT *Sukkah* 45b: “I have seen the sons of ascent [i.e., those privileged to ascend to heaven] and they are few. If there are a thousand, I and my son are among them; if there are a hundred, I and my son are among them; if there are two, they are I and my son.” See JT *Berakhot* 9:2, 13d; *Bereshit Rabbah* 35:2; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:15.

13. They heard a sound... Of heavenly angels assembling to hear the secrets. See above, [note 5](#).

The clause “and their knees knocked together” derives from Daniel 5:6, describing King Belshazzar’s reaction when he saw the hand writing on the wall.

14. I have heard Your sound; I am afraid... The prophet Habakkuk experienced a frightening revelation, which stemmed from *Ze’eir Anpin*, the configuration of *sefirot* from *Hokhmah* through *Yesod*. This divine realm is characterized by a tension between opposites—right and left, loving-kindness and judgment—so the prophet was fittingly afraid. However, for Rabbi Shim’on and his Companions, “the matter depends on love”; he is about to focus on the highest sefirotic realm, *Arikh Anpin*, which is characterized by pure love and compassion (corresponding to *Keter*).

The term זעיר אנופין (*ze’eir anpin*) means “short-tempered, irascible, impatient,” taking a short time for one’s nostrils to flare (deriving from Proverbs 14:17). The contrasting term אריך אנופין (*arikh anpin*) means “slow to anger, long-suffering, forbearing, patient,” taking a long time for one’s nostrils to flare (deriving from Exodus 34:6). See Ibn Ezra (short), ad loc.; *Zohar* 3:129a–b (*IR*); below, [notes 27](#), [230](#), [280](#), [295](#).

The terms *Arikh Anpin* and *Ze’eir Anpin* are sometimes understood respectively as “the Large (or Vast) Countenance” and “the Small Countenance.” Cf. the Talmudic description of two of the faces of the creatures seen by Ezekiel: “A large face and a small face,” referring respectively to *the face of a human* and *the face of a cherub* (Ezekiel 10:14). See BT *Sukkah* 5b, *Hagigah* 13b; *TZ* 70, 129b; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 170, n. 65; Vol. 7, p. 393, n. 110.

On *Arikh Anpin* and *Ze’eir Anpin*, see also Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:245–46, 426–27; Idel, *Ben: Sonship and Jewish Mysticism*, 417–25.

The full verse in Habakkuk reads: *YHVH, I have heard שמעך (shim'akha), of Your renown [or: Your sound]; I am afraid. YHVH, Your deed, in the midst of years revive it; in the midst of years make it known. In wrath remember compassion.* On Habakkuk and this particular verse, see *Bahir* 46-49, 51, 53 (68-72, 76-77, 79); *Zohar* 1:7b; 2:45a; 3:138b (IR); Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 34-36. On the love pervading Rabbi Shim'on's circle, see *Zohar* 2:190b; 3:59b; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 37-43.

15. One who goes about gossiping reveals a secret... Why does the verse mention “going about”? Because, Rabbi Shim'on explains, whatever word such a person hears moves around constantly inside him until he reveals it to another.

The phrase “a thorn in water” renders חִזְרָא בְּמֵיאַ (ḥizra be-mayya). The word ḥizra can also mean “bran,” which would yield the sense “bran in water,” resembling the Talmudic expression מֵיאַ דְּחִזְרָא (mayya de-ḥizra), “bran water, bran solution.” See BT *Bava Metsi'a* 60a, and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *mayya de-ḥizra*; Lieberman, *Tosefta ki-Fshutah*, 3:111-12, n. 28. Cf. BT *Pesahim* 42b.

The word נֶאֱמָן (*ne'eman*) means “faithful” but also “permanent, firm,” as in Isaiah 22:23. On the verse in Proverbs, see *Zohar* 2:71b; 3:294b (IZ). Cf. above, [note 6](#).

16. Do not let your mouth make your flesh sin... By revealing a secret that has been entrusted to you.

“The Ancient of Ancients” (or the Ancient One, or the Holy Ancient One) is the Ancient of Days, namely the primordial realm of *Arikh Anpin*. See above, [notes 11, 14](#). On the angels, see above, [notes 5, 13](#). On the verse in Ecclesiastes, see *Tosefta Hagigah* 2:3; JT *Hagigah* 2:1, 77b; BT *Hagigah* 15a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:4 (all pertaining to Elisha son of Avuyah); *Zohar* 2:87a; 3:79a, 105b, 159a; ZH 89d (*MhN, Rut*).

17. I will not tell the heavens to listen... As did Moses, when he delivered his final song to Israel: *Give ear,*

O heavens, that I may speak; let the earth hear my mouth's utterances (Deuteronomy 32:1).

In Deuteronomy, Moses calls upon heaven and earth to witness the justice of the poem's accusations, or (as understood traditionally) to be prepared to punish Israel if the people fail to fulfill the covenant. Here, Rabbi Shim'on feels no need to call upon heaven and earth, since all worlds are dependent on him and his Companions.

For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Ruah David*; *Yayin ha-Reqah*; *Sullam*; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 21; *Matoq mi-Devash*; Hellner-Eshed, *Qeri'ah ba-Idra Rabba*. On the verse in Deuteronomy, see *Targum Onqelos*, ad loc. Cf. Deuteronomy 4:26; 30:19; 31:28; Isaiah 1:2.

18. mysteries of mysteries... Rabbi Shim'on is about to reveal the secret meaning of a passage in Genesis (36:31–39), which begins: *These are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before a king reigned over the Children of Israel*. These kings do not constitute a dynasty since none of the successors to the throne is a son of his predecessor. In seven consecutive verses Genesis records *And [so and so] died*, and in the *Zohar* these royal deaths represent the destruction of unviable emanations tainted by harsh Judgment (which is identified as *Edom*). Only of the final, eighth king is a wife mentioned and no death recorded.

The notion of earlier emanations that were destroyed recalls the rabbinic description of worlds that were previously destroyed. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 3:7, in the name of Rabbi Abbahu: "The blessed Holy One kept creating worlds and destroying them until He created these [i.e., heaven and earth]. Then He declared, "These please Me, those do not.'" The theme of previous worlds that were destroyed and the *Zohar's* interpretation of the passage in Genesis inspired Isaac Luria's theory of "the breaking of the vessels."

On the midrashic description and on the theme of the death of the kings, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 9:2 (cf. 12:15); *Qohelet Rabbah* on 3:11; *Midrash Tehillim* 34:1; *Shemot Rabbah* 30:3; *Zohar* 1:29a, 154b, 223b; 2:34b, 176b (*SdTs*); 3:61a-b, 135a-b (*IR*), 142a (*IR*), 292a-b (*IZ*); *ZH 2d (MhN)*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:276-77, 289-90; 2:458-59; Liebes, "Ha-Mashiah shel ha-Zohar," 219-21; idem, *Studies in the Zohar*, 65-68, 128, 134-35, 155-56; idem, "Mar'ish ha-Arets," 352; Idel, "Ha-Maḥashavah ha-Ra'ah shel ha-El"; Farber-Ginat, "Qelippah Qodemet li-Fri"; Giller, *Reading the Zohar*, 95-98, 146-47; Har Shefi, "Malkin Qadma'in"; Hellner-Eshed, *Qeri'ah ba-Idra Rabba*. On the link between the destroyed worlds and the demonic realm in the writings of Isaac ha-Kohen, see Scholem, "Qabbalot R. Ya'aqov ve-R. Yitshaq," 193-97. On the verse in Genesis, see also *Zohar* 1:177a-b; 2:108b, 111a.

The Church father Origen refers to previous worlds in responding to the following question posed by heretics: "If the world had its beginning in time, what was God doing before the world began?" Origen replies, "Not then for the first time did God begin to work when He made this visible world; but just as after its destruction there will be another world, so also we believe that others existed before the present one came into being." See Origen, *De Principiis*, 3:5:3.

On the phrase "mysteries of mysteries," cf. above, [p. 317](#), [n. 84](#). אֶדוֹם (*Edom*), "Edom," represents Judgment partly because the nearly identical word אָדוֹם (*adom*) means "red," the color of Judgment. On the negative valence of Edom, see also above, [p. 61](#), [n. 23](#).

19. For this verse is difficult... Why does the verse in Genesis specify that certain kings of Edom reigned *before a king reigned over the Children of Israel*? After all, various other kings also reigned before the Children of Israel appeared and before they had a king. (See, for example, Genesis 14.)

“Arouse” renders למרחש (*le-mirhash*). The root רחש (*rhash*) means “to creep, move, be aroused, arouse, generate.” See Psalms 45:2; *Zohar* 3:287b (*IZ*); Scholem.

20. Before the Ancient of Ancients... The primordial manifestation of *Ein Sof* through *Keter* is known as the Holy Ancient One (or the Ancient of Ancients). Before this primal power had emanated any of the other sefirotic adornments, there was nothing but Infinity. The Ancient of Ancients engraved royal images (“kings”), but these did not endure. Eventually, He was arrayed successfully in sefirotic configurations.

The title Primordial King may refer to *Binah*, who was to rule over the lower *sefirot*, which can be pictured as *the Children of Israel*, namely of *Tif’eret Yisra’el* (Beauty of Israel), “the Primordial One.” See *Or Yaqar*; Vital (in *Hadrat Melekh*).

On the names of *the kings who reigned in the land of Edom*, see Genesis 36:31–39; *Zohar* 3:135b (*IR*). On the verse in Genesis, see above, [note 18](#). On the curtain, see *Zohar* 1:65a; 2:165b, 259a (*Heikh*).

21. An impulse arose in the Will... Within the primordial Will of *Arikh Anpin*.

According to rabbinic tradition, Torah antedated the world by two thousand years and also assisted God in creating the world. Here, Torah advises God to arrange His array before “arranging and forming,” and the divine array is described as “concealed for two thousand years.” This may imply that the letters of the alphabet (and thus of the Torah) were concealed within the divine mind and arranged in reverse order, and now needed to be arranged correctly.

On Torah antedating the world by two thousand years, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:2; *Va-yiqra Rabbah* 19:1; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:24; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:11; *Midrash Shemu’el* 5:2; *Tanḥuma, Vayeshev* 4; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Yitro* 16; *Midrash Tehillim* 90:12; *Bahir* 4 (5); *Zohar* 1:2b; 2:49a, 84b, 99a, 161a; 3:91b, 159a.

On Torah's role in Creation, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:1, in the name of Rabbi Osha'ya: "I was by Him as אָמוֹן (*amon*), a nursling (Proverbs 8:30) ... אָמוֹן (*amon*)—אֹמָן (*umman*), an artisan. Torah says, 'I was the artistic tool of the blessed Holy One.' According to the custom of the world, when a mortal king builds a palace he does not build it by his own skill but rather by the skill of an architect. And the architect does not build it out of his own knowledge, but rather has parchments and tablets [with plans and diagrams] to know how to make the rooms and doors. Similarly, the blessed Holy One gazed into Torah and created the world." See Vol. 7, p. 208, n. 1.

On the reversed sequence of the letters of the alphabet, see *Zohar* 1:2b-3b. On the last sentence, see BT *Sanhedrin* 18a (and 19a), in the name of Resh Lakish: "Adorn yourself, and afterward adorn others." Cf. Ibn Ezra, *Yesod Mora* 1; *Zohar* 3:135a (*IR*).

22. the Concealment of the Book... Referring to *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (The Book of Concealment). See *Zohar* 2:176b (*SdT*s). This reversal of the title appears frequently in *Idra Rabba*. On the relation between the *Idrot* and *Sifra di-Tsni'uta*, see Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 95-101; Giller, *Reading the Zohar*, 98-99.

The essence of the Ancient of Ancients is unknowable and beyond any normal notion of "existence." Only when arrayed in sefirotic adornments can it be known at all and said to exist. Cf. Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 1:57: "He exists, but not through an existence other than His essence."

The phrase סבא דסבין (*sava de-savin*), "elder of elders," is a play on the Hebrew term סבת הסבות (*sibbat ha-sibbot*), based on Latin *causa causarum*, "cause of causes," the ultimate ground of being. See *Zohar* 1:72b; 3:288b (*IZ*); *ZH* 48b-c; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 4 (6-7); *Or Yaqar*; Scholem, *Über einige Grundbegriffe des Judentums*, 50.

23. Master of white... *Arikh Anpin* (or the Ancient of Ancients, the Ancient of Days) is characterized by pure compassion and symbolized by the color white. He subdues the flaming forces of Judgment.

The imagery derives from Daniel 7:9: *As I watched, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days sat—His garment like white snow, the hair of His head like clean fleece, His throne flames of fire, its wheels blazing fire.*

“Sparkling” renders בוסינא (*bosina*), a variation on בוצינא (*botsina*), which means “lamp,” but in the *Zohar* also “spark.” See Liebes, *Peraqim*, 136–67. Cf. *idem*, 135; Vol. 5, p. 556, n. 22.

24. 400 worlds... In the world that is coming the righteous inherit one-thousandth of the radiance of the Ancient of Ancients.

The context in Genesis concerns Abraham’s purchase of the cave of Machpelah (and its adjacent field) from Ephron the Hittite. The full verse reads: *Abraham heeded Ephron, and Abraham weighed out to Ephron the silver of which he had spoken in the hearing of the Hittites—four hundred shekels of silver at the going merchants’ rate.*

Here in the *Zohar*, the word כסף (*kesef*) implies the divine white radiance and also suggests another meaning of the root כסף (*ksf*), “to yearn, desire,” since the reward of the righteous is elsewhere described as “four hundred worlds דכסופין (*de-khissufin*), of yearning.”

See *Zohar* 1:123b (*Tos*); 3:288a (*IZ*). On the “worlds of yearning,” see also 2:115a (*RM*); 3:106b; *TZ* 32, 76b. On the 400 worlds awaiting the righteous, see also *Zohar* 1:124b (*MhN*).

According to a rabbinic tradition, the righteous will be rewarded with 310 worlds in the afterlife, based on the numerical value of the word יֶשׁׁׁ (yesh), “substance,” in the verse *To endow my lovers with yesh (yesh), substance, filling their storehouses* (Proverbs 8:21). See *M Uqtsin* 3:12; *Avot*

5:19; BT *Sanhedrin* 100a; *Midrash Tehillim* 5:2; 31:7; *Zohar* 1:4b, 88a (ST), 156b (ST), 158a, 206a, 242b; 2:166b.

25. In the skull dwell 120 million worlds... And from this immense skull of *Arikh Anpin* (or the Ancient One) emanation (pictured as dew) flows gently to *Ze'eir Anpin*. He is called “the exterior one” because He covers, or envelops, *Arikh Anpin*. See *Zohar* 3:130a (IR).

The motif of dew reviving the dead appears in *Pirquei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 34: “Rabbi Yehudah said, ‘... In the time to come, the blessed Holy One will bring down a dew of revival, reviving the dead, as is said: *Your dead will live, my corpses will arise.... Awake and shout for joy, O dwellers of the dust!... For Your dew is a dew of lights... and the earth will cast forth spirits of the dead* (Isaiah 26:19).’ ... Rabbi Tanhum said, ‘... From where does it descend? From the head of the blessed Holy One. In the time to come, He will shake the hair of His head and bring down a dew of revival, reviving the dead, as is said: *I was asleep, but my heart was awake. ... For my head is filled with dew* (Song of Songs 5:2).’”

Here Rabbi Shim'on (or his source) may be focusing on the passive sense of the clause in Song of Songs—*my head is filled*—which implies that the head of *Ze'eir Anpin* is filled by *Arikh Anpin*, not by Himself. Alternatively, he is focusing on the present tense—*is filled*—which implies that the head of *Ze'eir Anpin* is filled constantly with the flow from above.

The phrase “holy ones of the Highest” refers to the angels, who are nourished by the dew of emanation conveyed by *Shekhinah*. On this phrase, see above, [note 5](#).

On the association of manna with dew, see Exodus 16:13–14; Numbers 11:9. Psalms 78:25 describes the manna as *bread of the mighty*, which may refer to food of the angels. See Septuagint, ad loc.; Wisdom of Solomon 16:20; BT *Yoma* 75b (in the name of Rabbi Akiva); Nahmanides on Exodus 16:6; *Zohar* 2:61b, 101b, 156b; ZH

86d (*MhN, Rut*). On the angels being nourished by *Shekhinah*, see *Shemot Rabbah* 32:4; *Kallah* 1:17.

On manna being ground for the righteous in the afterlife, see BT *Hagigah* 12b; *Zohar* 3:26a, 292b (*IZ*); Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 35a. Cf. *Mekhilta*, *Vayassa* 4; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 16:25; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:8; Naḥmanides on Exodus 16:6; *Zohar* 2:63a. On manna in the *Zohar*, see Hecker, *Mystical Bodies, Mystical Meals*, 82-115.

On emanation as dew, see Naḥmanides on Exodus 16:6; Todros Abulafia, *Sha'ar ha-Razim*, 54-56; *Zohar* 1:95b, 143b, 224b, 225b, 232a; 2:61b, 62b, 83a-b, 88a, 156b, 176b (*SdT*s), 177b (*SdT*s), 210a; 3:26a, 135b (*IR*), 208a, 288a (*IZ*), 292b (*IZ*); *ZH* 45a-b.

On the passage in *Pirḳei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 34, see JT *Berakhot* 5:2, 9b; BT *Hagigah* 12b, *Shabbat* 88b; *Pirḳei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 32-33; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Toledot* 19; Todros Abulafia, *Sha'ar ha-Razim*, 54; *Zohar* 1:118a (*MhN*), 130b-131a, 225b, 232a; 2:28b, 83a, 88a, 136b; 3:135b (*IR*), 288a (*IZ*), 292b (*IZ*); *ZH* 45a, 90d (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishḳal*, 88-89.

The number “120 million” is literally “twelve thousand myriads.” Several manuscripts (including N49, V22) read “thirteen thousand myriads,” and the number thirteen figures prominently below.

On the terms *Arikh Anpin* and *Ze'eir Anpin*, see above, [note 14](#). The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *I was asleep, but my heart was awake. The voice of my lover, knocking: “Open to me, my sister, my beloved, my dove, my perfect one! For my head is drenched [literally: filled] with dew, my locks with sprinkles of night.”*

The full verse in Isaiah 26 reads: *Your dead will live, my corpses will arise. Awake and shout for joy, O dwellers of the dust! For Your dew is a dew of lights, and the earth will give birth to [or: cast forth] spirits of the dead.*

26. That dew trickles to the Holy Apple Orchard...

The flow of emanation proceeds to *Shekhinah*, who is pictured as an orchard filled with sefirotic trees—especially the triad of *Hesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, whose respective colors all appear in the apple: the white pulp, the red skin, and the green stem (or leaves). See above, [p. 23](#), [n. 66](#).

In the verse from Exodus (as understood here), *the desert* symbolizes *Shekhinah*. The full verse, describing the first appearance of the manna, reads: *The layer of dew lifted, and look, on the surface of the desert [or: wilderness]—something fine, flaky, fine as frost on the ground.*

The full verse in Numbers reads: *The manna was like coriander seed, and its appearance [or: color, texture] was like the appearance of הבדולה (ha-bedolah), bdellium.* The term *bedolah* appears only one other place in the Bible, in the geographical setting of the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:12). Originally, *bedolah* apparently designated an aromatic yellowish semitransparent resin of trees (namely bdellium, similar to myrrh), but a number of ancient and medieval sources identify it as a precious stone. Rashi on Numbers 11:7 describes it as “crystal,” and in medieval Hebrew *bedolah* means “pearl” and “crystal.” Here, the *Zohar* adopts the sense of “crystal.”

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 16:2; *Zohar* 1:225b; 2:136b, 176b (*SdT*s), 225b; 3:49a, 135b (*IR*), 155b; *ZH* 48c. On the association of manna with dew, see the preceding note.

27. The whiteness of this skull radiates... This radiation extends the face of the Ancient of Ancients (the Ancient One), so it is called ארך אפים (*Erekh Appayim*), “Elongated Countenance; Vast Countenance,” literally “Of a Long Face,” or in Aramaic, אריכא דאנפין (*Arikha de-Anpin*) or אנפין אריך (*Arikh Anpin*). This name also means “slow to anger; long-suffering,” indicating the compassionate nature of this primordial realm.

In contrast, the lower, “exterior” sefirotic configuration (from *Hokhmah* through *Yesod*) is called זעיר אנפין (*Ze’eir Anpin*), “Small Countenance,” literally “Of a Small Face.” This name also means “short-tempered, irascible, impatient.”

When *Ze’eir Anpin* gazes upon *Arikh Anpin*, “His face expands and lengthens,” turning compassionate, but only temporarily.

On the names *Arikh Anpin* and *Ze’eir Anpin*, see *Zohar* 3:294a (*IZ*); above, [note 14](#); below, [note 230](#). On the interplay between *Arikh Anpin* and *Ze’eir Anpin*, see, e.g., *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdT*s); 3:15a–b, 133a (*IR*), 135b (*IR*), 137b–138a; Hellner-Eshed, “Refu’at ha-Panim.”

On the numerical element of 370 in relation to *Arikh Anpin* (or the Ancient of Days), see *Zohar* 1:4b; 2:14a–b (*MhN*); 3:133b–134a (*IR*), 135b (*IR*). On *Ze’eir Anpin* as “exterior,” see above, beginning of [note 25](#).

[28. other skulls of those below...](#) Belonging to other configurations. As each lower skull is illumined and numbered, it offers tribute to the Ancient of Days (or the Ancient One).

The verse in Exodus describes the poll tax required of each adult Israelite male during the census in the desert. It reads in full: *A beqa per skull, half a shekel according to the sanctuary shekel, for each who underwent the reckoning from twenty years old and above, for six hundred thousand and three thousand five hundred and fifty.* In the biblical context the silver *beqa* (weighing half a shekel) provided the silver needed for the sanctuary and simultaneously served as an instrument for counting heads.

See *Zohar* 3:135b–136a (*IR*). The phrase “a payment of tribute” renders אגרא אודאותא (*agar oda’uta*). For the term *oda’uta*, see, e.g., *Targum*, 1 Chronicles 25:3, where it means “praise, thanksgiving.” The wording *agar oda’uta* plays on יגרא שהדוּתא (*yegar sahaduta*), a mound of witness (Genesis 31:47), the Aramaic name given by Laban to the mound of stones commemorating the pact of non-aggression between

him and Jacob. Whereas in Genesis the phrase *yegar sahaduta* is spoken by Laban (whose name can mean “white”), here *agar oda’uta* is offered by each lower skull to *Arikh Anpin*, who is totally white (signifying Compassion). *Yegar sahaduta* happens to be the only Aramaic phrase in the entire Torah.

29. In the hollow of the skull, a membrane of air...

Covering the surface of the brain and separating it from the inner surface of the skull. The membrane is “uninterrupted,” that is, it envelops the brain entirely; it is so hidden that it cannot be located.

The reference to Wisdom represents the concealed essence of Wisdom, before it emerges from *Arikh Anpin* as a distinct *sefirah* in the configuration of *Ze’eir Anpin*.

On the membrane mentioned here, see *Zohar* 2:176b-177a (*SdTs*). Modern anatomy identifies three membranes surrounding the brain. On the two membranes surrounding the human brain (as understood in the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries), see Gershon ben Solomon, *Sha’ar ha-Shamayim* 9, 26b; Joseph ben Shalom Ashkenazi, *Peirush Sefer Yetsirah* 1:1, 13a-b.

30. An old man’s mind is concealed... Matching the mind of the Holy Ancient One, who is compared above to an “elder of elders.” See above, [note 22](#).

On the tranquil mind of an elder, see M *Qinnim* 3:6, in the name of Rabbi Shim’on son of Akashya, “The older that the elders of the ignorant grow, the more their mind becomes confused.... But not so with the elders of Torah; rather, the older they grow, the more their mind becomes stable.” On the phrase “(his) mind is concealed,” see *Zohar* 3:159a.

Wine ages best on its sediment, or lees. The expression “like fine wine upon its lees” derives from BT *Megillah* 12b: “like wine that has settled on its lees,” which in turn is based on the description of Moab in Jeremiah 48:11: *He is settled on his lees*. See *Zohar* 1:216b; 2:87a; 3:140b (*IR*),

248a; ZH 72d (*ShS*), 75a (*MhN, Rut*). Cf. *Zohar* 2:191a; 3:172a.

31. This membrane is detached from Ze'eir Anpin...

Whereas the membrane surrounding the brain of *Arikh Anpin* is “uninterrupted,” the membrane around the brain of *Ze'eir Anpin* (the configuration “below”) is “detached,” that is, it does not completely envelop the brain, and this interruption enables the brain to extend into numerous pathways. The verse in Genesis implies that the flow of emanation issues from *Hokhmah* (the brain of *Ze'eir Anpin*, symbolized by *Eden*).

The last letter of the Hebrew alphabet is ט (*tav*), whose original shape was X or +, that is, the simplest mark; and its name (*tav*) means “a mark, sign.” According to the mysterious Engravings of Letters, the *tav* signifies the Ancient of Days (or the Ancient One, or *Arikh Anpin*), who is called תמים דעות (*temim de'ot*), *the perfect in knowledge*, a phrase whose initial letter is *tav*. The word תמים (*tamim*), “perfect,” also means “complete,” alluding here to the uninterrupted, “complete” membrane of *Arikh Anpin*, whose brain is “concealed, quiescent, and tranquil.”

For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Sha'ar Ma'amrei Rashbi*, 114b-115a; *Qol be-Ramah*; *Emet le-Ya'aqov*; *Ruah David*; *Bei'urei ha-Gera*; *Yayin ha-Reqah*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*; Hellner-Eshed and Leader, *Idra Rabba*.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *A river issues from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four riverheads*. In Kabbalah, this river symbolizes the flow of emanation issuing from *Hokhmah*, conveyed by *Binah* through *Yesod*, entering the garden of *Shekhinah*. See Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows from Eden*, 229-51.

On the distinction between the membranes of *Arikh Anpin* and *Ze'eir Anpin*, see *Zohar* 3:136a (*IR*). On the thirty-two paths of Wisdom, see *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:1-2. According to certain kabbalists, these thirty-two paths correspond to the

thirty-one spinal nerves (which some earlier anatomists enumerated as thirty-two). See Joseph ben Shalom Ashkenazi, *Peirush Sefer Yetsirah*, 1:1, 14c; Kaplan, *Sefer Yetzirah*, 8–9.

On the letter *tav*, see Ezekiel 4:9; BT *Shabbat* 55a. On a volume containing secrets of engraved letters, see *Zohar* 1:33b, 224a; 2:139b; 3:175b, 264b, 285a, 286b; Cf. 3:156b, 180b.

32. From the skull of the head... An immense number of locks of hair hang from the head of *Ariḥ Anpin*. The image of pure wool derives from Daniel 7:9: *As I watched, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days sat—His garment like white snow, the hair of His head like clean fleece.*

“Locks” renders קוצי (*qotsei*), which literally means “thorns” but is here associated with קוצות (*gevutsot*), “locks.” The latter word appears in the description of the male lover in Song of Songs (5:2, 11), which is interpreted midrashically and mystically as alluding to the Divine Male. (See below, [note 113](#).)

On *qots* and *gevutsot*, see BT *Eruvin* 21b: “קוצותיו תלתלים (*Qevutsotav taltallim*), *His locks wavy* (Song of Songs 5:11). Rav Ḥisda said in the name Mar Ukba, “This teaches that one can expound on every single קוץ (*qots*), stroke [of the letters of Torah], תילי תילים (*tillei tillim*), heaps and heaps, of laws.”

See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:11; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli’ezer* 12, p. 235; *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 1; *Zohar* 3:79b. Cf. BT *Menahot* 29b; *Midrash Shemu’el* 5:3. The phrase “in His array” renders בתקונוי (*be-tiqqunoi*). On the semantic range of the word *tiqquna*, see above, [note 5](#). On the association of the root תקן (*tqn*) with hair, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 22:6: “מתקן (*metaqgen*), arranging (or smoothing), his hair.”

33. 410 strands of hair... Equivalent to the numerical value of קדוש (*qadosh*), “holy.” On the 410 worlds, cf. above, [note 24](#).

34. In every single strand there is a spring... Each strand of hair conveys a flow from the brain of *Arikh Anpin*, and this flow proceeds to the head of *Ze'eir Anpin*, whose brain is thereby nourished. On the thirty-two paths of Wisdom, see above, [note 31](#).

On the spring of each strand, see *Tanḥuma, Tazri'a* 6: "For every single hair, the blessed Holy One created its own spring [or: source] from which it draws. If the spring dries up, the hair withers."

See *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Tazri'a* 8; *Midrash Aggadah*, Leviticus 13:20; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 15:3; BT *Bava Batra* 16a.

35. By a person's hair is known what he is... Smooth hair indicates a compassionate nature, whereas coarse hair indicates a harsh nature.

On the physiognomy of hair, see Vol. 4, p. 393, n. 77. See also *Zohar* 3:131b, 134a, 140a (all *IR*); *TZ* 70, 123b. On the significance of reaching the age of forty, see M *Avot* 5:21; BT *Sotah* 21b-22a; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:30.

36. to the top of His shoulders... Thereby covering the back of the neck of *Arikh Anpin*, since the exposed nape signifies harsh Judgment or rejection. The verse in Jeremiah reads: *Indeed, they have turned עורף (oref), their back* [literally: *the back of the neck*], *to Me...* See *Zohar* 3:288b (*IZ*).

The hair of *Arikh Anpin* does not cover His ears, so that these *may be open* to Israel's prayers. See *Zohar* 3:136a (*IR*), 293a (*IZ*); *ZH* 31b, 34a.

The concluding quotation does not appear as such in the Bible. Cf. 1 Kings 8:52; Psalms 130:2; 2 Chronicles 6:40; Jeremiah 32:19. On the phenomenon of Zoharic biblical quotations differing from the Masoretic text, see Vol. 7, p. 8, n. 24.

37. The desire and joy of the righteous... Their souls ascend to the realm of *Ze'eir Anpin*, from which they yearn to reach the sublime realm of *Arikh Anpin* (or the Ancient One).

On the phrase “desirable to behold,” cf. the descriptions of the trees in the Garden of Eden: *desirable to look at* (Genesis 2:9, describing all the trees); *desirous to the eyes* (ibid. 3:6, describing the Tree of Knowledge).

38. Thirteen tresses of hair appear... Framing the face of *Arikh Anpin*. Even so, there is ultimately “no left” in this highest divine configuration, which is totally compassionate, so “all is right.” The numerous “enhancements” of His hair are not fully visible (or not visible to everyone), all the more so *Arikh Anpin* Himself.

On the phrase “seen and not seen,” cf. below at [notes 81](#), [102](#), [208](#). “Tresses” renders נִמִּין (*nimin*), literally “strands.” Elsewhere in this passage the word means individual “strands” of hair, but here it clearly connotes “tresses” or “locks.” “His enhancements” renders תְּקוּנוֹי (*tiqqunoi*), “His arrangements, enhancements” (or locks, curls, curlicues, formations, features, facets). See above, [notes 5](#), [32](#); below, [note 84](#).

39. Israel yearned to refine in their hearts... The simple sense of the verse in Exodus conveys Israel’s doubt: *Is YHVH among us or אֵין (ayin), not?* But here Rabbi Shim’on interprets *ayin* as *nothingness*, referring to the highest divine configuration, *Arikh Anpin* (or *Keter*), which is called *Ayin* (Nothingness or No-thingness) because it is beyond comprehension. Thus Israel sought to determine which configuration was manifested among them: was it *Ze’eir Anpin* (signified by the name *YHVH*) or *Arikh Anpin* (*Ayin*)?

But if Israel did not doubt God’s presence among them, why were they punished (by being attacked immediately afterward by Amalek)? Because their question was motivated not by love but by a desire to test God.

On the concept of *Ayin*, see Matt, “*Ayin*.” On the reading *Is YHVH among us or Ayin?* see *Zohar* 2:64b; 3:158b; *Gikatilla, Sha’arei Or*, 93b; Bahya ben Asher on Exodus 17:7. On the link between Israel’s question and the attack by Amalek, see Vol. 4, p. 351, n. 540.

“To refine” renders לצרפא (*letsarefa*). Cf. Psalms 26:2: צרפה (*Tsarefah*), *Refine* [or: *test; burn pure*], *my conscience* [literally: *my kidneys*] *and my heart*. The verse in Exodus reads in full: *He called the name of the place מסה ומריבה (Massah u-Mrivah), Testing-and- Quarreling, for the quarrel of the Children of Israel, and for their testing YHVH, saying, “Is YHVH among us or not?”*

40. In the parting of hair... On the head of *Arikh Anpin*. See *Zohar* 3:136a (*IR*), 288b (*IZ*).

On the 270 worlds, see *Zohar* 1:218b; 3:135b (*IR*), 139a (*IR*), 141a (*IR*). The number 613 alludes, of course, to the traditional number of commandments in the Torah. In the verse from Psalms, the name *YHVH* may allude here to *Ze’eir Anpin*, or specifically its core, *Tif’eret*, who is symbolized by Written Torah. For another interpretation, see Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 181, n. 132.

41. Forehead of the skull—Will of Wills... The primordial realm of *Arikh Anpin* is known as Will, and the forehead of His skull is the Will of Wills. When this divine forehead is revealed, compassion is manifested and Israel’s prayers are accepted.

See *Zohar* 3:136b (*IR*), 288b (*IZ*), 293a (*IZ*). The context in Exodus describes the צִיָּט (*tsits*), “medallion” (or “plate, rosette”), a gold plate worn on the forehead of the high priest over his turban, bearing the inscription קדש ליהוה (*qodesh la-YHVH*), *Holy to YHVH* (Exodus 28:36). Exodus 28:38 reads: *It shall be upon his forehead perpetually לדצון להם (le-ratson la-hem), for their acceptance* [or: *to win acceptance* (or *favor*) *for them*], *before YHVH*.

Here Rabbi Shim’on may be construing *le-ratson* as *toward the will*, implying that the *forehead* (or will) or *Ze’eir Anpin*, symbolized by the *forehead* of the high priest, faces *the will* of *Arikh Anpin*. For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital (in *Hadrat Melekh*); *Qol be-Ramah*; *Emet le-Ya’aqov*; *Bei’urei ha-Gera*; *Yafah Sha’ah*; *Yayin ha-Reqah*; *Sha’arei ha-Idra*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

42. At the time of the prayer of *minḥah*... According to rabbinic tradition, the patriarch Isaac “instituted the prayer of *minḥah*,” that is, the afternoon prayer. Isaac symbolizes *Gevurah*, also known as *Din* (Judgment), so the afternoon is a time when Judgment looms. In order to assuage Judgment, the compassionate forehead of *Ariḳh Anpin* (or the Ancient of Days) is revealed in the afternoon, ensuring that prayer will be accepted.

On the quality of the time of *minḥah* and the assuagement of Judgment, see *Zohar* 1:95b, 132b, 182b, 230a; 2:21a (*MhN*), 36b, 88b, 156a; 3:64b, 288b (*IZ*), 293a (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 87; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:963–64.

On the patriarchs instituting the daily prayers, see BT *Berakhot* 26b: “Rabbi Yose son of Rabbi Ḥanina said, ‘The patriarchs instituted the prayers.’ ... Abraham instituted the morning prayer... Isaac instituted the afternoon prayer... Jacob instituted the evening prayer.” See JT *Berakhot* 4:1, 7a–b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:9.

The verse in Psalm 69 is recited near the beginning of the Sabbath *minḥah* prayer before the Torah is taken out from the ark. On this verse, see *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 3:23; JT *Makkot* 2:6, 31d; *Eikhah Rabbah* 3:60; *Eikhah Rabbah* (Buber) 3:44; BT *Berakhot* 7b–8a; *Pesiḳta de-Rav Kahana* 24:2; *Devarim Rabbah* 2:12; *Tanḥuma, Miqqets* 9; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Miqqets* 11; *Midrash Tehillim* 65:4; 69:2; *Zohar* 1:105b, 116b; 2:156a, 253b (*Heikh*); 3:58b, 136b (*IR*).

43. Among others below... Especially within the realm of *Ze'eir Anpin*.

In the verse from Jeremiah, *the forehead* implies brazenness or impudence. On the phrase *the forehead of a whore*, see *Zohar* 3:231b. On the phrase as applied to the forehead of *Ze'eir Anpin*, see below, [note 248](#).

44. From this forehead... From the forehead of *Ariḳh Anpin*.

The full verse in Daniel (describing the Ancient of Days) reads: *A river of fire was flowing and gushing from His presence, a thousand thousands serving Him, a myriad of myriads attending Him.* דִּינָא יֵתִיב (*Dina yetiv*), *Judgment* [or: *the judicial assembly*] *sat* [or: *was seated*], and books were opened. Here, Rabbi Shim'on interprets *Judgment sat* as "Judgment sat still" and was not carried out.

See below, [note 120](#); cf. [note 208](#). See also *Zohar* 1:64b; 2:227b, where the verset *YHVH sat at the Flood* (Psalms 29:10) is interpreted to mean that *YHVH* (symbolizing Compassion) *sat* alone, uninvolved during the Flood, while unmitigated Judgment inundated the whole world.

45. Hair does not exist in this place... The forehead of *Arikh Anpin* is free of any hair, so that it may be completely revealed, subduing all forces of Judgment.

46. Supernal Eden... The concealed brain of *Arikh Anpin*, which illumines the brain (or *Hokhmah*) of *Ze'eir Anpin*. Whereas the brain of *Arikh Anpin* remains completely enveloped and does not branch into external paths, the brain of *Ze'eir Anpin* does branch out—into the thirty-two paths of Wisdom.

See above, [note 31](#); *Zohar* 3:133b (*IR*), 288b (*IZ*). On other senses of upper and lower Eden, see *Zohar* 2:178b (*SdT*s), 210b; 3:182b; *ZH* 18a (*MhN*); cf. *ZH* 13c (*MhN*).

47. Even though this Eden branches... Although *Hokhmah* (of *Ze'eir Anpin*) branches into numerous paths, it is unknowable except by *Ze'eir Anpin* Himself. As for Supernal Eden (the brain of *Arikh Anpin*), it (along with its hidden pathways) is unknowable except by *Arikh Anpin* (or the Ancient of Days) Himself.

The verse in Job describes how God alone knows *hokhmah* (wisdom). For Rabbi Shim'on, it implies that *Elohim* (referring here to *Ze'eir Anpin*) *understands its way*—that is, the pathways of *Hokhmah* (of *Ze'eir Anpin*), which is called "Eden below." However, only *He* (namely *Arikh Anpin* Himself) *knows*

the *place* (and nature) of His own brain, which is “Eden above.”

In the *Zohar's* approach to biblical interpretation, whereas the first- and second- person pronouns *I* and *You* can allude to relatively revealed divine aspects (which can identify themselves or be addressed directly), the third-person pronoun *He* can allude to a more concealed divine aspect. On *He* as alluding to *Arikh Anpin* (or *Keter*), see *Zohar* 1:49a; 2:177b (*SdT*s); 3:130a (*IR*), 134b (*IR*), 140b (*IR*), 290a (*IZ*). On *He* as alluding to *Binah*, see Vol. 6, pp. 267–68, n. 20. On this paragraph, see *Zohar* 3:140b (*IR*). On the verse in Job, see also *Zohar* 1:48b–49a; 3:290a (*IZ*).

The notion that the lower *sefirot* cannot comprehend the brain of *Arikh Anpin* parallels the statement in the Gnostic *Gospel of Truth* (22:27–29), according to which the aeons (divine emanations) below *Nous* (Intellect) are unaware of the hidden divinity: “It was quite amazing that they were in the Father without knowing Him.” Cf. *Zohar* 1:30a, 49a; 2:239a; 3:159a.

48. Eyes of the White Head... The eyes of *Arikh Anpin* never close, since they watch constantly over *Ze'eir Anpin*, whose core is “Israel above,” namely *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel). The phrase “different from other eyes” implies specifically “different from those of *Ze'eir Anpin*.” See below, [note 253](#).

The color white signifies pure Compassion. On the White Head, see *Zohar* 3:135a–b (*IR*). On the open eyes of providence, see *Zohar* 2:176b (*SdT*s); 3:289a (*IZ*). On the phrase “Israel above,” cf. the title Israel the Elder, discussed above, [p. 273](#), [n. 76](#).

The full verse in Kings reads: *that Your eyes may be open to the plea of Your servant and the plea of Your people Israel, to hear them whenever they call upon You.*

49. the Ancient of Ancients... *Arikh Anpin*, who is also known as the Ancient of Days.

On fish lacking eyelids and hardly sleeping, see Gershon ben Solomon, *Sha'ar ha-Shamayim* 7, 23b. According to rabbinic tradition, fish are immune from the evil eye. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 97:3 (p. 1246); BT *Berakhot* 20a, 55b; *Sotah* 36b; *Bava Metsi'a* 84a; *Bava Batra* 118b; *Zohar* 3:187a.

50. Behold, the eye of YHVH... Whereas this verse describes a single *eye of YHVH*, the verse in Zechariah speaks of *the eyes of YHVH*. Rabbi Abba explains that the plural pertains to *Ze'eir Anpin*, whereas the singular pertains to *Arikh Anpin*. Actually, *Arikh Anpin* also has two eyes, but that realm is so unified that the two turn into one.

See below, [notes 56](#), [60](#), [62](#). The verse in Zechariah reads: *These seven are the eyes of YHVH, ranging over the whole earth*. Cf. 2 Chronicles 16:9. On these two verses, see *Zohar* 1:241a-b; 2:107a (Vol. 5, pp. 123-24, n. 351); 3:293b (*IZ*).

51. Hod (Splendor), Hadar (Majesty), and Hedvah (Joy)... Namely, the three *sefirot* *Hod*, *Gevurah*, and *Yesod*.

52. from the secret recess of the brain... Within the white head of *Arikh Anpin*. The third white strikes the “seventh lamp,” apparently signifying *Shekhinah* (the seventh *sefirah*, counting from *Hesed*) or *Yesod* (counting from *Binah*) or perhaps *Da'at* (counting from below).

53. It has also been taught... Rabbi Shim'on supports and amplifies Rabbi Abba's teaching. The “three lamps on the left side” are the three *sefirot* *Hod*, *Gevurah*, and *Yesod*. See above, [note 51](#).

54. three lamps on the right side... *Netsah*, *Hesed*, and *Tif'eret*.

55. from deep within the brain... Of *Arikh Anpin*. This third white strikes the black hair of *Ze'eir Anpin*, when it is necessary to mitigate His harsh Judgment. The “three remaining crowns” may refer to *Hokhmah*, *Binah*, and *Da'at* (namely the three components of the brain of *Ze'eir Anpin*), or perhaps *Hokhmah*, *Binah*, and *Shekhinah*. See below, [note 235](#).

56. they are two, turning into one... The two eyes of *Arikh Anpin* turn into one eye, since this realm of pure Compassion exhibits no duality of right and left. See above, [note 50](#).

57. He that has a good eye יְבוֹרֵךְ (yevorakh), will be blessed... The full verse reads: *He that has a good [or: generous] eye יְבוֹרֵךְ (yevorakh), will be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor.* By a change in vocalization, the verse is construed differently: *He that has a good eye יְבַרֵךְ (yevarekh), will bless.* See BT *Sotah* 38b, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi: "We give the cup of blessing for the recital of Grace after Meals only to one who has a generous eye, as is said: *He that has a generous eye יְבוֹרֵךְ (yevorakh), will be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor.* Do not read *yevorakh, will be blessed*, but rather *יְבַרֵךְ (yevarekh), will bless.*"

See *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 129; *Tanḥuma, Vezot Haberakhah* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vezot Haberakhah* 1; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 21:15; *Zohar* 2:218a-b; 3:63b, 147b, 187b, 211b.

58. There is no illumination for the lower eye... The eye—or eyes—of *Ze'eir Anpin* reflect Judgment, signified by the color red or black; and this harsh quality can be removed only by the white light of the eye of *Arikh Anpin*.

The verse in Isaiah now implies that the righteous will see the eye of *Arikh Anpin* gazing into the eye(s) of *Ze'eir Anpin*. Similarly, the verse in Numbers implies that *Ze'eir Anpin* (known as *YHVH*) is *seen* by *Arikh Anpin eye-to-eye*.

59. the Concealment of the Book... Referring to *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (The Book of Concealment). See *Zohar* 2:176b (*SdT*s); *Zohar* 3:136b-137b (*IR*); above, [note 22](#).

60. Behold, the eye of YHVH... Whereas this verse describes a single *eye of YHVH*, the verse in Zechariah speaks of *the eyes of YHVH*. Rabbi Shim'on explains that the singular pertains to the eye of *Arikh Anpin*, whereas the plural pertains to the eyes of *Ze'eir Anpin*. See above, [note 50](#).

61. A fruitful son is Joseph... The verse reads: *A fruitful son is Joseph, a fruitful son* עֲלֵי עַיִן (*alei ayin*), *by a spring*. According to a midrashic interpretation, the phrase *alei ayin* implies that Joseph and his descendants are protected from the evil *ayin*, “eye.” Here, Rabbi Shim’on applies the phrase to the watchful eye of *Arikh Anpin*.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 97 (p. 1224); 97:3 (p. 1246); BT *Berakhot* 20a, 55b; *Sotah* 36b; *Bava Metsi’a* 84a; *Bava Batra* 118b; *Zohar* 2:225a; 3:202b. Cf. above, [note 49](#).

62. Why is it referred to as one?... The singular wording *a good eye* implies that the two eyes of *Arikh Anpin* function as one, since in that realm there is only Compassion (symbolized by right) and no Judgment (symbolized by left). In the realm of *Ze’eir Anpin* below, there are two distinct eyes, right and left, colored white and red (signifying respectively Compassion and Judgment). See above, [note 50](#).

63. This eye, the eye of watchfulness... The eye of *Arikh Anpin* is always open and beaming, whereas the multicolored eyes of *Ze’eir Anpin* are sometimes closed.

On the multicolored eyes of *Ze’eir Anpin*, see *Zohar* 3:136b–137a (*IR*). The verse in Psalms reads: *Awake! Why do You sleep, O Lord?...*

“A fold” renders סורטא (*surta*), which may be based on סיטרא (*sitra*), “side, hem, fold.” See *Zohar* 1:132b (Vol. 2, p. 244, n. 322); 3:63b (Vol. 7, p. 417, n. 184); *Derekh Emet*; Luria, *Va-Ye’esof David*, s.v. *sutra*.

64. When they are opened... When the eyes of *Ze’eir Anpin* are opened, if the color red (signifying Judgment) dominates the eye, then the divine gaze is dangerous.

65. the Ancient of Days... *Arikh Anpin*.

66. the name of the Ancient One is concealed... The verse in Genesis 22 records God’s declaration to Abraham following the binding of Isaac. It reads in full: *He said, “בי נשבעתי”* (*Bi nishba’ti*), *By My own Self I swear, declares YHVH, that because you have done this thing and have not*

withheld your son, your only one.” Here, Rabbi Shim’on reads *bi nishba’ti* as: [*By that which is*] *within Me I swear*. Thus, *Ze’eir Anpin* (known as *YHVH*) swears an oath *by that which is within Me*, namely by *Arikh Anpin*. See *Zohar* 3:66b; *ZH* 51d. Cf. Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 109; 210, n. 151.

The full verse in Genesis 48 reads: *He [namely Jacob] blessed them on that day, saying, “By you shall Israel bless, saying, ‘May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh’”—and he put Ephraim before Manasseh*. Even though Manasseh was Joseph’s firstborn, Jacob *put Ephraim first* in the blessing. Here, Rabbi Shim’on interprets *By you shall Israel bless* as meaning: *By the power of Arikh Anpin shall Israel* (namely *Ze’eir Anpin*, who is called “Israel above”) *bless the people of Israel*. See above, [note 48](#); [p. 273, n. 76](#).

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *He said to me, “You are My servant, Israel, in whom I glory.”* Here, Rabbi Shim’on interprets the concluding clause as meaning that *Ze’eir Anpin* (known as *Israel*) says to *Arikh Anpin*: *In you I glory*. He also acknowledges another interpretation: the whole clause is spoken by *Arikh Anpin* (known as the Ancient of Days), who glories (or is manifested) in *Ze’eir Anpin* (known as *Israel*).

[67. As I watched, thrones were cast down...](#) The full verse reads: *As I watched, thrones רמיו (remiv), were placed [or: were cast], and the Ancient of Days sat—His garment like white snow, the hair of His head like clean fleece, His throne flames of fire, its wheels blazing fire.*

[68. Stand erect and establish this throne!](#) Rabbi Shim’on asks Rabbi Yehudah to explain the wording *Thrones were cast down*.

[69. His throne, flames of fire...](#) The continuation of the verse describes the throne as *flames of fire*, signifying harsh Judgment. By sitting upon (or riding) this throne, *Arikh Anpin* (known as the Ancient of Days) subdues Judgment. Then He moves from the Throne of Judgment to the Throne of Compassion, and the first throne is, as it were, *cast down*. See above, [p. 137, n. 242](#).

70. I, YHVH, the first... *Arikh Anpin* declares that He is *the first*, and also *with the last*—that is, accompanying or animating the last stages of emanation. The pronoun *He* alludes here to *Arikh Anpin*. See above, [note 47](#).

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *Who has wrought and achieved, calling the generations from the beginning? I, YHVH, the first, and with the last I am He.*

71. By the nose... The nose is the most distinctive feature of the face.

See M *Yevamot* 16:3: “Evidence [of the identity of a corpse] may not be given except from [proof provided by] the face together with the nose.” See Naḥmanides on Leviticus 21:18; *Zohar* 2:122b, 177b (*SdTs*); 3:136b (*IR*), 137b (*IR*), 294a (*IZ*).

72. What is the difference... *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient One) is called מאריה דחוטמא (*mareih de-ḥutma*), “Master of the Nose,” and His nostrils convey the breath of life.

According to BT *Ta’anit* 29a, the second-century Roman governor of Judea, Tineus Rufus, called Rabban Gamliel II בעל החוטם (*ba’al ha-ḥotem*), “Master of the Nose,” which in that context means “a distinguished person”; or perhaps the Roman governor was hinting at Rabban Gamliel’s position as *Nasi*, Patriarch, by referring to him as *nasutus*, “having a large nose.”

On the breath issuing from the nostrils of the Holy Ancient One, see *Zohar* 2:176b (*SdTs*); 3:289a (*IZ*). Cf. 3:137b–138a (*IR*), 294a (*IZ*). On the animating power of the divine breath, see Genesis 2:7: *YHVH Elohim formed the human, dust from the soil, and blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and the human became a living being.*

73. This nose is an armoire... Through the nose of *Arikh Anpin* (pictured as a cabinet), breath blows to *Ze’eir Anpin*. The compassionate nature of *Arikh Anpin* generates forgiveness and tranquility, soothing the temperamental quality of *Ze’eir Anpin*.

The Garden of Eden symbolizes *Shekhinah*, with whom *Ze'eir Anpin* unites. The Messiah, descended from King David, will be inspired by a breath issuing from one of the nostrils of *Arikh Anpin*. Cf. *Zohar* 1:103b.

“Breath” renders רוּחַ (*ruḥa*), “wind, breath, spirit.” The verse in Isaiah reads: רוּחַ (*Ruah*), *The spirit [or: breath] of YHVH will alight upon him...* On *Arikh Anpin* granting forgiveness, see *Zohar* 3:133a (*IR*).

“Armoire” renders פַּרְדֵּשְׁקָא (*pardashqa*), apparently based on the rabbinic term פַּרְדֵּסְקִין (*pardisqin*), a corruption of Greek *purgiskos*, “cupboard, cabinet.” See M *Oholot* 6:7; *Tosefta Oholot* 7:13; Lieberman, *Tosefet Rishonim*, 3:115. On the word *pardisqin* in M *Oholot*, the early-thirteenth-century Tosafist Samson of Sens explains to his readers what a cabinet is: “hollow columns in the wall of the house made of many windows and with doors.” Asher ben Yehiel explains that *pardisqin* are “windows like towers built into the wall.”

See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tum'at Met* 25:4; Abraham ben David, ad loc.; *Zohar* 2:176b–177a (*SdT*s), 178b (*SdT*s); 3:262a, 289a (*IZ*), 294b (*IZ*).

Some commentators understand *pardashqa* as “officer,” based on the rabbinic term פַּרְדֵּשְׁכָא (*pardashkha*), “officer, official,” which may itself derive from Persian. This sense could convey the image of a nose supervising commandingly. See BT *Shabbat* 94a, *Megillah* 12b; *Zohar* 1:148b; 2:8b, 36b; 3:144b (*IR*); *Arukh ha-Shalem*, s.v. *pardakhsh*; *Tosefot he-Arukh ha-Shalem*, 336, s.v. *pardakhsh*.

74. Look, there are four breaths here... The verse in Isaiah mentions four breaths, three more than the one supposedly destined for the Messiah. Cf. *ZH* 60c (*MhN, Shir ha-Shirim*).

75. In the days of King Messiah... Rabbi Yose explains that *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of Days) will exhale one breath—as implied by the beginning of the verse in Isaiah: *The breath of YHVH will alight upon him.*

This breath will be accompanied by three other breaths, each of which includes two breaths—as implied by the continuation of the verse: *a breath of wisdom and understanding, a breath of counsel and power, a breath of knowledge and awe of YHVH*. These “six other breaths” represent the six lower *sefirot* (*Hesed* to *Yesod*), which are the six sefirotic “crowns of *Ze’eir Anpin*.”

The full verse in Jeremiah reads: *No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, “Know YHVH,” for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest.* See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Teshuvah* 9:2; *Zohar* 3:23a, 58a (Vol. 7, p. 371–72, n. 45).

76. *Solomon sat on the throne of YHVH...* The six steps leading to Solomon’s throne correspond to the six divine breaths and the six *sefirot* from *Hesed* to *Yesod*.

Although the second half of the verse in Isaiah specifies only three breaths, each of these includes two. See the preceding note. On the Messiah surpassing Solomon, see Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Teshuvah* 9:2; *ZH* 11c (*MhN*). Cf. Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 182, n. 141.

77. *From four winds, come, O breath!...* The context is Ezekiel’s vision of the dry bones. The full verse reads: *He said to me, “Prophesy to הרוח (ha-ruah), the breath! Prophesy, O son of man, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord YHVH: From the four ruhot, winds, come, ha-ruah, O breath, and breathe into these slain—that they may live!”*

As indicated above ([note 73](#)), *ruah* means “wind, breath, spirit.” Here Rabbi Shim’on associates the four winds (or directions) or the world with the four breaths mentioned by Isaiah. See above, [note 75](#).

On the verse in Ezekiel, see *Zohar* 1:139a (*MhN*), 175b–176a, 235a; 2:13a–b; *ZH* 60c (*MhN, Shir ha-Shirim*).

78. *Eventually the blessed Holy One will generate one breath...* In the time of the Messiah, God will generate one breath comprised of (or *from*) *four breaths*, which will inspire everyone. See above, [note 75](#).

79. what is the difference... Between the nose of *Arikh Anpin* (or the Ancient of Days) and the nose of *Ze'eir Anpin*. The former exhales pure life, whereas the latter sometimes flares with fiery judgment against sinful humanity.

The verse in Samuel concludes:... *coals blazed from it* [or: *from Him*]. See *Zohar* 3:137b-138a (*IR*), 289a (*IZ*), 294a (*IZ*).

80. When Rav Hamnuna Sava ... He would address *Arikh Anpin* as Master of the Nose.

The verse in Isaiah reads in full: *For the sake of My name* אפי אאריך (*a'arikh appi*), *I delay My wrath* [or hyperliterally: *lengthen My nose*], *and for My praise* אהטם (*ehetom*), *I refrain* [or: *restrain Myself; restrain it*], *for you, so as not to cut you off*. The verbal root חטם (*htm*), "to restrain, bridle, muzzle," is a cognate of the Hebrew noun חוטם (*hotem*), Aramaic חוטמא (*hutma*), "nose."

According to the verse, God promises Israel that He will be not be short-tempered but, rather, long-suffering. Here, Rabbi Shim'on links *ehetom* directly with *hotem* (or *hutma*), "nose," so the verb now means *I restrain the nose*, "I soothe the flaring nostrils of *Ze'eir Anpin* (the Short-Tempered One)," or "I manifest the patient quality of the nose," "I extend My nose (to Yours)."

On the title Master of the Nose, see BT *Ta'anit* 29a (mentioned above, [note 72](#)). The first half of Rav Hamnuna Sava's declaration plays on the Talmudic wording: "The Master of the Nose is sought."

On Rav Hamnuna Sava, see above, [p. 105](#), [n. 154](#). On his prayers, see BT *Berakhot* 11b, 17a, 58a; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 122, n. 68.

The title the Ancient of Days refers to *Arikh Anpin*. On the names *Arikh Anpin* and *Ze'eir Anpin*, see above, [notes 14](#), [27](#). On the verse in Isaiah, see *Zohar* 2:122b; 3:138a (*IR*), 289a (*IZ*), 294a (*IZ*). Cf. *Zohar* 1:70a. On this paragraph, see Asulin, "Qomatah shel ha-Shekhinah," 161-63.

81. The length of the nose... Of *Arikh Anpin*. According to *Zohar* 3:140b (*IR*), there are 375 elements of *hesed* within *Arikh Anpin*.

“Masters of Qualities” renders מארי מדין (*marei middin*), “masters of *middin*,” likely deriving from the verbal root מדר (*mdd*), “to measure.” See Judges 5:10: *you who sit on middin*, where the word is variously rendered as “[extended, wide] carpets, blankets” or—based on דין (*din*), “judgment”—“the judgment seat.” See BT *Eruvin* 54b: “It was taught in the school of Rav Anan: What is the meaning of the verse... *you who sit on middin*?... You who render judgment in absolute truth.”

In the *Zohar* the expression apparently refers to kabbalists who know the מדות (*middot*), the divine “qualities, attributes” (*sefirot*), or who know שעור קומה (*shi’ur qomah*), “the measure of the [divine] stature.” See Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, § 952: “Whoever knows this שיעור (*shi’ur*), measure, of our Creator..., concealed from creatures, is assured of life in the world that is coming.” See *Zohar* 1:133a, 241b; 2:34a, 71b, 122b, 130b, 134b, 161a, 163a, 213b; 3:138b (*IR*), 141a; *ZH* 73b (*ShS*), 74b (*ShS*), 106b (*Tiq*).

82. Woe to one who extends his hand... To grab hold of someone’s beard was considered a grave insult. Here this image may imply brazenly exploring the mysteries of the beard of *Arikh Anpin*.

The description “white as snow” derives from Daniel 7:9: *As I watched, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days sat—His garment like white snow, the hair of His head like clean fleece, His throne flames of fire, its wheels blazing fire.* On the concluding phrase, “faith of all faith,” cf. below, [note 98](#).

Based on the extended description of the holy divine beard in *Idra Rabba* (and *Idra Zuta*), kabbalists insisted on not trimming their own beards at all—or even removing a single strand—since the human beard symbolizes the divine

beard, each strand of which conveys the flow of emanation. See Vital, *Sha'ar ha-Mitsvot*, 56b-57a (quoting Isaac Luria); Romanelli, *Massa ba-'rav*, 52; Wiener, *Hadrat Panim Zaqan*, 37-46 and passim; Horowitz, "Al Mashma'uyyot ha-Zaqan bi-Qhillot Yisra'el," 137-46; Hallamish, *Ha-Qabbalah*, 313-14.

On the divine beard, see Giller, *Reading the Zohar*, 118-24. On the beard as glorious, see BT *Shabbat* 152a, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Korḥah: "The glory of a face is the beard." See Ibn Ezra on Leviticus 19:27; *Zohar* 2:122b, 176b-177b (*SdT*s), 186b; 3:130b-134b (*IR*), 139a-140b (*IR*), 289a-b (*IZ*), 295a-b (*IZ*). Cf. David Kimḥi on 2 Samuel 10:5. On the motif of the beard extending to the navel, see Horowitz, "Al Mashma'uyyot ha-Zaqan bi-Qhillot Yisra'el," 136-37.

On the phallic association of the beard, see *Zohar* 2:186b (Vol. 6, p. 50, n. 130); Wolfson, *Circle in the Square*, 196-97, n. 6; idem, *Venturing Beyond*, 210, n. 87; Giller, *Reading the Zohar*, 94, 123; Hellner-Eshed, *Qeri'ah ba-Idra Rabba*. Cf. M *Sanhedrin* 8:1, 4; *Niddah* 6:11. According to Talmudic tradition (BT *Shabbat* 152a, *Yevamot* 80b), a eunuch is characterized by his lack of a beard.

On the negative association of grabbing someone's beard, see *Zohar* 2:17a (*MhN*); Constable, "On Beards in the Middle Ages," 62; Horowitz, "Al Mashma'uyyot ha-Zaqan bi-Qhillot Yisra'el," 129-30. Cf. below, [notes 99](#), [335](#).

[83. the Concealment of the Book...](#) Referring to *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (The Book of Concealment). See *Zohar* 2:177a (*SdT*s); above, [note 22](#).

The phrase "offering of spices" alludes to the cheeks, based on the description of the beloved in Song of Songs 5:13: *his cheeks like a bed of spices* [or: *balsam*]. See *Zohar* 2:177a (*SdT*s); 3:133b, 134b, 139a, 140b (all *IR*), 295a (*IZ*).

[84. This is the glorious beard...](#) The beard of *Arikh Anpin* conveys thirteen streams of emanation via thirteen תקונין (*tiqqunin*), "arrangements, enhancements" (or locks,

curls, curlicues, formations, features), which are described below.

On the term *tiqquna*, see above, [notes 5, 32, 38](#). On the thirteen enhancements of *Arikh Anpin*, see (in addition to the passage here, extending to 3:134a) *Zohar* 2:176b-177a (*SdT*s); 3:289a-b (*IZ*). On the connection between the thirteen enhancements and the thirteen attributes of Compassion, see below, [note 99](#).

According to rabbinic sources, thirteen rivers of balsam await the righteous in the world that is coming. See above, [p. 77, n. 67](#). On thirteen springs associated with the beard of *Arikh Anpin*, see *Zohar* 2:177a (*SdT*s); 3:131a-b (*IR*), 134b (*IR*), 139a (*IR*), 140a (*IR*), 289a-b (*IZ*), 295a (*IZ*). See also Gikatilla, *Sod Shelosh Esreh Middot*, 219-25; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 99-103. On the connection between the beard and faith, see below, [note 98](#).

[85.](#) First enhancement... This first *tiqquna* (enhancement) of the beard consists of hair extending from above the ears to the top lip of the mouth.

[86.](#) Second enhancement... From one side of the upper lip to the other.

[87.](#) Third enhancement... This enhancement consists of the philtrum, the vertical groove running from right beneath the nose to the top of the lip. This “path” is free of hair.

[88.](#) Fourth enhancement... The hair growing beneath the lower lip from one side to the other.

[89.](#) Fifth enhancement... The indentation beneath the lower lip, where a “path” supposedly appears between the hair, corresponding to the third enhancement.

[90.](#) Sixth enhancement... Mainly the hair covering the cheeks, which are called “the offering of fine spices.” See above, [note 83](#).

[91.](#) Seventh enhancement... The round fleshy parts of the cheeks beneath the eyes, free of hair, appearing

especially in a smile, and described here as “two apples.” See *Zohar* 3:133b (*IR*), 139a (*IR*).

92. Eighth enhancement... The widening of the beard beneath the mouth and extending all the way down to the navel.

93. Ninth enhancement... The small, short hairs within the hanging body of the beard.

94. Eleventh enhancement... Describing the strands of hair covering the throat (mentioned in the tenth enhancement). The final clause may imply that the hairs are of equal length.

95. Thirteenth enhancement... The hair behind the visible hanging body of the beard (described in the eighth enhancement).

96. None of the face of the fragrant offering... The only visible parts of the entire cheeks (“the fragrant offering”) are the round fleshy “apples.” See above, [notes 83, 91](#).

97. Through these thirteen enhancements... Through the entire beard flow streams of emanation to the sefirotic configurations below.

On the thirteen springs, see above, [note 84](#). The phrase “calyx and blossom” derives from the biblical description of the lampstand in the Tabernacle. See Exodus 25:33, and *Targum Onqelos*, ad loc. On the association of apples with calyxes, see BT *Menahot* 28b: “The כפתורים (*kaftorim*), ‘calyxes’ [of the lampstand], were like Cretan apples.” (The term *kaftor* means both “calyx” and “Crete.”)

98. with the perfection of the beard... A man whose beard is fully grown, displaying all thirteen of these enhancements, is considered trustworthy and faithful. See below, [note 324](#).

99. the Concealment of the Book... Referring to *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (The Book of Concealment). Cf. *Zohar* 2:177a (*SdT*s); Vol. 5, p. 558, n. 30. See above, [note 22](#).

By the manifestation of some of the thirteen enhancements in the world, thirteen gates of Compassion are opened. These gates correspond to the thirteen attributes of Compassion, which are derived from two biblical passages (in Exodus and Micah).

The more prevalent list of the attributes of Compassion appears in Exodus 34:6-7, which reads in full: *YHVH passed before his face and called out, "YHVH! YHVH! A compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger [or: long-suffering], and abounding in kindness [or: love] and truth [or: faithfulness], keeping kindness for the thousandth generation, removing iniquity, transgression, and sin; yet He does not wholly acquit, inflicting the guilt of fathers upon sons and upon sons of sons, to the third and fourth generations."* For the verses in Micah, see below at [note 101](#).

Rabbi Shim'on declares that whoever extends his hand (and takes hold of his beard) to swear an oath is as if he swears by the thirteen enhancements of the beard of *Arikkh Anpin*. He then asks how many enhancements there are in the beard of *Ze'eir Anpin*.

Cf. *Zohar* 1:165a (Vol. 2, p. 422, n. 831). See also Rabbi Shim'on's exclamation above (at [note 82](#)): "Woe to one who extends his hand into the glorious supernal beard of the holy Elder, hidden and concealed of all!"

The motif of swearing by one's beard is demonstrated in medieval literature, e.g., in the twelfth-century French epic poem *La Chanson de Roland* (§§ 4, 17-18, 130, 288). The twelfth-century abbot Burchard of Bellevaux describes how men "introduce their beards into their swearing as if out of reverence, in order that whatever they affirm by swearing by their beards may be held not unbelievable but holy. A man of this type says, 'By this beard, it is so,' or 'it is not so,' or 'it will be so,' or 'it will not be otherwise.'" See Constable, "On Beards in the Middle Ages," 64.

On Jews and Moslems swearing by the beard, see Romanelli, *Massa ba-rav*, 52; Horowitz, "Al Mashma'uyyot

ha-Zaqan bi-Qhillot Yisra'el," 144-45. Shakespeare utilizes the image several times (*Two Gentlemen of Verona*, 4:1; *As You Like It* 1:2; *Troilus and Cressida* 4:5). The motif reappears in the famous exchange in the fairy tale "Three Little Pigs" between the big bad wolf and each of the pigs: "Little pig, little pig, let me come in." "No, no, not by the hair on my chinny chin chin." "Then I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house down."

100. twirl the curls of the Holy King's enhancements... That is, elucidate and elaborate the enhancements of the divine beard. See below at [note 325](#).

101. Who is a God like You... Thirteen attributes... As indicated below (at [note 110](#)), the divine description in these three verses from Micah contains thirteen elements, signifying thirteen attributes and alluding to the thirteen enhancements of the beard of *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of Ancients). On the thirteen springs, see above, [note 84](#).

102. hidden and not hidden... Revealed partially through its manifestations in lower sefirotic configurations, or revealed to genuine seekers. See above at [notes 38, 81](#).

103. First enhancement... As indicated above (at [note 85](#)), the first enhancement of the beard consists of hair extending from above the ears to the top lip of the mouth. Soon Rabbi Yitshak will elucidate this enhancement. On the unique nature of each strand of hair, see above, [note 34](#).

104. If all strands... If the hair of the head of *Arikh Anpin* and the hair of His beard is all equally holy, why are the strands of the hair of the head longer than those of the beard? And why are the latter coarse and the former smooth? On the contrast between the hair of the head and that of the beard, see *Zohar* 3:49a; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 119-20.

105. Those of the head extend... They are long so that they can reach the head of *Ze'eir Anpin* below, conveying the flow of emanation from the brain of *Arikh Anpin* to brain of

Ze'eir Anpin. As explained below, if the hair of the head of *Arikh Anpin* were coarse, it could not transmit this flow.

106. *Wisdoms cry aloud outside...* In its simple sense, the unusual plural form חכמות (*hokhmot*), *wisdoms*, is apparently a plural of majesty or intensification. Here, Rabbi Yitshak wonders why the verse begins in the plural and then switches to the singular (*she lifts her voice*). He explains that the plural *wisdoms* refers to the two divine brains—of *Arikh Anpin* and *Ze'eir Anpin*—which interact *outside* the concealed brain of *Arikh Anpin*. The singular conclusion of the verse refers to the union of the two brains, that is, when one flows to the other. On the plural form *wisdoms* in the verse from Proverbs, see *Zohar* 1:141b; 3:140a (*IR*).

107. *Because of the flow from brain to brain...* The strands of hair on the head of *Arikh Anpin* are not coarse because if they were they could not convey the flow from His brain to that of *Ze'eir Anpin*.

On the incompatibility of anger and wisdom, see BT *Pesaḥim* 66b, in the name of Resh Lakish: “Regarding any person who becomes angry, if he is a sage, his wisdom departs from him; if he is a prophet, his prophecy departs from him.”

Cf. M *Avot* 2:5, in the name of Hillel: “The bashful cannot learn, nor can the hot-tempered teach.” On the physiognomy of hair, see above, [note 35](#).

108. *Consequently, they are long...* The hair on the head of *Arikh Anpin* is long so that it can reach the spinal cord of *Ze'eir Anpin*.

See above, [note 105](#). On the relation between the brain and the spinal cord, see BT *Hullin* 45a-b.

109. All those hairs... Of both the head and the beard of *Arikh Anpin* are white, signifying Compassion. However, the hairs of His beard are coarse and powerful so that they can transmit the thirteen attributes (associated with the thirteen enhancements of His beard) to the black beard of *Ze'eir Anpin* below, which is characterized by Judgment and can be assuaged only by a powerful source.

The description “white as snow” derives from Daniel 7:9: *As I watched, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days sat—His garment like white snow, the hair of His head like clean fleece, His throne flames of fire, its wheels blazing fire.*

110. In front of the ears hairs begin... The hair of the beard of *Arikh Anpin* begins in front of the ears, not mingling with the hair of His head. The three verses in Micah allude to all thirteen enhancements of the beard of *Arikh Anpin*, while correspondingly the verses in Exodus allude to the thirteen enhancements “below,” that is, to the conveying of these enhancements to the beard of *Ze'eir Anpin* (which on its own includes only nine enhancements), thereby assuaging that lower beard’s quality of Judgment.

For the uninterrupted verses in Micah, see above at [note 101](#). For the verses in Exodus, see above, [note 99](#). For various views on how the wording in Exodus yields thirteen attributes, see Margaliot’s discussion in his edition of *Sefer Ḥasidim*, § 250, n. 3; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, 22:124–25; and Steinsaltz’s table in his edition of BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 17b.

111. How could Moses not utter these supernal ones?... Since the thirteen attributes recorded in Micah are so supernal (relating directly to *Arikh Anpin*), why weren’t they uttered by Moses, the greatest of all prophets? Rabbi Yitshak explains that Moses sought to apply the attributes below to *Ze'eir Anpin*, “where Judgment prevails,” thereby assuaging the quality of Judgment; so he needed to express the “lower” thirteen attributes recorded in Exodus. This

was critical because Israel had just sinned by worshiping the Golden Calf, and Judgment was looming, threatening to destroy them. On the other hand, in the book of Micah (“this other place”), the prophet conveys the elevated praise of *Arikh Anpin* (or the Ancient of Days) by uttering the supernal attributes.

See *Zohar* 3:138a (*IR*), 147a (*IR*). On the notion that Moses spoke the attributes listed in Exodus 34, see *Targum Yerushalmi* (frag.), Exodus 34:6; *Pirquei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 46 (and David Luria, ad loc., n. 77); BT *Yoma* 36b; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, Leviticus 34:6, nn. 48, 51–52.

112. Those thirteen enhancements... The hairs of the beard of *Arikh Anpin* are coarse and powerful because they must overwhelm the decrees of harsh Judgment below (deriving from *Ze’eir Anpin*). Any harsh forces that see this holy beard are ashamed and incapacitated. See above, [note 109](#).

113. If so, look, the hairs below are black... If the hairs of the beard of *Arikh Anpin* are coarse and powerful yet white, why are the coarse hairs of *Ze’eir Anpin*’s beard black? Why are they not all the same color? In response, Rabbi Yitshak first quotes the verse from Song of Songs, which alludes to the black hair of *Ze’eir Anpin*. The white hair of *Arikh Anpin*, situated above the black hair of *Ze’eir Anpin*, matches the image of white fire upon black fire.

The description of Torah as being “given to Israel in white fire upon black fire” reverses the common rabbinic image (attributed to Rabbi Shim’on son of Lakish), according to which it was inscribed (or engraved) in black fire upon white fire. See JT *Sheqalim* 6:2, 49d; *Sotah* 8:1, 22d; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:11; *Devarim Rabbah* 3:12; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 89; *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 1; *Midrash Tehillim* 90:12; *Zohar* 2:84a, 114a; 226b (“in white fire upon black fire”); 3:154b; Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 38, 48–50; Idel, “Tefisat ha-Torah,” 43–46; idem, *Absorbing Perfections*, 45–79.

On the contrast between God's white and black hair, see BT *Hagigah* 14a: "One verse says, *His garment like white snow, the hair of His head like clean fleece* (Daniel 7:9); yet it is written *his locks wavy, black as a raven* (Song of Songs 5:11)! There is no contradiction: here, referring to [God] sitting [in judgment]; there, to war. For a master has said: In sitting, none is more fitting than an old man, and in war none is more fitting than a young man."

The reference to sitting in judgment fits the context in Daniel (7:9–10): *As I watched, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days sat—His garment like white snow, the hair of His head like clean fleece.... Judgment [or: the judicial assembly] sat [or: was seated], and books were opened.* The reference to war reflects the tradition that the Song of Songs conveys a vision of God at the Red Sea, where He appeared as *a man of war* (Exodus 15:3). See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:2; Lieberman, "Mishnat Shir ha-Shirim." On such contrasting depictions of God, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 4; *Bahodesh* 5; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Yitro* 16; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 21, 100b; *Sekhel Tov*, Exodus 15:21.

The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *His head finest gold, his locks תלתלים (taltallim), wavy [or: curly, luxuriant, fronds of a palm], black as a raven.* See above, [note 32](#); [p. 316, n. 83](#). On the black hair of *Ze'ir Anpin*, see *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdTs*); 3:136a (*IR*), 139a (*IR*), 140a (*IR*), 293a (*IZ*).

114. Essence of the matter... Rabbi Yitshak returns to the question of why the hairs on the head of *Arikh Anpin* are long. The reason is that these hairs must convey a flow from the brain of *Arikh Anpin* to the brain of *Ze'ir Anpin* below.

115. First enhancement... As indicated above (at [note 85](#)), the first enhancement of the beard consists of hair extending from above the ears to the top lip of the mouth. Here, "the start of the hair of the head" means the initial lowest part.

116. the head of a thousand worlds... The head of *Ariḳh Anpin*. On the image of the primal ring, cf. *Zohar* 1:15a.

117. nor do these hairs descend... That is, they do not descend far.

118. thirty-one even locks... This number is equivalent to the numerical value of the divine name לַא (*El*), “God,” which signifies the first enhancement both in the verses from Micah and Exodus. See above, [note 110](#).

As Rabbi Yitshak indicates, the word *el* also connotes “strength, power, ability.” See Genesis 31:29; Deuteronomy 28:32; Proverbs 3:27; Micah 2:1; Nehemiah 5:5. Here this sense refers to the strength to subdue the forces of Judgment below.

119. thirty-one worlds... Which scrutinize the forces of Judgment below.

Although *El* indicates the power to subdue Judgment, this quality is assuaged and overwhelmed by the Compassion of *Ariḳh Anpin* (who is known as the Ancient of Days). On the expression “worlds of yearning,” see above, [p. 198](#), end of [n. 418](#).

120. Why to the mouth?... The first enhancement of the beard extends to the divine mouth so that it will not pronounce judgment.

The full verse in Daniel (describing the Ancient of Days) reads: *A river of fire was flowing and gushing from His presence, a thousand thousands serving Him, a myriad of myriads attending Him.* דִּינָא יְתִיב (*Dina yetiv*), *Judgment* [or: *the judicial assembly*] *sat* [or: *was seated*], *and books were opened*. Here, Rabbi Yitshak interprets *Judgment sat* as “Judgment sat still” and was not carried out. See above, [note 44](#).

The verse in Isaiah provides the throne name of the Davidic king: *Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace*. Rabbi Yitshak may be interpreting פֶּלֵא (*pele*), *wonderful*, as alluding to פֶּה (*peh*), “mouth,” and אֵל (*El*), *God*.

The concluding sentence means that the beginning of the verse in Micah refers to the first enhancement of the beard of *Arikh Anpin* (who is known as the Ancient of Days). See above at [note 110](#).

121. The first world... Each of the three worlds described here subdues numerous forces of Judgment below.

The concluding phrase (“like a chest sealed by a large clasp”) renders בקיסטא בעזיקא רבא (*ke-qista be-izqa rabba*). *Qista* apparently derives here from Latin *cista*, “chest, box,” and Greek *kiste*, “basket, hamper.” See *M Kelim* 15:1; *Arukh ha-Shalem*, s.v. *qst*. (Elsewhere in the *Zohar qista* often means “a measure, jug,” deriving from Greek *xestes*, a measure about the size of a pint. See above, [p. 23, n. 64](#); [p. 200, n. 423](#).) *Izqa* means “ring; signet ring; fetter,” perhaps referring here to a clasp. See *Targum Yonatan*, Jeremiah 40:1; Rosenberg, *The Anatomy of God*.

122. The second world... The number of forces of Judgment in this world (fifty-seven thousand) may be based on the numerical value of אל (*El*), “God,” and יהוה (*YHVH*), which equals fifty-seven.

The concluding phrase apparently describes how an animal is controlled (or prodded) by a sharp object. The wording (“like the nape of an animal’s neck by a thorny cane”) renders בקידלא בחזירא (*ke-qidla be-ḥizra*), “like a neck (or nape of a neck) by a thorn (or cane, reed).” See *Bei’ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 189, s.v. *be-quidla be-ḥizra*; *Or Yaqar*.

123. The third world... The number of forces of Judgment here (ninety-six thousand) may be based on the combined numerical value of אל (*El*), “God,” and אדני (*Adonai*), which equals ninety-six.

The concluding phrase (“like vestments on an emperor”) renders כבוסיטא לקוסרא (*ke-vosita le-qusra*). *Vosita* (or *bosita*) apparently derives from Latin *vestis*, “garment, vestment.” See *Bemidbar Rabbah* 7:3: בסטיא (*bestiyya*),

“garments”; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 134–35; below, [note 209](#). *Qusra* may be based on קיסרָא (*qeisara*), “Caesar, emperor.”

124. like the bitterness of tears... As God’s tears, shed over Israel’s suffering, are sweetened when they fall into the Great Sea.

See BT *Berakhot* 59a: “When the blessed Holy One remembers His children, who are plunged in suffering among the nations of the world, He sheds two tears into the Great Sea, and His voice resounds from one end of the world to the other.”

See *Zohar* 1:4b, 231a; 2:9a, 18a (*MhN*), 19a–b (*MhN*), 195b–196a; 3:137b (*IR*), 138b (*IR*), 143a (*IR*), 172a–b; *ZḤ* 53b, 88a (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Seder Gan Eden*, 133.

125. Who can behold this enhancement... When harsh forces of Judgment see this enhancement of the beard of *Arikh Anpin*, they are ashamed and incapacitated. See above, [note 112](#).

His crowning white enhancements surpass those of *Ze’eir Anpin* below, which are fewer in number and black, yet linked with the higher ones.

126. Enhancements were arranged... Each of the thirteen enhancements of *Arikh Anpin* generates a particular blessing for those in need below. All the lower worlds yearn for such blessings.

127. If the Ancient of Ancients... were not arrayed... If *Arikh Anpin* were not arrayed in His enhancements, the divine energy could not be channeled below and everything would cease to exist.

128. Until thirteen below... The thirteen enhancements of *Arikh Anpin* radiate below to *Ze’eir Anpin*, who on His own possesses only nine enhancements, but when the thirteen above are manifested below, *Ze’eir Anpin* shares “the count of these thirteen.”

129. it is not mentioned... The beard of *Arikh Anpin* is not mentioned in the Torah. Cf. below, [note 311](#); and above at [note 66](#).

The continuation of this paragraph may mean: From the beard of *Ariḳh Anpin* is revealed the beard of *Ze'eir Anpin* (who is identified here as “the High Priest above”), from whom the beard descends, as it were, to the human high priest who serves in the Temple. Just as the beard of *Ze'eir Anpin* is arrayed in eight enhancements (plus a culminating ninth one), so the high priest on earth is arrayed in eight garments.

These eight garments include four garments worn by all of the priests (tunic, sash, breeches and headdress—or, for the high priest, a turban), and four special garments worn by the high priest alone (ephod, breast-piece, robe, and gold medallion). See Exodus 28 and 39; Leviticus 8:7–9, 13; Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1:501–13; *Zohar* 3:37a.

The *fine oil* in the verse from Psalms symbolizes the flow of emanation, which is conveyed by the divine beard. On this verse, see above, [p. 59](#), [n. 13](#). Elsewhere in the *Zohar*, *Ḥesed* is often identified as the divine priest. On the image of the angel Michael bringing an offering to God, see BT *Ḥagigah* 12b, *Zevaḥim* 62a, *Menaḥot* 110a; *Midrash Tehillim* 134:1; Vol. 7, pp. 174–75, n. 20.

For various interpretations of this paragraph, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital (in *Hadrat Melekh*); *Qol be-Ramah*; *Emet le-Ya'aqov*; *Ruah David*; *Bei'urei ha-Gera*; *Yafah Sha'ah*; *Yayin ha-Reqaḥ*; *Sullam*; Rosenberg, *The Anatomy of God*; *Sha'arei ha-Idra*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

[130](#). How do we know?... That the high priest on earth corresponds to the divine High Priest. Rabbi Yitṣḥak interprets *brothers* (in the preceding verse from Psalms) as alluding to *Ariḳh Anpin* and *Ze'eir Anpin*. The word גַּם (*gam*) means literally “also,” but because in biblical Hebrew it often serves to emphasize or intensify, the verse in its simple sense reads (*dwelling*) *fully together*. Here, based on the rabbinic hermeneutical principle that *gam* can amplify meaning, Rabbi Yitṣḥak indicates that it includes the high priest below. Through his earthly service, the high priest

stimulates the divine High Priest to convey the flow of emanation.

131. the Countenance of Days of the Ancient of Ancients... Playing on “the Ancient of Days.” See *Bereshit Rabbah* 35:2; *Zohar* 1:83a, 89b (ST), 130a, 188a; 3:201a; ZH 19a (MhN).

132. celebrate the glory of the enhancements... By elucidating their secret meaning.

133. I am my beloved’s... Rabbi Hizkiyah applies the verse to himself. What engendered his intimacy with the Beloved? The outpouring of divine desire upon him.

The verse in Song of Songs reads: *I am my beloved’s, and his desire is עלי (alai), for [or: toward; literally: upon] me.* On this verse, see *Zohar* 1:88a-b; 3:288a (IZ).

134. I was contemplating, and behold... On this wording, see Daniel 7:6-9. On the number 325 in an almost identical context, see Gikatilla, *Sod Shelosh Esreh Middot*, 222. Cf. *Zohar* 3:48b; below, [note 224](#). On the image of bathing, see above at [notes 53-54](#).

On this passage, see Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 101-3; Hellner-Eshed, “Temunah mi-Ma’amaqim”; idem and Leader, *Idra Rabba*; Sobol, “Ein Mal’akh Ehad Oseh Shetei Sheliḥuyyot”; Asulin, “Ha-Pegam ve-Tiqquno,” 228-29.

135. You have seen removing iniquity... Angels inform Rabbi Hizkiyah that he has seen the divine attribute of *removing iniquity*, signified by “one darkness... bathing in that light.” This attribute corresponds to the second enhancement of the beard of *Ariḥ Anpin*, namely the hair extending from one side of the upper lip to the other. See above at [note 86](#). For the context in Micah, see above at [notes 101, 110](#).

The notion of seeing one of God’s thirteen attributes derives from BT *Sanhedrin* 111a, which discusses the verse in Exodus immediately following the list of attributes: “*Moses quickly kneeled down to the ground and prostrated himself* (Exodus 34:8). What did Moses see? Rabbi Ḥanina

son of Gamla said, 'He saw ארך אפים (*erekh appayim*), *slow to anger* (ibid., 6).' The Rabbis say, 'He saw אמת (*emet*) *truth* [or: *faithfulness*] (ibid.).'"

See Jacob ben Sheshet, *Ha-Emunah ve-ha-Bittahon*, 23, pp. 437-38; Bahya ben Asher on Exodus 34:8; Scholem. For the full list of attributes in Exodus 34, see above, [note 99](#).

136. All lamps—you Companions... Rabbi Shim'on addresses his brilliant Companions, who are assembled in a circle (or semicircle). He calls as witnesses "the highest heaven and the highest holy earth" (apparently referring to *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*) and declares that he now sees what no one has seen since Moses ascended Mount Sinai the second time, after smashing the first set of tablets. This may imply that on his first ascent Moses saw something even greater. Or it could refer to the fact that during his earlier ascent Moses was accompanied by Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel, all of whom experienced a divine vision (see Exodus 24:9-11), whereas on his second ascent Moses was alone. Moreover, when he ascended this second time, Moses heard God proclaiming His thirteen attributes (ibid. 34:4-7), and according to the Talmudic tradition (quoted in the preceding note) Moses actually saw one of these attributes.

On the boldness of Rabbi Shim'on's claim, see Jacob Emden's shocked response in *Mitpaḥat Sefarim*, 29: "Ah! What can I say? Is it possible to believe this according to its simple sense?" On the comparison and contrast between Rabbi Shim'on and Moses, see Huss, *Ke-Zohar ha-Raqi'a*, 11-42.

On the Companions as "lamps," cf. Rabbi Shim'on's title "the Holy Lamp" (discussed above, [p. 139](#), [n. 250](#)). See also BT *Pesaḥim* 8a, in the name of Rava: "To what are the righteous compared in the presence of *Shekhinah*? To a lamp in the presence of a torch."

On the circular assembly of Rabbi Shim'on and the Companions, see above, [note 4](#). On the verse in Malachi,

see *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:10; 78:5; BT *Nedarim* 8b, *Avodah Zarah* 3b-4a; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 14, p. 271; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 1:5; *Midrash Tehillim* 41:4; 58:3.

137. Furthermore, I know that my face is shining... Rabbi Shim'on's awareness elevates him above Moses, who was unaware that his face glowed from encountering God on Mount Sinai.

The radicalness of Rabbi Shim'on's claim that he surpasses Moses is underscored by the strained attempts of interpreters to explain it away. See *Or Yaqar*; Vital (in *Hadrat Melekh*); *Yafah Sha'ah*; *Yayin ha-Reqaḥ*. See further Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:10; Huss, *Ke-Zohar ha-Raqi'a*, 26-27. On Moses' not knowing that his face shone, see BT *Shabbat* 10b, *Beitsah* 16a. Cf. *Zohar* 2:179a (*SdT*s).

According to a rabbinic tradition, "Matters that were not revealed to Moses were revealed to Rabbi Akiva," who was Rabbi Shim'on's teacher. See *Tanḥuma*, *Huqqat* 8; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Huqqat* 24; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 14, 64b; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 19:6. Cf. *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 13; *Pirgei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 2.

The context in Exodus (34:29-30) reads: *When Moses came down from Mount Sinai—with the two tablets of the Covenant in Moses' hand as he came down from the mountain—Moses did not know that the skin of his face was radiant because of His speaking with him [or: because of his speaking with Him]. Aaron and all the Children of Israel saw Moses, and look, the skin of his face was radiant, and they were afraid to come near him.*

138. I see with my own eyes these thirteen... Whereas the Talmud indicates that Moses saw only one of God's thirteen attributes, Rabbi Shim'on declares that he sees all thirteen, which correspond to the thirteen enhancements of the beard of *Arikh Anpin*.

As each of the Companions elucidates one of the enhancements (and its corresponding attribute), that enhancement ascends and is arrayed and concealed within

the divine beard, while the other enhancements remain below to be expounded. Thus the creativity of the Companions enhances and perfects the divine beard.

See below, [note 211](#); Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 61–63. On creative words ascending and being crowned, see *Zohar* 1:4b–5a; 3:85a. On Moses seeing one of the thirteen attributes, see above, [note 135](#). The phrase “like a king among his legions” derives from Job 29:25 and *Targum*, ad loc.

139. Gird yourselves... Prepare for the struggle of penetrating and elucidating the secrets. On the battle of Torah, see above, [note 5](#).

According to rabbinic sources, Rabbi Shim'on claimed that he could protect the world until the Messiah arrives. (See *Bereshit Rabbah* 35:2; JT *Berakhot* 9:2, 13d; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:15. Cf. BT *Sukkah* 45b.) According to the *Zohar*, Rabbi Shim'on's generation is the greatest one there will be until the Messiah appears. See above, [p. 191, n. 398](#); Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 1–84.

The phrase “a monumental event” renders קיימא (*qeyama*), whose range of meaning in the *Zohar* includes “pillar, monument, status, position, event.” Here, the term is likely based on the medieval sense of מעמד (*ma'amad*), as in the phrase מעמד הר סיני (*ma'amad har sinai*), “the event (or standing) at Mount Sinai.” See Liebes, *Peraqim*, 359–60; idem, *Studies in the Zohar*, 23; above, [note 2](#).

140. Rise, Rabbi Hizkiyah, a second time Rabbi Shim'on directs Rabbi Hizkiyah to continue and elucidate the next enhancement of the divine beard, the third one.

141. One messenger does not perform two missions Since Rabbi Hizkiyah has elucidated the second enhancement, now another one of the Companions should proceed with the third one.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 50:2: “One angel [or: messenger] does not perform two missions, nor do two angels perform one mission.” See *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayera* 20; *Zohar*

1:107a, 119b, 127a (*MhN*); Sobol, “Ein Mal’akh Eḥad Oseh Shetei Sheliḥuyyot.”

142. Each and every one in his place... Each of the Companions will elucidate appropriately. On the special status of Rabbi Shim’on, Rabbi El’azar, and Rabbi Abba, see above, [note 12](#).

143. Look, I do not know how to speak... How could Jeremiah have said this, when he certainly had been speaking for years?

The verse in Jeremiah reads: אָהָה אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה (*Ahah Adonai YHVH*), *Ah, Lord YHVH*. The last Hebrew word in this phrase is traditionally assigned the vowels of the name אֱלֹהִים (*Elohim*), “God,” and pronounced as such. The *Zohar* quotes the verse as אָהָה יי אֱלֹהִים (*Ahah YY Elohim*), replacing *Adonai* with “יי” (YY)—a frequent abbreviation of יְהוָה (*YHVH*)—and replacing *YHVH* with *Elohim*. See *Tanḥuma, Toledot* 12.

144. Well, perish the thought... Rabbi Ḥiyya explains that Jeremiah was specifying that he did not know דָּבַר (*dabber*), *how to speak*, which is different than not knowing how to talk at all. דִּבּוּר (*Dibbur*), “speaking,” implies proclaiming powerfully, whereas אֲמִירָה (*amirah*), “saying,” refers to normal talking. For example, when God revealed the Ten Commandments, He *spoke*, causing the world to tremble. Similarly, Jeremiah claimed that he did not *how to speak* and proclaim forcefully, reprimanding Israel.

On the semantic distinction between *dibbur* (speaking) and *amirah* (saying), see above, [p. 58](#), [n. 10](#). On the interpretation of *I do not know how to speak* in the verse from Jeremiah, see David Kimḥi, *ad loc.*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:79. On the overwhelming power of God’s revelation at Mount Sinai, cf. *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:6; 5:16; BT *Shabbat* 88b; *Pesiḳta Rabbati* 20, 98b; *Shemot Rabbah* 29:4; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 10:1.

145. If so, look at what is written... If the divine *dibbur* (speech) is so overwhelming, then how could the Torah state so often (a total of seventy times) וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה (*Va-ydabber*

YHVH), *YHVH spoke, to Moses?* On the distinction between Moses and other prophets, see Vol. 3, p. 31, nn. 217–18.

146. The first enhancement... The first two enhancements of the beard culminate in the third. On these three enhancements, see above, [notes 85–87](#).

147. Third enhancement... This is the philtrum, the vertical groove running from right beneath the nose to the top of the lip. This “path” is free of hair. Rabbi Ḥiyya indicates that “hair ceases on this path” so that the divine breath can pass freely down from the nostrils—thereby *passing over transgression* and passing down to the mouth, which can then declare *I have forgiven*.

See *Zohar* 2:177a (*SdTs*). The phrase in Micah 7:18 corresponds to this third enhancement, as mentioned above at [note 110](#). The phrase ‘subduing iniquities’ paraphrases the wording in the following verse in Micah: *He will subdue our iniquities*. The divine declaration *I have forgiven* appears in Numbers after Moses repeats certain attributes originally listed in Exodus 34:6–7.

148. Numerous registrars... Heavenly powers who record the divine declaration of forgiveness.

“Registrars” renders ערקיסאות (*arqisa’ot*), a neologism apparently based on ערכאות (*erkha’ot*), “record offices, archives; courts, magistrates’ offices.”

149. the Concealment of the Book... Supposedly referring to *Sifra di-Tsni’uta* (The Book of Concealment), though the passage quoted here does not appear in the extant *Sifra di-Tsni’uta*. Cf. *Zohar* 2:177a (*SdTs*); Vol. 5, p. 557; 3:141a (*IR*). See above, [note 22](#).

If Israel proves worthy, then the letters of the word פשע (*pasha*), *transgression*, become rearranged as שפע (*shepha*), “abundant flow”—the ש (*shin*) now preceding the פ (*pe*)—signifying the flow of divine Compassion. If the people are not worthy, then the compassionate breath of *Arikh Anpin* stands still and does not “pass over” into *Ze’eir Anpin* (the Short-Tempered One) to assuage the latter’s wrath.

150. What is the difference... Between *Ze'eir Anpin* and *Arikh Anpin*? The former becomes so incensed by human sin that His nostrils flare.

The verse in Numbers reads: *The wrath* [literally: *nose*] *of YHVH flared against them*, וַיֵּלֶךְ (*va-yelekh*), *and He went off*. Here, Rabbi Ḥiyya construes the final clause as describing not God's departure but rather the effect of divine wrath on anyone found in the vicinity: *and he went*, that is, any such person is permanently "gone."

On the divine wrath shooting forth from the nostrils, see *Zohar* 3:137b-138a (*IR*). The verse in Isaiah reads: *Grass withers, flowers fade, for the breath of YHVH blows upon it*. Cf. Psalms 103:15-16.

151. Of Arikh Anpin... The breath pouring from His nostrils soothes and purifies, *passing over transgression*. However, the verse in Exodus describes the destructive passage of *Ze'eir Anpin* (who is called *YHVH*).

The verse in Job reads: *A wind passes, clearing them* (that is, clearing the skies of clouds). The full verse in Exodus, describing the killing of the Egyptian firstborn, reads: *YHVH will pass* [or: *pass through*] *to strike Egypt, and when He sees the blood* [of the paschal lamb] *on the lintel and on the two doorposts, YHVH will pass over the entrance and will not allow the Destroyer to enter your houses to strike*. See *Zohar* 1:201a.

152. one who is worthy of this... Of being forgiven by the soothing breath of *Arikh Anpin* passing on this path, which is the third enhancement of the divine beard.

153. I will rejoice greatly... The word *rejoice* resonates with the end of Rabbi Shim'on's declaration to Rabbi Ḥiyya: "and gladly protect you." The Ancient of Days is *Arikh Anpin*, source of all joy.

154. When this path of the beard... When the vertical groove directly beneath the nose of *Arikh Anpin* is revealed, the divine breath passes freely down from the nostrils and silences all forces of harsh Judgment. So "this

path signifies silence,” which explains the widely recognized gesture of putting a finger to one’s lips to urge another to be silent. For Rabbi Shim’on, the essential point of this gesture is not shutting the mouth or closing the lips but rather indicating the path beneath the nose.

A divine paradigm of this gesture appears in Greek and Roman mythology, where Harpocrates (the son of Isis) is pictured as the god of silence, “the one who suppresses his voice, urging silence with his finger.” See Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 9:692; Augustine, *City of God* 18:5. Cf. below, [note 358](#).

155. Fourth enhancement... The hair growing beneath the lower lip from one side to the other. See above, [note 88](#).

This enhancement corresponds to the next phrase in the passage from Micah: *of the remnant of His people*. See above at [note 110](#). Apparently, Rabbi Shim’on interprets *the remnant* as referring to the “remaining” area around the mouth. In the verse from Kings, the phrase *that is found* may mean that now with this enhancement that remaining area *is found* with hair.

The verse in Zephaniah links *the remnant* with speech, and its continuation mentions the mouth explicitly: *The remnant of Israel shall do no iniquity and speak no falsehood; a deceitful tongue shall not be in their mouths*.

156. Fifth enhancement... The indentation beneath the lower lip, where a “path” supposedly appears between the hair, corresponding to the path of the third enhancement though less visible. See above, [note 89](#).

This enhancement corresponds to the next phrase in the passage from Micah: *He does not retain His wrath forever*. See above at [note 110](#). For Rabbi Shim’on, this implies that *Arikh Anpin* assuages and eliminates the wrath of *Ze’eir Anpin* by conveying compassionate forgiveness toward Him on this path.

157. Rise, Rabbi Yose Rabbi Shim'on instructs him to elucidate this fifth enhancement and thereby arrange it perfectly above. See above, [note 138](#).

158. Happy the people who has it so... Rabbi Yose rereads שְׂכַחָהּ (she-kakhah), *who [has it] so*, as שַׁחַחָהּ (shakhakhah), [*The king's fury*] *abated*. The verse in Psalms now implies: *Happy the people for whom [God's anger] has abated*.

159. Alternatively, subsiding through wrath... Once God has executed punishment and spent His wrath, He is appeased.

The context in Numbers (11:14-15, containing Moses' declaration to God) reads: *I cannot by myself carry this entire people, for it is too heavy for me. If כַּחַח (kakhah), this, is how You treat me, kill me, please, instantly, if I have found favor in Your eyes—so that I won't have to see my wretchedness*. Here, apparently, Rabbi Yose associates *kakhah* with the clause that soon follows—*kill me, please, instantly*—which signifies harsh Judgment, characteristic of *Ze'eir Anpin*. Alternatively, he interprets *if kakhah, this, is how You treat me* differently: "If You intend to spend Your wrath upon the people..." That type of divine behavior reflects harsh Judgment.

Thus the verse in Psalm 144 now encompasses both Judgment and Compassion. The first half of the verse means *Happy the people לו שְׂכַחָהּ (she-kakhah lo), who has it so*—that is, for whom divine wrath subsides once it has been spent. This pertains to the Judgment of *Ze'eir Anpin*. The conclusion of the verse—*Happy the people whose God is YHVH!*—pertains to the Compassion of *Arikh Anpin*, who is called *YHVH*. On the name *YHVH* signifying Compassion, see above, [p. 184](#), [n. 375](#).

160. שְׂכַחָהּ (she-kakhah)—the Name comprising all names... Now Rabbi Yose construes the verse as: *Happy the people לו שְׂכַחָהּ (she-kakhah lo), who has [the Name equivalent to] כַּחַח (kakhah)—that is, the Name יהוה (YHVH), whose numerical value is equal to that of כַּחַח (kakhah), forty-*

five, when יהוה (YHVH) is spelled out completely: יהא ואו הא (Yod He Vav He). This supreme Name, associated with *Arikh Anpin*, includes all divine names.

Arikh Anpin (referred to here as the blessed Holy One) assuages the anger of *Ze'eir Anpin* and passes over the transgression of all those who have strayed.

On YHVH as including all divine names, see *Zohar* 2:260a (*Heikh*); Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orach*, 2a. Cf. *Zohar* 2:124a.

161. The path of the holy supernal enhancement... The upper path directly beneath the nose (which is the third enhancement) and the lower path beneath the lower lip (the fifth enhancement) are equivalent, both conveying the compassionate forgiveness of *Arikh Anpin* to *Ze'eir Anpin* below.

The wording *He does not retain* implies that *His wrath* has no place to stay on the lower path. On the third and fifth enhancements, see above, [notes 147, 156](#).

162. Wherever a path is revealed... Any path within *Arikh Anpin* that is revealed conveys compassionate counsel below. As for what remains sealed, it does not convey such counsel and remains unknown to anyone other than *Arikh Anpin* Himself.

“Eden above” designates the concealed brain of *Arikh Anpin*, which remains enveloped and is unknowable except by *Arikh Anpin* Himself. The phrase *Your thoughts* in Psalm 92 now alludes to this concealed brain. On Eden above (and its concealed pathways), see above, [notes 46-47](#).

163. Sixth enhancement... Mainly the hair covering the cheeks, which are called “the offering of fine spices,” based on the description of the beloved in Song of Songs 5:13: *his cheeks like a bed of spices*. See above, notes, 83, 90. On the lower path, see above, [note 156](#).

164. array this enhancement By elucidating this feature of the beard, Rabbi Yeisa will arrange it perfectly above. See above, [note 138](#).

165. *My love shall never depart...* In this verse God speaks of *My love*, whereas in the other verse He speaks of *love of the world*. How can this contradiction be explained?

Isaiah 54:8 reads וּבְחֶסֶד עוֹלָם (*Uv-ḥesed olam*), *With everlasting love, will I have compassion upon you*. Here, Rabbi Yeisa construes *olam* as *world*, rather than *everlasting*.

166. *There is love, and then there is love...* The *love* manifested by *Arikh Anpin* (who is also known as the Ancient of Ancients and the Ancient of Days) is “inner *love*,” concealed within the edge of the beard.

The priest is associated with *Ḥesed* (Love). On the formulation “There is love, and then there is love!” see *Zohar* 1:219a; 3:21a. Cf. *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdT*s); 3:140b (*IR*).

On the various “edges of the beard,” see M *Makkot* 3:5; BT *Makkot* 20a-21a. On the command not to cut off the edge of the beard, see Leviticus 19:27, which is addressed to the Israelites in general, not just the priests.

167. *the Concealment of the Book...* Supposedly referring to *Sifra di-Tsni’uta* (The Book of Concealment), though the passage quoted here does not appear in the extant *Sifra di-Tsni’uta*. See above, [note 22](#).

168. *My love shall never depart from you...* The expression *My love* alludes to the inner love, concealed within *Arikh Anpin* (who is also known as the Ancient of Days). The alternative expression, *love of the world*, refers to the outer love, belonging to *Ze’eir Anpin* (who is situated “outside” the realm of *Arikh Anpin*). This aspect of חֶסֶד (*ḥesed*) corresponds to the *sefirah* of *Ḥesed*, which is part of the configuration of *Ze’eir Anpin*, who is referred to here as *the world*. See *Zohar* 3:140b (*IR*).

The verse in Psalms reads עוֹלָם חֶסֶד יִבְנֶה (*olam ḥesed yibbaneh*), which is normally understood to mean *Forever will love be established*, but is construed midrashically as *The world is built by love*. See *Mekhilta*, *Shirta* 9; *Sifra*, *Qedoshim* 10:11, 92d; JT *Yevamot* 11:1, 11d; *Sanhedrin* 5:1,

22c; 9:1, 26d; BT *Sanhedrin* 58b; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 4; *Pirquei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 21; *Midrash Tehillim* 89:2; *Zohar* 1:230b; 2:79a, 166b; 3:77a, 145b, 259b; Vol. 7, pp. 524–25, nn. 533–34.

169. true love... According to rabbinic sources, the love that a person displays toward someone who has died (for example, by honoring him) is called “true love,” since the “lover” can expect no compensation for it. Here, Rabbi Yeisa draws on this notion, indicating that “true love does not pertain to life of the body, but rather to life of the soul.”

The term “body” also alludes to *Ze'eir Anpin*, who comprises an entire body, as opposed to *Arikh Anpin*, who consists solely of a head and can also be described as a soul rather than a body. See *Zohar* 3:289b (IZ); Liebes, *Peraqim*, 176, 186, 250.

This sixth enhancement of the beard of *Arikh Anpin* corresponds to the phrase in Micah: *for he delights in love*. See above at [note 110](#). On the rabbinic notion of “true love,” see *Bereshit Rabbah* 96:5; *Tanḥuma, Vayḥi* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayḥi* 5.

170. Seventh enhancement... The round fleshy parts of the cheeks beneath the eyes, free of hair, appearing especially in a smile, and described here as “two apples.” The entire cheeks are pictured as “an offering of spices.” See above, [notes 83, 91](#).

171. Like an apple tree... An apple includes three colors: the white pulp, the red skin, and green stem (or leaves). So the two “apples” of the cheeks of *Arikh Anpin* (who is called here the blessed Holy One) include a total of six colors, corresponding to the six previous enhancements of His beard. This seventh enhancement (the “apples” of the cheeks) is equivalent to all six previous ones, or represents their culmination.

As implied now by the verse in Proverbs, the beaming, smiling cheeks of *Arikh Anpin* radiate life to all. On the verse

in Song of Songs, see *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah*, ad loc. On the image and colors of the apple, see above, [p. 23](#), [n. 66](#).

[172.](#) From these apples... From the beaming cheeks of *Arikh Anpin*, life issues to the world and joy reaches *Ze'eir Anpin*—assuaging His quality of Judgment and ensuring that His face too will shine, conveying blessing to the world. The face of *Ze'eir Anpin* is called “the outer face” because it lies outside the realm of *Arikh Anpin*.

[173.](#) Whenever these outer lamps shine... The *sefirot* of *Ze'eir Anpin*, situated outside the realm of *Arikh Anpin*, are described as “outer lamps.” If their intermittent illumination conveys blessing to the world and eliminates wrath, then how much more so with the beaming cheeks of *Arikh Anpin*.

[174.](#) When these two apples are revealed... The radiant cheeks of *Arikh Anpin* bring joy to *Ze'eir Anpin* below and His *sefirot* shine.

[175.](#) As for the outer face... The face of *Ze'eir Anpin* sometimes shines and sometimes darkens, depending on the illumination from *Arikh Anpin* above and the conduct of humans below. Therefore the verse in Psalms conveys a plea that *Ze'eir Anpin shine His face upon us*. The concluding word, *selah*, is a liturgical direction whose meaning and etymology are unclear. Here, Rabbi Shim'on may be interpreting it according to the Targum on Psalms as “forever.” Cf. BT *Eruvin* 54a.

[176.](#) These apples that are concealed... The cheeks are concealed in the sense that they belong to the hidden realm of *Arikh Anpin*, or when they do not illumine the face of *Ze'eir Anpin* below.

The clause in Micah corresponds to the seventh enhancement of the beard of *Arikh Anpin*, as indicated above at [note 110](#). The wording *He will return* implies that sometimes the cheeks do not illumine *Ze'eir Anpin*; only when they do is compassion conveyed to those on earth.

The sentence “And in the one below, it is *truth*” means that regarding *Ze’eir Anpin* below, the seventh enhancement (reaching Him from *Arikh Anpin* above) is signified by the word *truth* in the list of attributes found in Exodus 34:6–7. See above, [notes 99, 111](#); cf. below at [notes 348, 354](#). On the number 370, see above, [note 27](#).

[177. Eighth enhancement...](#) The widening of the beard beneath the mouth and extending all the way down to the navel. See above at [note 92](#).

[178. array this enhancement](#) By elucidating this feature of the beard, Rabbi El’azar will arrange it perfectly above. See above, [note 138](#).

[179. All depends upon מזל \(*mazzal*\)...](#) The term *mazzal* has a wide range of meaning: “constellation, planet, planetary or astrological influence, zodiacal sign, destiny, fortune, guardian angel.” The term *היכל* (*heikhal*) means “temple, sanctuary,” and in medieval Sephardic usage also “ark.” Thus this Hebrew saying could be rendered “All depends upon fortune [or: destiny, astrological influence], even the Torah scroll in the ark [or: in the Temple].”

On depending upon *mazzal*—Aramaic *מזלא* (*mazzala*)—see *Targum*, Ecclesiastes 9:2: “All depends upon *mazzala*, destiny [or: fortune, astrological influence].” Cf. BT *Mo’ed Qatan* 28a, in the name of Rava: “Life, children, and sustenance do not depend on merit but on *mazzala*, destiny.”

See Rashi on *Shabbat* 75a, s.v. *le-eini ha-ammim*; Ibn Ezra on Job 28:1; *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*), 115a, 137a, 156b, 159b, 160b, 180b–181a, 198a, 207b; 2:6a, 177a (*SdTs*), 178b (*SdTs*), 252b (*Heikh*), 274b (*Tosafot*); 3:25b–26a, 77b, 79b, 289a–b (*IZ*), 292b (*IZ*), 295b (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 193–94 (and Wolfson’s notes); idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 65–66 (82); Gikatilla, *Sha’arei Orah*, 37a–b, 74a, 95a.

The Hebrew formulation here in the *Zohar*—“All depends upon *mazzal*, even the Torah scroll in the *heikhal*”—matches almost exactly a Geonic formulation (in *Teshuvot*

ha-Ge'onim ha-Hadashot, ed. Emanuel, p. 51): "All depends upon *mazzal*, even the Torah scroll בארון (*ba-aron*), in the ark." This Geonic source attributes the saying to *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana*, though it does not appear in the extant versions of that midrashic text. See Emanuel's note, ad loc., and the supplementary note on p. 58.

On the *Zohar's* formulation, see *ZH* 42b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 193–94 (and Wolfson's notes, and his Introduction, 51–53); Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 12a, 37a–b, 74a; idem, *Sha'arei Tsedeq*, 17a; idem, *Sod Shelosh Esreh Middot*, 223–24; *TZ* 69, 100a; 70, 127a; Scholem, "Ha-Im Hibber R. Mosheh de León et Sefer ha-Zohar?" 27; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 99–100; idem, "Koah ha-Millah," 9–10; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 132–33, n. 126; Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*, 228–29.

For various traditions on the Torah scroll in the Temple, see M *Mo'ed Qatan* 3:4; BT *Bava Batra* 14a–b; *Devarim Rabbah* 9:9; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana*, add., *Vezot Haberakhah*, pp. 441–42; *Midrash Tehillim* 90:3; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 4:20.

On a book's destiny, see the proverb by the second-century Latin grammarian and poet Terentianus Maurus (in his *De litteris, de syllabis, de metris*, 1. 1286): "Pro captu lectoris habent sua fata libelli" (The destiny of books depends on their reader's comprehension).

180. the Concealment of the Book... Supposedly referring to *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (The Book of Concealment), though the passage quoted here does not appear as such in the extant *Sifra di-Tsni'uta*. Cf. *Zohar* 2:177a (*SdT*s) (Vol. 5, pp. 557–58, nn. 27, 29), 178b (*SdT*s) (Vol. 5, pp. 573–74, n. 69). See above, [note 22](#).

Rabbi El'azar challenges the formulation that he just quoted. How could the Torah—which is so holy and upon which all depends—be itself dependent on an astrological sign? After all, Israel is told not to believe in, or *be dismayed by, signs in the heavens*.

The threefold mention of *holy* in the verse from Isaiah corresponds to the threefold holiness of Torah. Torah's "three aspects of holiness" may refer to the holiness of Israel, the priests, and Mount Sinai at the time of revelation (see Exodus 19:10, 22–23). The "three levels" may refer to priests, Levites, and Israel. The "three days" refers to Moses' command to the Israelites at Sinai: *Ready yourselves for three days* (Exodus 19:15).

The phrase "*Shekhinah* is in three" may refer to three classes of angels accompanying Her: *seraphim*, *hayyot*, and *ophanim*. The two Tablets of the Covenant together with the Ark comprise another triad.

As mentioned in the preceding note, the term *heikhal* can mean "ark, temple, sanctuary." On the holiness of a Torah's case, see BT *Megillah* 26b, *Sanhedrin* 48b. On various triple formulations relating to the revelation of Torah, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:13; BT *Shabbat* 88a; *Tanḥuma, Yitro* 10; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Yitro* 8; *Midrash Mishlei* 22; *Zohar* 2:78b. The full verse in Isaiah reads: *One called to another, saying, "Holy, holy, holy is YHVH of Hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory."*

On the verse in Jeremiah and Israel's immunity from astrological influence, see BT *Shabbat* 156a, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "How do we know מִזַּל לְיִשְׂרָאֵל (*she-ein mazzal le-yisra'el*), that Israel is immune to astrological influence [literally: "that there is no astrological influence upon Israel"]? Because it is said: *Thus says YHVH: Do not learn the way of the nations, and by signs in the heavens do not be dismayed; for the nations are dismayed by them* (Jeremiah 10:2)—the nations are dismayed, not Israel."

181. Well, it has been established... Rabbi El'azar explains that here the term *mazzal* does not refer to an astrological sign, but rather to the eighth enhancement of the beard of *Arikh Anpin*, whose long extending "cord" of hairs represents the beard's consummation. Thus "all hairs of the beard depend" upon it, as does the holy flow of emanation.

The mystical meaning of the term *mazzal* is soon clarified. On the eighth enhancement of the beard, see above, [note 177](#). For the approximate parallel in “the Concealment of the Book,” see *Zohar* 2:177a (*SdTs*) (Vol. 5, pp. 557–58, nn. 27, 29).

182. Although the Torah scroll is holy... It attains complete tenfold holiness only when it enters the *heikhal* (ark, temple, sanctuary). Correspondingly above, *Tif’eret* is symbolized by the Torah, and *Shekhinah* by the *heikhal*. Only when this divine couple joins as one, thereby unifying all ten holy *sefirot*, does *Shekhinah* attain the name *heikhal*. On ten levels of holiness, see M *Kelim* 1:6–9.

183. All depends upon mazzal... The eighth enhancement of the beard of *Arikh Anpin* is called מזל (*mazzal*) because all מזלי (*mazzalei*), “signs of the zodiac,” are suspended from it, and also because “those above and below נזלי (*nazelei*), flow, from it.”

Now the meaning of the puzzling proverb—“All depends upon *mazzal*, even the Torah scroll in the *heikhal*”—becomes clear: All depends upon this flowing enhancement of the beard, even the Torah scroll (symbolizing *Tif’eret*) in the *heikhal* (symbolizing *Shekhinah*).

On the association of *mazzal* with the root נזל (*nzl*), “to flow,” see *Zohar* 1:115a, 180b–181a, 198a; 2:177a (*SdTs*), 252b (*Heikh*); 3:289a (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 193–94; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 65 (82); Gikatilla, *Sha’arei Orah*, 12a, 37a, 74a. In the *Zohar* the “flowing” *mazzal* often refers to *Binah*. However, in *Sifra di-Tsni’uta* and the *Idrot* (as well as in Gikatilla’s writings), it describes the higher source of emanation in the flowing beard of *Arikh Anpin*.

On “all things of the world” depending upon *mazzal*, see BT *Mo’ed Qatan* 28a (quoted above, [note 179](#)): “Life, children, and sustenance do not depend on merit but on *mazzala*, destiny.”

184. Whoever sees this enhancement... Any forces of harsh Judgment (aroused by *our iniquities*) who encounter this eighth enhancement of the beard. The clause in Micah corresponds to this particular enhancement, as indicated above at [note 110](#).

185. Ninth enhancement... The small, short hairs within the hanging body of the beard. See above at [note 93](#).

186. Rise, Rabbi Abba To elucidate this enhancement and thereby arrange it perfectly above. See above, [note 138](#).

187. These hairs mingling... The hairs of this enhancement represent a residue of the divine mental process, so they are tinged with Judgment (pictured as emerging from this residue). This quality enables them to overwhelm any harsh forces of Judgment that demand punishment.

On the residue of divine thought as the source of Judgment, see Idel, “Ha-Maḥashavah ha-Ra’ah shel ha-El.” Cf. above, [note 18](#); below, [note 224](#). The phrase *the depths of the sea* implies here “sediments, residue.” On the association of this phrase with the ninth enhancement, see above at [note 110](#).

188. Tenth enhancement... See above at [note 94](#).

189. Rise, Rabbi Yehudah To elucidate this enhancement.

190. They will enter caves in the rocks... The phrase *the fear of YHVH* alludes to *Ze’eir Anpin*, who is “outside” the realm of *Arikh Anpin* and characterized by Judgment and *fear*—unlike *Arikh Anpin*, who is characterized by pure Compassion.

The verse in Isaiah 2 reads: *They will enter caves in the rocks and holes in the ground...* The phrase *clefts in the cliffs* appears later in Isaiah (7:19).

191. The glory of His majesty... That is, of *Arikh Anpin*.

192. Two... There are “two” enhancements involved here, both relating to the hair covering the throat beneath

the beard. The tenth enhancement is the hair itself, while the eleventh is the fact that these strands do not part from one another and are of equal length. See above at [notes 94, 188](#).

The two expressions in Micah correspond respectively to these two enhancements, as indicated above at [note 110](#). *Jacob* may allude to *Ze'eir Anpin* (or to His core, *Tif'eret*), to whom Rabbi Yehudah alluded above (at [note 190](#)).

[193. Twelfth enhancement...](#) See above at [note 95](#).

[194. What is meant by 'trouble'?...](#) Trouble implies Judgment, but how could this possibly pertain to the beard of *Arikh Anpin*, who is pure Compassion? Rabbi Yehudah explains that there is no hair covering the mouth of *Arikh Anpin* so that He can exhale His breath unimpededly (without any trouble) to *Ze'eir Anpin* below, thereby assuaging any harsh Judgment in that lower divine realm.

[195. From this holy supernal mouth...](#) From the mouth of *Arikh Anpin*, a breath issues, pouring into *Ze'eir Anpin* below.

The number thirty-seven thousand is based on the numerical value of the word הבל (*hevel*), "breath," which equals thirty-seven. Cf. above, [note 27](#).

[196. This is hiddenness of all...](#) The breath of the mouth of *Arikh Anpin* is unknowable. It is not adorned or enhanced—that is, it remains unperceived. Whereas the breath that proceeds from (or through) *Ze'eir Anpin* ("outside") inspires the prophets and is called "the mouth of *YHVH*," the breath of *Arikh Anpin* is not yet expressed or referred to by any name. Since this breath is intended to assuage *Ze'eir Anpin*, the mouth of *Arikh Anpin* must remain clear of hairs on all sides, enabling the breath to pass easily below.

On breath (or spirit) enveloping (literally "clothing") the prophets, see the quotation by Isaac ben Jacob ha-Kohen from *Sefer ha-Malbush* (published by Scholem, in "Qabbalot R. Ya'aqov ve-R. Yitshaq," 255): "the air in which

prophets are clothed.” Cf. the biblical idiom in Judges 6:34; 1 Chronicles 12:19; 2 Chronicles 24:20. On “the mouth of YHVH,” see *Zohar* 3:141a (*IR*), 295b (*IZ*).

197. from the place surrounded symmetrically... From the mouth of *Arikh Anpin*. The clause in Micah alludes to the twelfth enhancement, as indicated above at [note 110](#).

198. twelve boundaries above... Twelve potencies of *Tif'eret*, parallel to twelve angelic forces surrounding *Shekhinah* (“below”) and also to the twelve geographical boundaries of the twelve tribes of Israel.

“Boundaries” renders תְּחוּמֵי (tehumim), “boundaries, limits, dominions.” The phrase “twelve boundaries” recalls the twelve גְּבוּלֵי אֶלְכָסוֹן (gevulei alakhsan), “diagonal borders” (edges of a cube), mentioned in *Sefer Yetsirah* 5:1. See above, [p. 121](#), [n. 199](#). On the relation between *Shekhinah* and the twelve tribes, see above, [pp. 260–61](#), [n. 34](#).

199. Thirteenth enhancement... The hair behind the visible hanging body of the beard (described in the eighth enhancement). The only visible parts of the entire cheeks (“the fragrant offering”) are the round fleshy “apples.” See above, [notes 83, 91](#), and at notes [95–96](#).

200. in this holy supernal assembly... On the term אִדְדָּא (*iddera*), “threshing floor, chamber, assembly,” see above, [note 4](#).

Once each enhancement is elucidated by Rabbi Shim'on or one of the Companions, it ascends and is arrayed perfectly above. See above, [note 138](#). On the surrounding fire, cf. BT *Hagigah* 14b.

201. This thirteenth enhancement... The preceding twelve enhancements are all included with this culminating one. From it dangle all the enhancements intended for the beard of *Ze'eir Anpin* below.

202. days of old... This concluding phrase of the passage in Micah—יְמֵי קֶדֶם (*yemei qedem*)—corresponds to the final (all-encompassing) enhancement of the beard of *Arikh Anpin*, as indicated above at [note 110](#).

The phrase *days of the world* renders ימי עולם (*yemei olam*), which means literally *days of eternity* (or *antiquity*) and is usually translated as *days of old*. Here, Rabbi Shim'on construes *olam* as *world*, alluding to *Ze'eir Anpin*, who is known as *the world*. See *Zohar* 3:15a-b, 138b (*IR*), 144a (*IR*), 145b. Cf. above, [notes 165, 168](#). The verse in Isaiah reads: *He raised them and exalted them* כל ימי עולם (*kol yemei olam*), *all the days of old*. Cf. Malachi 3:4.

203. in this mazzala... As explained above, the term מזלא (*mazzala*) has a wide range of meaning, including: “constellation, planet, astrological influence, destiny.” Here it refers to the final “flowing” enhancement of the divine beard, based on the root נזל (*nzl*), “to flow.” See above, [notes 179, 181, 183](#).

Earlier, the eighth enhancement was described as *mazzala*, while here the thirteenth enhancement is so described. Both of these enhancements together constitute the long hanging body of the beard. See above, [note 199](#).

Since this final enhancement (or “day”) includes all the preceding twelve, it “is not included among them.”

204. when the Ancient of Days is aroused... In the Messianic age, this thirteenth enhancement (or “day”) will be called יום אחד (*yom ehad*), *one day*, since the numerical value of אחד (*ehad*), *one*, is thirteen.

According to Rabbi Shim'on, *He will be known* means that this thirteenth enhancement alone *will be known*. The phrase *to YHVH* may mean to *Ze'eir Anpin*, who is called *YHVH*. On the pronoun *He* alluding to *Arikh Anpin*, see above, [note 47](#).

The full verse in Zechariah reads: *There will be one day; it [or: he] will be known to YHVH—neither day nor night—and in the evening there will be light.*

205. Wherever there is day, there is night... But the realm of *Arikh Anpin*—and especially its thirteenth enhancement (or “day”)—is beyond all such distinctions.

Thus the verse in Zechariah describes this final *day* as *neither day nor night*.

On the notion “there is no day without night,” see above, [pp. 91–92](#), [n. 110](#). On the wording *neither day nor night*, see ZH 51d.

The phrase “from our perspective” renders מסטרא דילן (*mi-sitra di-lan*), “from our side (or aspect).” See Maimonides, *Peirush ha-Mishnah*, intro, p. 3; *Zohar* 2:174a, 176a; 3:141b (*IR*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 146, and Wolfson’s note, ad loc.; *Ma’arekhet ha-Elohut*, 6b, 7b.

[206. thirteen directions—springs...](#) On these thirteen springs of emanation, see above, [note 84](#).

[207. No one knows a bodily place...](#) The realm of *Arikh Anpin* (or the Ancient One) is described as “one head without a body,” as opposed to *Ze’eir Anpin*, who comprises an entire body. See *Zohar* 3:289b (*IZ*); Liebes, *Peraqim*, 176, 186; above, [note 169](#).

[208. He is known and unknown...](#) Essentially and ultimately unknown, though partially known through the enhancements of His beard or through His manifestations in lower sefirotic configurations. See above, [notes 38, 81, 102](#).

The third-person pronoun הוּא (*hu*), *He*, alludes here to the concealed realm of *Arikh Anpin*, who cannot be identified (or addressed) directly. In grammatical terminology the third-person construction is known as נסתר (*nistar*), “concealed.” See above, [notes 47, 204](#). The verse in Isaiah begins: *I am YHVH, הוּא (hu), that [or: He], is My name*.

In the Masoretic text, the verse in Psalm 100 is written: *He made us, ולא אנחנו (ve-lo anahnu), and not we ourselves*. According to a Masoretic note, however, the verse should be read *He made us, ולו אנחנו (ve-lo anahnu), and we are His*. Here, Rabbi Shim’on may be alluding to a different reading, suggested in *Bahir* 96 (141): *ולא אנו (ve-la-alef anahnu), and we belong to the alef*, namely to oneness. See Scholem, *Das Buch Bahir*, 105, n. 3; *Zohar* 1:120b; 2:177b (*SdTs*); 3:183b.

On the interpretation of *The Ancient of Days sat*, cf. above, [note 44](#).

209. When this canopy... The canopy consists of a vestment (or curtain) spread over four columns and hanging down on all four sides, encompassing Rabbi Shim'on and his Companions. The various enhancements of *Arikh Anpin* descended beneath the canopy.

On this canopy, see *Zohar* 3:138b, 144a (both *IR*). Cf. another divine curtain mentioned above at [note 20](#). "Canopy" renders פריסא (*perisa*), "cover, curtain." "Curtain" renders פרוכתא (*perokhta*), "curtain." "Vestment" renders בוסיטא (*bosita*), apparently deriving from Latin *vestis*, "garment, vestment." See above, [note 123](#).

210. One column was situated... Each of the four columns is an angelic being, holding a spade in his hand. The spade is a kind of pitchfork with four sharpened teeth ("keys"), by which each angelic column pulls down the fabric of the canopy spread above, so that it surrounds Rabbi Shim'on and his Companions.

On angelic or divine spades, see *Zohar* 1:62b (*Tos*), 154b (*ST*), 232a (*Tos*), 233b-234a (*Tos*); 3:60b, 270b (*Mat*).

211. I saw these enhancements... Each enhancement of the beard of *Arikh Anpin* awaits the creative elucidation of Rabbi Shim'on or one of his Companions. Once elucidated, the enhancement ascends to the divine beard, where it is arrayed according to the description of one of the rabbis. See above, [note 138](#).

212. All the columns... rejoice... The angelic columns rejoice upon hearing the elucidation of the enhancements offered by Rabbi Shim'on and his Companions. Numerous other angels arrive with chariots to listen as well. On the angels' eagerness to hear such secrets, see above, [note 5](#).

213. The blessed Holy One delights... God Himself delights in hearing such profound teachings.

Even after departing this world, a scholar of Torah continues to utter words of wisdom. See *Shir ha-Shirim*

Rabbah on 7:10: “Rabbi Yoḥanan said, ‘Even when a Torah scholar has died, his lips move in the grave. Why? *Stirring the lips of sleepers.*’... Rabbi Ḥanina son of Papa and Rabbi Simon. One said, ‘Like one who drinks spiced wine.’ The other said, ‘Like one who drinks aged wine: even though he has drunk it, the taste and aroma are still in his mouth.’”

See above, [pp. 117-18](#), [n. 188](#). The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *Your palate is like fine wine—flowing to my beloved smoothly, gliding over [or: trickling over; stirring] the lips of sleepers.*

214. Now focus your minds... Now that Rabbi Shim'on and his Companions have completed elucidating the enhancements of the beard of *Arikh Anpin*, the Master calls upon his close circle to prepare “to arrange the enhancements” of the lower configuration, *Ze'eir Anpin*, which were bestowed upon Him by *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of Days). On *Arikh Anpin* and *Ze'eir Anpin*, see above, [notes 14, 27](#).

215. His enhancements spread... Whereas the realm of *Arikh Anpin* represents undifferentiated oneness and pure Compassion, the realm (and enhancements) of *Ze'eir Anpin* include “this side and that”—both right and left, Compassion and Judgment. This dual nature resembles that of the human being, whose divine archetype is Primordial Adam, spanning the entire configuration of *Ze'eir Anpin* (*Hokhmah* through *Yesod*).

Ze'eir Anpin is inspired by the breath of *Arikh Anpin* (“the Concealed One”) and empowered to unite with *Shekhinah* (symbolized by “the Throne”).

On the all-inclusive nature of the human image, see above, [p. 261](#), [n. 36](#); Liebes, *Peraqim*, 50-51, 53-54. The description “*adam*—including all names” may allude to the fact the numerical value of אדם (*adam*), forty-five, is equivalent to that of the name יהוה (*YHVH*), when the latter is spelled out completely: יוד הוא ואו הוא (Yod He Vav He). According

to Kabbalah, the name *YHVH* includes all divine names. See above, [note 160](#).

Ze'eir Anpin—pictured as the divine *Adam*—includes “all worlds above and below.” The concluding clause (“even if they did not endure”) alludes to the following passage.

The verse in Ezekiel, describing what lies above the angelic *hayyot* (living beings), reads in full: *Above the firmament over their heads—like the appearance of sapphire, image of a throne. And upon the image of a throne, an image like the appearance of a human being upon it above.*

[216. the Concealment of the Book...](#) Supposedly referring to *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (The Book of Concealment). Although *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* does not include the actual passage quoted here, it does open with a similar description. See *Zohar* 2:176b (*SdTs*); above, [note 22](#).

Before *Arikh Anpin* (known also as “the Ancient of Ancients”) generated a stable sefirotic structure (alluded to here by “His enhancements”), He attempted to produce earlier emanations (depicted as “kings”). However, since these were dominated by harsh Judgment, they could not endure.

The full passage in Genesis (36:31–39) lists eight kings of Edom, who do not constitute a dynasty since none of the successors to the throne is a son of his predecessor. In seven consecutive verses Genesis records *And* [so and so] *died*, and here these royal deaths represent the destruction of the unviable emanations tainted by harsh Judgment (which is identified as *Edom*). Only of the final, eighth king is a wife mentioned and no death recorded.

The notion of earlier emanations that were destroyed recalls the rabbinic description of worlds that were previously destroyed. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 3:7, in the name of Rabbi Abbahu: “The blessed Holy One kept creating worlds and destroying them until He created these [i.e., heaven and earth]. Then He declared, ‘These please Me,

those do not.” The theme of previous worlds that were destroyed and the *Zohar’s* interpretation of the passage in Genesis inspired Isaac Luria’s theory of “the breaking of the vessels.”

See above, [note 18](#). On the world not enduring at first, cf. *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 3, and David Luria, ad loc., n. 12.

אָדוֹם (*Edom*), “Edom,” represents Judgment partly because the nearly identical word אָדוֹם (*adom*) means “red,” the color of Judgment. On the negative valence of Edom, see also above, [p. 61](#), [n. 23](#). Conversely, the color white represents the pure Compassion of *Arikh Anpin*, who is known as “the White Head.” On this last image, see above at [note 48](#).

[217](#). **If any head of a nation...** Just as the nation’s condition depends on its leader, so the emanations intended by *Arikh Anpin* could not endure until He Himself was arrayed.

The seven Edomite kings who died (be ginning with *Bela son of Beor*) correspond to the earlier worlds described in *Bereshit Rabbah* (as quoted in the preceding note): “The blessed Holy One kept creating worlds and destroying them until He created these [i.e., heaven and earth].”

On the nation being dependent on its leader, see BT *Arakhin* 17a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 42; *Zohar* 2:36b, 47a, 198a; 3:20b, 114a (above, [p. 236](#), [n. 37](#)). Cf. *Tosefta Ta’anit* 2:5; BT *Eruvin* 41a; *Tanḥuma, Ḥuqqat* 23; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 19:28. The full verse in Genesis reads: *There reigned in Edom Bela son of Beor, and the name of his city was Dinhabah.*

[218](#). **Bela son of Beor...** The root בלע (*bl’*) can mean “to swallow, engulf,” so here the name בלע (*Bela*) implies destruction and doom. Furthermore, the full name of this king resembles that of Balaam son of Beor, who is associated with the demonic Other Side. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:332.

219. What is דנהבה (Dinhavah)?... The name yields the expression דין הב (Din hav), “Give judgment,” alluding to the harsh Judgment generated by King Bela.

The verse in Proverbs refers to a greedy person or to someone constantly leeching off others. It may also be a warning that a greedy parent engenders greedy children. Anatomically, the leech has two suckers, one at each end, pictured in this verse as *two daughters*.

In rabbinic sources, the *leech* represents Hell, whose forces (*daughters*) crave more and more wicked victims. See *Midrash Mishlei* 17:1; 30:15; BT *Avodah Zarah* 17a; above, [p. 4](#), [n. 12](#).

220. As soon as he ascended to settle... When King Bela attempted to establish his reign he failed, because the balanced sefirotic structure of Primordial Adam had not yet emerged, without which the extreme Judgment of the Edomite kings could not endure. On the prior lack of balance, see above, [note 2](#).

221. Would you ever imagine that they were nullified?... How could this be, since eventually the forces of Judgment were included in the sefirotic Adam once He emerged? Rabbi Shim'on explains that “nullified” implies that these harsh forces were temporarily removed. Eventually they were transformed, some of them being assuaged within Primordial Adam, some partially so, and some remaining harsh, constituting the demonic Other Side.

The phrase “became fragrantly firm” renders אַחֲבַסְמוּ (*itbesamu*). The verbal root בָּסַם (*bsm*) conveys both fragrance and firmness. See above, [p. 36](#), [n. 104](#).

222. But it is written He died... he died... Each of the first seven kings of Edom is described as having *died*, which would imply that they were completely nullified. However, Rabbi Shim'on explains that here the verb *died* has a metaphorical meaning: they fell to a lower rung of existence.

On descending to a lower rung as “dying,” see JT *Nedarim* 9:2, 41c; *Bereshit Rabbah* 71:6; 96:3; *Eikhah Rabbah* 3:2; BT *Nedarim* 64b, *Avodah Zarah* 5a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 40; *Tanḥuma*, *Vayḥi* 2; *Tsav* 13; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayḥi* 3; *Shemot Rabbah* 5:4; *Zohar* 2:19b (*MhN*); *ZH* 80b (*MhN*, *Rut*).

According to midrashic sources, the verse in Exodus—*The king of Egypt died*—implies not that he actually died but that he was struck with leprosy (or scaly affliction), which resembles dying. See *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 2:23; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:34; *Midrash Aggadah* and Rashi, Exodus 2:23. Cf. 2 Kings 5:7; *Zohar* 2:19b (*MhN*). On the phrase “became fragrantly firm,” see the preceding note.

223. The name of his wife was Mehetabel... The last of the eight Edomite kings listed in Genesis (Hadar) differs from the preceding seven in two ways: his wife is mentioned explicitly and his death is not recorded. Rabbi Shim’on links these two features, explaining that the harmonious union of male and female overcomes “nullification.” However, even Hadar and Mehetabel were not firmly established until the sefirotic Adam emerged and they were transformed and integrated within that holy realm of male and female.

Palm trees are dioecious: male and female flowers grow on separate trees. Male flowers produce pollen, while female flowers develop into fruit. As early as 2300 B.C.E., Mesopotamian farmers had learned to hang a male flower in a female tree to enhance pollination.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 40(41):1; *Midrash Tehillim* 92:11; BT *Pesaḥim* 56a; *Bahir* 117 (172), 139 (198), and Scholem’s note, ad loc.; Rashi on *Pesaḥim* 56a, s.v. *Rav Aḥa*; *Tosafot*, *Menahot* 71a, s.v. *markivin*; *Zohar* 1:82a, 220b; 2:37b, 126a; 3:16a, 143b (*IR*), 292a (*IZ*); *ZH* 50d; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 128.

On Mehetabel, see *Zohar* 1:145b (Vol. 2, p. 313, n. 405); 3:142a (*IR*), 292a (*IZ*); *ZH* 6d-7a (*MhN*), 52a. See

also Ibn Ezra on Genesis 36:39; Maimonides, Commentary on the Mishnah, *Sanhedrin* 10, intro, principle 8; Scholem, *Alchemy*, 70-71. On the significance of the union of male and female, see above, [pp. 12-13](#), [n. 36](#); Liebes, *Peraqim*, 329-30; idem, *Studies in the Zohar*, 155-56; Vol. 5, pp. 545-46, n. 3.

224. When an impulse arose... When *Arikh Anpin* sought to emanate the full spectrum of *sefirot*, He first generated a single spark from בוצינא דקרדינותא (*botsina de-qardinuta*), “the Lamp of Adamantine Darkness.” This primordial source, or divine tool, delineates the stages of emanation. As the paradoxical name suggests, its potent brilliance overwhelms comprehension.

A breath fans the spark into a flame, which scatters into 370 directions, and אוירא דכיא (*aveira dakhya*), “pure air (or ether)” issues. Gradually, a skull takes shape, becoming the head of *Ze’eir Anpin*, comprising the *sefirot* of *Hokhmah* and *Binah*.

On *botsina de-qardinuta*, see Vol. 1, pp. 107-8, n. 4; Vol. 5, pp. 560-61, n. 35; Vol. 7, pp. 304-5, n. 157; *ZH* 56d-58d (*QhM*); *Zohar* 1:15a, 18b, 86b; 2:133b, 177a (*SdTs*), 233a, 254b (*Heikh*), 260a (*Heikh*); 3:49a, 3:48b, 139a (*IR*), 292b (*IZ*), 295a-b (*IZ*); Liebes, *Peraqim*, 145-51, 161-64; idem, “Zohar ve-Eros,” 73-80; Wolfson, “Woman—the Feminine as Other in Theosophic Kabbalah,” 178-82; idem, *Circle in the Square*, 60-62.

On the generating of sparks as the cleansing of divine thought, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:289-90. On the number 370, see above, [note 27](#). Cf. the number 325 in *Zohar* 2:53b; 3:48b, 132b (*IR*), 209a; Gikatilla, *Sod Shelosh-Esreh Middot*, 222; and the number 320 in *Zohar* 2:254b (*Heikh*); 3:292b (*IZ*).

On *aveira dakhya*, “pure air,” see *Zohar* 2:50a (*Mat*); 3:139a (*IR*), 292b (*IZ*), 295a (*IZ*); *ZH* 70a, 73b, 74b (all *ShS*). Cf. 1:15a, 16b, 32b; 2:177b (*SdTs*); Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 331-47; Vol. 1, pp. 108-9, n. 11. Cf. *Sefer Yetsirah* 2:6: “Out of chaos He formed substance, making

what is not into what is. He hewed enormous pillars out of *avir* (air, ether) that cannot be grasped.” On the divine skull, see *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdT*s); 3:48b, 292b (*IZ*).

225. Would you ever imagine ‘within it’?... The spark does not lose its identity and potency within the pure air, but is simply concealed, still able to stimulate the development of the skull. The air itself is concealed within *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of Days).

226. In this skull fire spread... Fire symbolizes *Din* (Judgment), on the left side, while air symbolizes *Ḥesed*, on the right. Pure air presides over the latter, and pure fire over the former.

Since fire symbolizes Judgment, one might wonder how such a quality can be manifested within the divine skull. Rabbi Shim’on explains that at this stage the fire of Judgment has not yet actually emerged but exists potentially in the spark. The description “mighty” alludes to *Din* (Judgment), also known as *Gevurah* (Power). On the 270 worlds, see above, [note 40](#).

227. In this skull dwell 90,000,000 worlds... The immense number of worlds in the skull of *Ze’eir Anpin* is exceeded by the number within the skull of *Arikh Anpin* (120,000,000; see above at [note 25](#)). From *Arikh Anpin* (known as the White Head), emanation (pictured as dew) flows gently into the skull of *Ze’eir Anpin*.

The motif of dew reviving the dead appears in *Pirquei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 34: “Rabbi Yehudah said, ‘... In the time to come, the blessed Holy One will bring down a dew of revival, reviving the dead, as is said: *Your dead will live, my corpses will arise.... Awake and shout for joy, O dwellers of the dust!... For Your dew is a dew of lights... and the earth will cast forth spirits of the dead* (Isaiah 26:19).’ ... Rabbi Tanḥum said, ‘... From where does it descend? From the head of the blessed Holy One. In the time to come, He will shake the hair of His head and bring down a dew of revival, reviving the dead, as is said: *I was asleep, but my heart was*

awake.... For my head is filled with dew (Song of Songs 5:2).” See above, [note 25](#).

228. That dew comprises two colors... The color white (symbolizing Compassion or Love) derives from *Arikh Anpin* (or the White Head), whereas the color red (signifying Judgment) characterizes *Ze'eir Anpin*. See above, [note 26](#).

229. Many of those who sleep... Of all those who have died, the worthy ones will eventually be revived and rewarded with eternal life, bestowed by the pure Compassion of *Arikh Anpin*. Conversely, the wicked will be revived and punished, suffering the harsh Judgment of *Ze'eir Anpin*.

Each day the dew of emanation flows to *Shekhinah*, “the Apple Orchard,” whose fruit includes both white and red, reflecting the two qualities of Compassion (or Love) and Judgment.

See above, [notes 26–27](#). The full verse in Isaiah 26 reads: *Your dead will live, my corpses will arise. Awake and shout for joy, O dwellers of the dust! For Your dew is a dew of lights, and the earth will give birth to [or: cast forth] spirits of the dead.* See above at [note 25](#).

230. from the skull to His face... So that the face of *Ze'eir Anpin* extends through an immense number of worlds—whose total however is merely one-sixtieth of the 90,000,000 worlds inside His skull, and is more than doubled by the 3,700,000 worlds of the face of *Arikh Anpin*, “Elongated Countenance” (or Slow to Anger; Long-Suffering). The relatively “small” number of worlds of the face of *Ze'eir Anpin* explains His name, which can be rendered Small Countenance (or Short-Tempered).

When Judgment looms and the world needs Compassion, *Ze'eir Anpin* gazes upon the face of *Arikh Anpin* and thereby expands and lengthens, so that *Ze'eir Anpin* Himself turns compassionate and “long-suffering.” See above, [notes 14, 27, 227](#).

231. From this skull emerges one route... Conveying the rich flow of emanation. As each lower stage receives this, they offer tribute to *Arikh Anpin* (or the Ancient of Days).

The verse in Exodus describes the poll tax required of each adult Israelite male during the census in the desert. It reads in full: *A beqa per skull, half a shekel according to the sanctuary shekel, for each who underwent the reckoning from twenty years old and above, for six hundred thousand and three thousand five hundred and fifty.* In the biblical context the silver *beqa* (weighing half a shekel) provided the silver needed for the sanctuary and simultaneously served as an instrument for counting heads. See above, [note 28](#).

232. three cavities... Or ventricles of the brain, covered by a membrane separating the brain from the inner surface of the skull. Whereas the membrane covering the brain of *Arikh Anpin* (or the Ancient of Days) envelops (or “seals”) His brain entirely, the membrane covering the brain of *Ze’eir Anpin* allows His brain to extend into thirty-paths of Wisdom.

Galen recognized four ventricles (or cavities) of the brain, but some medieval scholars distinguished only three. See Ibn Ezra (long) on Exodus 31:3 (and *Qarnei Or*, ad loc.); idem on Isaiah 44:18; Gershon ben Solomon, *Sha’ar ha-Shamayim* 9, 26-c; *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdT*s); 3:140a (*IR*), 142b (*IR*), 262a, 292b-293a (*IZ*), 294b (*IZ*); Siegel, *Galen’s System of Physiology and Medicine*, 118-23; Ullmann, *Islamic Medicine*, 63; Gross, *Brain, Vision, Memory*, 28-35.

On the membranes surrounding the human brain and the distinction between the membranes of *Arikh Anpin* and *Ze’eir Anpin*, see above, [notes 29, 31](#). On the thirty-two paths of Wisdom, see *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:1-2; above, [note 31](#). The full verse in Genesis reads: *A river issues from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four riverheads.* In Kabbalah, this river symbolizes the flow of emanation issuing from *Hokhmah*, conveyed by *Binah*

through *Yesod*, entering the garden of *Shekhinah*. See Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows from Eden*, 229–51.

233. From one cavity... The brain residing in this cavity corresponds to *Hokhmah*, which branches off into thirty-two paths of Wisdom. See the preceding note; Ibn Ezra (long) on Exodus 31:3.

234. From the second cavity... The brain residing in this cavity corresponds to *Binah* (or *Tevunah*), who includes fifty gates. “Fifty days of Torah” refers to the seven weeks plus one day between the Exodus and the Revelation at Mount Sinai, as commemorated in the Counting of the Omer.

Binah is symbolized by the Jubilee, which occurs every fifty years at the end of the cycle of seven Sabbatical years (or *shemittot*). According to a rabbinic tradition, the existence of the entire world follows the pattern of the Sabbatical cycle. See BT *Sanhedrin* 97a, in the name of Rav Kattina: “For six thousand years the world exists and for one thousand it lies desolate, as is written: *YHVH alone will be exalted on that day* (Isaiah 2:11).” Based on this rabbinic tradition, in early Kabbalah a theory of *shemittot* developed, according to which the world is destroyed every six millennia, lies in desolation for one millennium, and is then re-created anew and differently. Seven such cycles culminate in the cosmic Jubilee.

Here Rabbi Shim'on refers to “fifty thousand generations” (rather than fifty thousand years). At the conclusion of this cosmic cycle, *Binah* (referred to here as the blessed Holy One) will “restore His breath” to Himself. This may imply that when the animating divine breath is drawn back to its source, all of existence returns along with it—just as in the earthly Jubilee all land that has not yet been redeemed reverts to its original owner. See Nahmanides, *Peirush Sefer Yetsirah*, 401–2; *Zohar* 2:179a (*SdTs*); Vol. 5, p. 585–86, n. 93; Hellner-Eshed and Leader, *Idra Rabba*.

The image of fifty gates of *Binah* is based on a statement attributed to Rav and Shemu'el (BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b, *Nedarim* 38a): “Fifty gates of בינה (*binah*), understanding, were created in the world, all of which were given to Moses except for one, as is said: *You made him little less than God* (Psalms 8:6).”

On the Jubilee, see above, [p. 90](#), [n. 107](#). On the kabbalistic theory of *Shemittot*, see Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 120–22; idem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 460–74; Pedaya, *Ha-Ramban*, 380–91, 432–33; Vol. 5, p. 550, n. 11. On the second cavity as *Binah* (or *Tevunah*), see Ibn Ezra (long) on Exodus 31:3.

235. From the third cavity... The brain residing in this cavity corresponds to *Da'at*, the hidden *sefirah* mediating between *Hokhmah* and *Binah*, and linking them.

The context in Proverbs (24:3–4) reads: *By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established. And by knowledge rooms are filled with all precious and lovely wealth.* On this verse, see *Zohar* 2:14b (*MhN*), 123a; 3:136a (*IR*), 289b (*IZ*), 291a (*IZ*), 296a (*IZ*).

On *Da'at*—Aramaic דעתא (*Da'ta*)—see *Zohar* 2:123a; 3:291a (*IZ*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:341. On the third cavity as *Da'at*, see Ibn Ezra (long) on Exodus 31:3. On the triad of *Hokhmah*, *Binah* (or *Tevunah*), and *Da'at*, see Exodus 31:3; and *Pirquei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 3: “By ten utterances was the world created... and by three are they comprised, namely *Hokhmah*, *Tevunah*, and *Da'at*.” See *Zohar* 2:14b (*MhN*); Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 170–71, n. 65; above, [notes 5, 12](#).

236. These three cavities permeate the whole body... The three brains permeate the entire body of *Ze'ir Anpin*, both its right and left sides.

237. From the skull of the head... Whereas the hair of *Arikh Anpin* is white (reflecting pure Compassion), the hair of *Ze'ir Anpin* is black (reflecting Judgment). Furthermore,

the hair of *Arikh Anpin* is untangled, whereas that of *Ze'eir Anpin* is “interwoven and mingling.”

On the clause “reasons of Torah relating to pure and impure,” see, e.g., *Midrash Tehillim* 12:4, in the name of Rabbi Yannai: “With every utterance that the blessed Holy One spoke to Moses, He offered forty-nine facets of ‘pure’ and forty-nine facets of ‘impure.’” These “pure” and “impure” facets refer respectively to forty-nine ways by which something can be proven pure (and thus permitted) and forty-nine ways by which the same thing can be proven impure (and thus forbidden).

See *Massekhet Soferim* 16:5; JT *Sanhedrin* 4:1, 22a; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 26:2; BT *Eruvin* 13b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 4:2, 4; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:4; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 8:1; *Tanḥuma, Bemidbar* 10, *Huqqat* 4; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Huqqat* 7, 18; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 19:2; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 14, 58a–b, 62b; 21, 101a–b; *Zohar* 2:15b (*MhN*), 83b, 123a, 139b, 183a; 3:97b (*Piq*).

On this *Zohar* passage, see *Zohar* 3:293a (*IZ*). On the white, untangled hair of *Arikh Anpin*, see above at [note 32](#). On the black hair of *Ze'eir Anpin*, and the contrast between God’s white and black hair, see above, [note 113](#).

238. On all aspects that are pure... The locks of hair of *Ze'eir Anpin* are coarse. Actually, only some of them are coarse, whereas others are smooth.

The phrase “heaps of wavy curls” renders תלין על תלין (*tillin al tillin*), which plays on the wording and the midrashic interpretation of Song of Songs 5:11: *His head finest gold, his locks תלתלים (taltallim), wavy [or: curly; luxuriant; fronds of a palm], black as a raven*. See BT *Eruvin* 21b: “תלתלים קווצותיו (*Qevutsotav taltallim*), *His locks wavy*. Rav Ḥisda said in the name Mar Ukba, “This teaches that one can expound on every single קוץ (*qots*), stroke [of the letters of Torah], תילים (*tillei tillim*), heaps and heaps, of laws.” See above, [note 32](#); *Zohar* 3:140a (*IR*).

On the phrase “a mighty hero victorious in battles,” see *Zohar* 3:139a (*IR*), 141a (*IR*), 295b (*IZ*), based on *Targum Onqelos*, Genesis 10:9; Exodus 15:3. Cf. above, [note 113](#).

Song of Songs 5:15 reads in full: *His thighs, pillars of marble, set upon pedestals of gold. His appearance is like Lebanon, בחור כארזים (baḥur ka-arazim), distinguished as the cedars [or: a young man like the cedars].*

[239. they flow from many springs...](#) The wavy hair of *Ze'eir Anpin* issues from springs within the three cavities of the brain, the first of which corresponds to *Hokhmah*.

On these cavities, see above, [note 232](#). On the “channels of the brain,” see *Zohar* 3:293a-b (*IZ*); *TZ* 6, 21b; *TZ*, add. 6, 144b; *ZḤ* 119a (*Tiq*). Cf. *Zohar* 1:161a-b, 162a (*ST*); 3:262a; below, [note 340](#). “Channels of” renders רהטי (*rahatei*), whose root, רהט (*rht*), means “to run; move swiftly.” See Genesis 30:38, 41; Exodus 2:16; and Song of Songs 7:6: *The dangling locks of your head like royal purple; a king is captured ברהטים (ba-rehatim), by the flowing tresses.*

[240. From the second cavity...](#) Corresponding to *Binah*, who includes fifty gates. See above, [note 234](#).

241. From the third cavity... Corresponding to *Da'at*. See above, [note 235](#).

242. cover the sides of the ears... Hindering *Ze'eir Anpin* from hearing the prayers of Israel. Therefore Israel has to implore Him to *incline* His ear. See *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdTs*); 3:138a–b (*IR*), 293a (*IZ*), 294b (*IZ*); *ZH* 31b, 34a. Conversely, the hair of *Arikh Anpin* does not cover His ears, so that prayer may enter. See above, [note 36](#). The verse in Kings reappears in Isaiah 37:17; cf. Daniel 9:18.

243. Upon this depend right and left... All such distinctions depend upon *Ze'eir Anpin*, not upon *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient One), whose oneness transcends all duality.

244. In the parting of hair... The path appearing there on the head of *Ze'eir Anpin* corresponds to the same path in *Arikh Anpin*. See above, [note 40](#); *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdTs*); 3:293a (*IZ*).

The number 613 alludes, of course, to the traditional number of commandments in the Torah. In the verse from Psalms, the name *YHVH* likely alludes here to *Ze'eir Anpin*, or specifically its core, *Tif'eret*, who is symbolized by Written Torah.

245. one million wailers and howlers... Forces of harsh Judgment. Conversely, from the smooth locks dangle positive powers, who are adept at balancing right and left (Love and Judgment) and who weigh human actions on the cosmic scale.

On the concluding sentence, see above, [note 243](#). On the phrase מאריהון דמתקלא (*mareihon de-matqala*), “masters of balance,” see *Zohar* 1:223b; 2:122b; 3:141a (*IR*); 293a (*IZ*).

246. Forehead of the skull... Of *Ze'eir Anpin*. From here, watchfulness takes effect when required.

The phrase “scrutinizing providence” renders דאשגחזתא אשגחזתא (*ashgahuta de-ashgahuta*). The word *ashgahuta* means “watching, watchfulness, supervision, providence.”

247. except at the time when prayers of Israel ascend... Then *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of Days and the Will of Wills) reveals His compassionate forehead, illumining the forehead of *Ze'eir Anpin* and assuaging the forces of Judgment. See *Zohar* 2:122b, 177b (*SdTs*); 3:129a-b (*IR*), 288b (*IZ*), 293a (*IZ*).

248. In this forehead emerges one measure... Extending from the brain that corresponds to *Binah*, who generates fifty gates.

In the verse from Jeremiah, *the forehead* implies brazenness or impudence. Here it seems to imply: *You* (namely Israel) *had the punishing forehead* of *Ze'eir Anpin* glaring at you, because *you refused to be ashamed*. See above, [note 43](#).

“Measure” renders שיעורא (*shi'ura*), a reading reflected in numerous witnesses (including C7, F11, F13, L3, M8, Pr13, T1, V22, *Or Yaqar*), whereas the printed editions (and N49) read: שערא (*sa'ara*), “hair.” Both versions are likely a play on שער (*sha'ar*), “gate,” although here (at the end of the sentence) the *Zohar* employs the Aramaic תרעין (*tar'in*), “gates.” On the brain corresponding to *Binah* (and on the fifty gates), see above, [note 234](#).

249. When the blessed Holy One is aroused... Then the face of *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of Days) shines upon the face of *Ze'eir Anpin*, who in contrast to יומין עתיק (*Attiq Yomin*), “the Ancient of Days,” is called here זעיר יומין (*Ze'eir Yomin*), “the Youthful of Days.” The forehead of *Arikh Anpin* illumines and assuages the forehead of *Ze'eir Anpin*.

The unique name *Ze'eir Yomin*, “the Youthful of Days,” is preserved or reflected here in numerous manuscripts (including C7, Es3, F11, F12, F13, L3, M8, N49, Pr13, T1, V22), *Or Yaqar*, and both early printed editions (Cremona and Mantua). This could be simply a mistake, instead of the normal form *Ze'eir Anpin* (or *Ze'eir Appin*); but it seems more likely to be an intentional innovation, typical of the *Zohar's* creativity. Eventually, the playful *Ze'eir Yomin* fell victim to the

editors of the Constantinople edition (1736), who emended it to the standard *Ze'eir Appin*, and that change was adopted in all subsequent editions of the *Zohar*.

In one of his sermons, the nineteenth-century Christian scholar and preacher Llewelyn Ioan Evans uses the same name, not in contrast to the Ancient of Days but rather as its complement. See his *Preaching Christ*, 347: “Nay, verily, the Ancient of Days is also the Youthful of Days forever.”

On the uniqueness of the formulation *Ze'eir Yomin*, see *Qol be-Ramah*. Cf. *TZ* 70, 138b. Cf. also the expression יומין זעירין (*yomin ze'eirin*), “a few days, a short while,” which appears in *Targum Onqelos*, Genesis 27:44; 29:20; and occasionally in the *Zohar*. At the beginning of *Idra Rabba*, this expression means “Days are few.” See above, [note 3](#). Cf. *Zohar* 2:176b (*SdTs*); Vol. 5, p. 552, n. 14. On the names *Ze'eir Anpin* and *Arieh Anpin*, see above, [notes 14, 27](#).

On the blessed Holy One delighting with the righteous, cf. above, [p. 10](#), [n. 32](#). On the verse in Psalm 69, see above, [note 42](#).

250. This forehead expands... The forehead of *Ze'eir Anpin* yields an immense number of harsh forces of Judgment, symbolized by intense red. See *Zohar* 3:293a (*IZ*).

251. Twenty-four supernal judgments appear... In the forehead of *Ze'eir Anpin*. The term נצח (*netsah*) means “eternity, endurance, glory, victory.” If the letter נ (*nun*) is replaced by the immediately preceding letter in the alphabet—מ (*mem*)—then נצח (*netsah*) turns into מצח (*metsah*), “forehead,” indicating the close connection between the forces of Judgment called *Netsah* and the forehead of *Ze'eir Anpin*.

The phrase נצח נצחין (*netsah netsahim*) implies several aspects of *Netsah*. The *sefirah* of *Netsah* is often symbolized by the right leg, and according to *Zohar* 1:241a, the phrase *netsah netsahim* alludes to three joints in this leg, likely referred to here as “well-known places” in the body.

See *Zohar* 3:293a-b (*IZ*); Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 39b; idem, *Sha'arei Tsedeq*, 18a. On the phrase *netsah netsahim*, see also *Bahir* 115 (169-70); Idel, "Homer Qabbali," 184, n. 76. On the three joints in the arm and in the leg, see also *Zohar* 1:154a, 241a; 2:244a-b; 3:142a-b (*IR*).

252. נצח (*Netsah*), the Eternal One of, Israel... The forces of Judgment called *Netsah* can be assuaged if Israel engages in *teshuvah*. But such a divine transformation, or "regret," pertains only to the sefirotic structure known as *Adam, human*, whose core is *Tif'eret* and which here excludes the head, specifically the forehead. If *Netsah* (representing the forces of Judgment) appears in the forehead of *Ze'eir Anpin* (above the facial features of *Adam, human*), then there can be no regret, as implied by the verse in Samuel: *Netsah... does not regret, for He is not adam, a human, to have regret.*

According to *M Yevamot* 16:3: "Evidence [of the identity of a corpse] may not be given except from [proof provided by] the face together with the nose." Thus, the face and the nose determine the identity of *adam, a human*. See above, [note 71](#).

On this passage, see Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 39a-b; idem, *Sha'arei Tsedeq*, 18a; Scholem; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 212-13, nn. 180-81. On the catastrophic lack of divine regret, cf. *Zohar* 3:74b-75a.

253. Eyes of the head... The eyes of *Ze'eir Anpin* are different from the eyes of *Arikh Anpin*, because the latter constitute a single open eye, conveying pure Compassion, whereas the former are characterized by Judgment.

On the eyes of *Arikh Anpin*, see above at [notes 48-65](#). On the clause "heaps of hair hang," see above, [note 238](#). The phrase "masters of watchfulness" renders מארי אשגחזותא (*marei ashgahuta*). See *Zohar* 2:122b; 3:293b (*IZ*). On the term *ashgahuta*, see above, [note 246](#).

254. the Ancient One... *Arikh Anpin*.

255. When that cover lifts... When the eyelids of *Ze'eir Anpin* open, He sees the single constantly open eye of *Arikh*

Anpin, and His eyes are bathed in the milky whiteness of that good eye.

See *Zohar* 3:293b (*IZ*). On the good and constantly open eye of *Arikh Anpin*, see above, [notes 57-58](#), [63](#). On *Arikh Anpin* and *Ze'eir Anpin* gazing at one another, see *Zohar* 3:15a-b, 292b (*IZ*). The phrase “one whiteness” alludes to the fact that there are three aspects of white in the eye of *Arikh Anpin*. See above, [notes 51-55](#).

The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *His eyes are like doves by streams of water, bathing in milk, sitting by a brimming pool*. See *Zohar* 2:122b, 177b (*SdTs*); 3:289a (*IZ*). The verse in Psalms reads: *Awake! Why do You sleep, O Lord?...* See above at [note 63](#).

[256. red, black, and green...](#) These three colors, which don't seem to fit the image of *doves*, are described below.

On the colors in the eyes of *Ze'eir Anpin*, see *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdTs*); 3:293b-294a (*IZ*). For the full verse in Song of Songs, see the preceding note.

[257. seven eyes of supervision...](#) Forces of אשגחזתא (*ashgahuta*), “watching, watchfulness, supervision, providence,” which emerge from the black of the eye (apparently the pupil).

[258. From the red...](#) This color, the element of fire, and the direction north all symbolize Judgment.

The verse in Zechariah reads: *These seven are the eyes of YHVH, ranging over the whole earth*. Cf. 2 Chronicles 16:9; and see above, [notes 50, 60](#).

[259. From the green...](#) This color and the direction south symbolize respectively harmony and love. These seven splendors presumably expose both good and evil deeds.

The verse in Job 34 reads: *For His eyes are upon a person's ways, and all his steps does He see*. The conclusion of this verse is here replaced by the conclusion

of Job 37:7: *that all humans may know His deeds*, which is now construed as: *to know the deeds of all humans*.

260. When they are bathed in white... When the eyes of *Ze'eir Anpin* are bathed in the whiteness of the eye of *Arikh Anpin*, they too convey compassionate goodness. Still, the color red enables *Ze'eir Anpin* to execute Judgment upon the enemies of Israel.

The verbal formulation in Exodus—*ראה ראיתי* (*ra'oh ra'iti*)—combines the infinitive absolute and the past tense. It is normally understood as *I have surely seen*, but here Rabbi Shim'on focuses on the double sense: *Seeing have I seen*, which combines benefiting Israel and wreaking vengeance upon the Egyptians. Similarly, the double exclamation in Psalms—*Awake! Rouse Yourself!*—alludes to “two openings” of the eyes: one benefiting Israel directly, the other indirectly by punishing their enemies.

For earlier interpretations of the double wording *ra'oh ra'iti*, see *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 3:7; *Tanḥuma*, *Shemot* 20; *Ki Tissa* 21; *Shemot Rabbah* 2:5; 3:2; 42:5; 43:8. On the verse in Psalms, see above, [note 255](#).

261. The first color: red within red... This color apparently surrounds the following two colors. See *Or Yaqar*; *Yayin ha-Reqaḥ*; *Sha'arei ha-Idra*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

262. The second color: black... Presumably the pupil of the eye, surrounded by the other two colors. See above, [note 257](#).

On the clause “like a stone emerging from the abyss in the great sea once in a thousand years,” cf. *Zohar* 2:176b (*SdT*s); Vol. 5, p. 552, n. 14.

263. The third color: green... Between the (inner) black and the (outer) red. Apparently, the red thread circles the inner border of the green circle, adjacent to the outer border of the (inner) black circle; while the black thread circles the outer border of the green circle, adjacent to the inner border of the (outer) red circle. Thereby all three

colors touch one another. See *Or Yaqar; Yayin ha-Reqaḥ; Sha'arei ha-Idra; Matoq mi-Devash*.

264. When the white revolves... When the eyes of *Ze'eir Anpin* are bathed in the whiteness of the eye of *Arikh Anpin*, the three colors (red, black, and green) subside and only white appears. Consequently, all forces of harsh Judgment (tinged red and black) vanish—or turn white as *teeth*.

The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *Your teeth are like a flock of shorn sheep [or: sheep similar in size], coming up from the washing, all of them twinning [or: matching, identical] and none bereft among them.*

265. For eye-to-eye they will see... This verse now implies that the righteous will see the eye of *Arikh Anpin* gazing into the eye(s) of *Ze'eir Anpin*. Similarly, the verse in Numbers implies that *Ze'eir Anpin* (known as *YHVH*) is *seen* by *Arikh Anpin eye-to-eye*. See above, [note 58](#).

266. Then, opening of the eyes... Since *Ze'eir Anpin* includes both right and left, Compassion and Judgment, His two eyes transmit both good and evil. The verse in Daniel demonstrates that His *eyes can see our desolation* and such divine awareness will lead to Israel's redemption. The verse in Isaiah describes how God's *eyes will see the future tranquility of Jerusalem*; but this entails the bloody defeat of Israel's enemies. Divine goodness is inseparable from the necessary evil of divine destruction.

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *Gaze upon Zion, our city of assembly; Your eyes will see Jerusalem a tranquil abode [meaning: as a tranquil abode], a tent not to be packed up, whose pegs will never be pulled out, and none of whose ropes will snap.* For various interpretations of this paragraph, see *Or Yaqar; Yayin ha-Reqaḥ; Sullam; Sha'arei ha-Idra; Matoq mi-Devash*.

267. the Concealment of the Book... Referring to *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (The Book of Concealment). See *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdT*s); above, [note 22](#).

The two verses from Isaiah both describe Jerusalem, which symbolizes *Shekhinah*. According to one verse, Jerusalem is *a tranquil abode*, whereas the other insists that she contains *justice*, equivalent here to Judgment, which can be harsh and untranquil. However, here the phrase *a tranquil abode* is applied not to Jerusalem but to *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of Days), who is being addressed: *Your eyes will see* [or: *May Your eyes see*] *Jerusalem, O tranquil abode*. He is being asked to “gaze upon these eyes” of *Ze’eir Anpin*, eliminating their harsh colors and conveying through them a compassionate gaze upon Jerusalem.

Therefore, in this verse the word עֵינֶיךָ (*einekha*), *your eyes*, is spelled without the second ם (*yod*): עֵינֶךָ (*einekha*), *your eye*, alluding to the single all-seeing eye of the Holy Ancient One. Actually, the Masoretic spelling of עֵינֶיךָ (*einekha*), *Your eyes*, includes both *yods*. The statement here that “it is spelled עֵינֶךָ (*einekha*), *your eye*,” without the second *yod* (as, for example, in Isaiah 37:17), is playfully creative. On the phenomenon of Zoharic biblical quotations differing from the Masoretic text, see Vol. 7, p. 8, n. 24.

On the juxtaposition of the two verses in Isaiah, see *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdT*s); 3:293b–294a (*IZ*). For the full verse in Isaiah 33, see the preceding note. The verse in Isaiah 1, bemoaning the lost glory of Jerusalem, reads: צֶדֶק (*Tsedeq*), *Righteousness* [or: *Justice*], *lodged in her*. On *tsedeq* as *Din* (Judgment), see *Bahir* 50 (74); *Zohar* 3:85b, 198b–199a.

268. As for its saying *Jerusalem*... The verse in Isaiah begins by referring to *Zion*, but then continues *Your eyes will see Jerusalem*. The name *Zion* alludes to the compassionate aspect (or condition) of *Shekhinah*, whereas *Jerusalem* refers to Her quality of Judgment. See *Zohar* 3:293b, 296b (both *IZ*). For the full verse, see above, [note 266](#).

269. The eyes of YHVH your God are perpetually upon her... According to its simple sense, *upon her* means

“upon the land of Israel,” which here also symbolizes *Shekhinah*. For Rabbi Shim’on, *the eyes of YHVH* are the eyes of *Ze’eir Anpin*, whose constant gaze is required because of the Judgment appearing in *Shekhinah*. However, in the time to come, the single compassionate eye of *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of Ancients, or the Ancient of Days) will gaze upon *Shekhinah*.

On the distinction between *compassion* and *great compassion*, cf. *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdT*s); below, [note 356](#). See also above, [notes 14](#), [27](#).

On the verse in Deuteronomy, see especially *Zohar* 3:293b–294a (*IZ*), and also 1:107a, 199a, 250b; 2:157b, 226a; *ZH* 87c (*MhN*, *Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 105. On the verse in Isaiah 1, see above, [note 267](#).

[270. In these eyes...](#) In the eyes of *Ze’eir Anpin* (within their two colors of Judgment) are two divine tears. These are sweetened in the whiteness of Wisdom.

See BT *Berakhot* 59a: “When the blessed Holy One remembers His children, who are plunged in suffering among the nations of the world, He sheds two tears into the Great Sea, and His voice resounds from one end of the world to the other.” See above, [note 124](#).

[271. the Concealment of the Book...](#) Referring to *Sifra di-Tsni’uta* (The Book of Concealment). See *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdT*s); above, [note 22](#).

The nose is the most distinctive feature of the face. See M *Yevamot* 16:3: “Evidence [of the identity of a corpse] may not be given except from [proof provided by] the face together with the nose.” See above, [note 71](#).

The nose of *Ze’eir Anpin* spews smoke and fire when He rages at human wickedness. This wrathful quality matches His name: זעיר אנפין (*Ze’eir Anpin*), which means “short-tempered, irascible, impatient,” taking a short time for His nostrils to flare. See above, [note 14](#).

On the nose of *Ze'eir Anpin*, see *Zohar* 2:122b; 3:294a (*IZ*); cf. 1:70a. On the nose of *Arikh Anpin*, see *Zohar* 3:130a–b (*IR*), 289a (*IZ*). On the difference between the two, see above, [notes 79, 150–51](#).

The verse in Samuel reads:... *coals blazed from it* [or: *from Him*]. See above, [note 79](#). On the statement “there is no smoke without fire...,” see *Zohar* 1:70a.

[272.](#) **When these three unite...** The three elements mentioned in the verse from Samuel: *smoke, fire, and coals*. Cf. *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdTs*).

[273.](#) **the wrath and the fury...** In rabbinic literature these two nouns are frequently personified as malevolent powers.

On the fiery destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, see Genesis 19:24: *YHVH rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire*. On the personification of Wrath, Fury, and the Destroyer, see *Targum Yerushalmi* on the verse in Deuteronomy; BT *Shabbat* 55a; *Pirgei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 45; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 4:3; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 20; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tissa* 13; *Shemot Rabbah* 41:7; 44:8; *Devarim Rabbah* 3:1; *Midrash Tehillim* 7:6.

[274.](#) **There are five *Gevuran*, Powers...** These five aspects of *Gevurah* within *Ze'eir Anpin* are sometimes correlated with the five letters of the Hebrew alphabet that have both regular and final forms: מנצפק (mem, nun, tsade, pe, kaf). The combined numerical value of these five letters is 280, which, multiplied by 5, equals 1,400. Note the five bodily parts: nose, mouth, arm, hand, and fingers.

The verse in Psalms mentions the plural: גבורות (*gevurot*), *the powers*, whereas the verse in Chronicles employs the singular: והגבורה (*ve-ha-gevurah*), *and the power*. Rabbi Shim'on explains why.

On the five *Gevuran*, see *Zohar* 3:138b, 141a, 142a (all *IR*), 296a (*IZ*). Cf. *Zohar* 2:83a; 3:24a, 31b, 38a, 48b, 60a. On the singular and plural of *Gevurah*, see *Zohar* 1:249a. The verse in Psalms reads: *Who can utter גבורות (gevurot), the*

mighty acts of, YHVH or declare all His praise? See *Zohar* 2:83a; 3:294a (IZ). On the verse in Chronicles and its kabbalistic significance, see above, [p. 66](#), [n. 36](#).

275. All those Gevuran... Both immense numbers play on the element 1,400, and the second one includes an extra 5. See the preceding note.

The verse in Psalms reads: *One generation to the next will praise Your deeds, וגבורותיך יגידו (u-gvurotekha yaggidu), and Your mighty acts they will proclaim.* Here, Rabbi Shim'on is apparently interpreting *yaggidu* according to the sense of the Aramaic root נגד (*ngd*), "to flow." See Hellner-Eshed and Leader, *Idra Rabba*.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *He drove out the human and placed east of the Garden of Eden the cherubim and the flame of the whirling sword to guard the way to the Tree of Life.* In the *Zohar*, this *flame of the whirling sword* often represents *Shekhinah* and Her forces.

276. For we are about to destroy this place... This verse is spoken by the two angelic messengers, who come to Lot in Sodom. The verse continues: *because the outcry against them has grown great before YHVH, and YHVH has sent us to destroy it.* The other two verses quoted here involve *YHVH* even more directly in destroying the wicked cities. But how can this be, when the name *YHVH* represents Compassion, unlike the name *Elohim*, which signifies Judgment?

On the wicked transforming God's attributes, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 33:3, in the name of Rabbi Shemu'el son of Nahman: "Woe to the wicked, who turn the Attribute of Compassion into the Attribute of Judgment!" See above, [p. 290](#), [n. 11](#). The wording here in the *Zohar* matches the version quoted by Asher ben David, *Sefer ha-Yihud*, 55, where it is linked to Genesis 19:24.

On *YHVH* and *Elohim* signifying, respectively, Compassion and Judgment, see above, [p. 184](#), [n. 375](#). On the name *YHVH* in the context of Sodom and Gomorrah, see *Bereshit*

Rabbah 51:2; *Zohar* 1:64b; 2:227b (Vol. 6, p. 306, n. 125). Genesis 19:24 reads in full: *YHVH rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from YHVH out of heaven.*

277. I am YHVH—I have not changed... Implying that His Attribute of Compassion is constant. Rabbi Shim'on explains that Compassion pertains to *Arikh Anpin* (who is also known as the Ancient of Ancients, the White Head, and Will of Wills). When He is revealed, His Compassion assuages and overwhelms the Judgment characteristic of *Ze'eir Anpin*. But when *Arikh Anpin* is not revealed, the Judgment of *Ze'eir Anpin* takes effect, and it is as if the Compassion of *Arikh Anpin* itself—represented by the name *YHVH*—enacts Judgment.

278. all the lamps... All the *sefirot* of *Ze'eir Anpin*, who is now associated with the name *YHVH*.

On the sefirotic significance of the letters of *YHVH*, see above, [p. 83](#), [n. 83](#). On the interplay between *Arikh Anpin* and *Ze'eir Anpin*, see above, [note 27](#).

279. from YHVH out of heaven... The full verse reads: *YHVH rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from YHVH out of heaven.* The phrase *out of heaven* demonstrates that the destruction comes from *Ze'eir Anpin*, whose core is *Tif'eret*, symbolized by *heaven*.

Furthermore, according to a midrashic tradition, the word שָׁמַיִם (*shamayim*), “heaven,” represents a compound of אֵשׁ וּמַיִם (*esh u-mayim*), “fire and water,” which here symbolize Judgment and Compassion, which both appear within *Ze'eir Anpin*—unlike *Arikh Anpin*, who is pure Compassion with “no Judgment at all.”

On the midrashic interpretation of *shamayim*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 4:7, in the name of Rav: “The blessed Holy One took אֵשׁ (*esh*), fire, and מַיִם (*mayim*), water, and mixed them with one another, and from them שָׁמַיִם (*shamayim*), heaven, was made.” See BT *Hagigah* 12a.

280. This nose is small... Because the nose of *Ze'eir Anpin* is small, the smoke emerges quickly. His wrath can be

assuaged only by *Arikh Anpin*, “the Long-nosed, Long-suffering” (who is also called the Holy Ancient One).

The word “small” renders זעיר (*ze’eir*), as in זעיר אנפין (*Ze’eir Anpin*), literally “of a small face,” and meaning “short-tempered,” taking a short time for His nostrils to flare. In contrast, אריך אנפין (*Arikh Anpin*)—Hebrew ארך אפים (*Erekh Appayim*)—means “slow to anger, long-suffering, patient,” taking a long time for His nostrils to flare. Here, Rabbi Shim’on construes *Arikh Anpin* also as “Long-nosed,” based on Hebrew אף (*aph*), “nose, anger,” which is etymologically and semantically related to Aramaic אנף (*anaph*), “face.” Similarly, *Ze’eir Anpin* can imply “Small-nosed, Short-nosed.” The Hebrew plural אפים (*appayim*) can mean both “nostrils” and “face.” See above, [notes 14, 27](#).

281. a pausal sign interposing... This clause renders פסיק טעמא (*paseiq ta’ama*), “a (punctuation) sign interposes,” which plays on the noun פסק (*paseq*), literally “cutting off, interposition,” the name of a Masoretic minor pausal sign consisting of a vertical line (|) between two words. One of the functions of this sign is to separate a pair of identical words or names in the biblical text, such as יהוה | יהוה (*YHVH YHVH*), | אברהם אברהם (*Avraham Avraham*), *Abraham! Abraham!* or יעקב | יעקב (*Ya’aqov Ya’aqov*), *Jacob! Jacob!* or שמואל | שמואל (*Shemu’el Shemu’el*), *Samuel! Samuel!*

Uniquely, however, when God calls to Moses out of the Burning Bush, the exclamation משה משה (*Mosheh Mosheh*), *Moses! Moses!* contains no pausal sign.

See *Shemot Rabbah* 2:6; *Zohar* 1:120a–b, 158b; 3:187b, 289b (*IZ*); *Minḥat Shai* on Exodus 3:4. Cf. *Sifra*, *Nedavah* 1:10, 12, 3c–d; *Tosefta Berakhot* 1:14; *Bereshit Rabbah* 30:4; 38:12; 56:7; *Rut Rabbah* (ed. Lerner) 8:4; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli’ezer* 8, pp. 143, 154; *Midrash Shemu’el* 9:8; *Tanḥuma*, *Shemot* 18; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemot* 15; *Midrash Tehillim* 9:7; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:21; *Zohar* 1:59b–60a (*Tos*). Cf. also *Zohar* 2:93b. On the pausal sign

paseq, see Gesenius, *Hebrew Grammar*, § 15f, n. 2; *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 13:640-41.

282. Abraham! Abraham!—the latter complete...

According to rabbinic tradition, Abraham underwent ten tests, through which he eventually proved his devotion and holiness. The last of these ten tests is considered here to be the binding of Isaac; and at the last moment of this ordeal, just as Abraham was about to slaughter his son, an angel stopped him, exclaiming *Abraham! Abraham!* From a kabbalistic perspective, by nearly sacrificing Isaac, Abraham succeeded in balancing *Hesed* and *Gevurah*, thereby becoming completely whole.

On Abraham's ten tests, see Jubilees 17:17; 19:8; M *Avot* 5:3; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 33; B, 36; *Pirgei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 26; *Midrash Tehillim* 18:25; *Zohar* 1:82a. In his Commentary on the Mishnah, *Avot* 5:3, Maimonides identifies the binding of Isaac as the tenth and final test. On the sefirotic significance of the binding of Isaac, see especially *Zohar* 1:119b-120a. On the exclamation *Abraham! Abraham!* indicating incompleteness and then completeness, see *Zohar* 1:120a-b; 3:187b.

283. Jacob! Jacob!—the latter complete... God utters this exclamation as the aged Jacob is about to leave Canaan on his way to Egypt to reunite with Joseph, his long-lost son.

According to a midrashic tradition, after Joseph initially disappeared, *Shekhinah* departed from his father, Jacob, thereby depriving him of prophetic vision. Many years later, when Jacob realized that his son was still alive, *Shekhinah* returned, and Her power of inspiration reanimated the aged patriarch.

By this point in his life, Jacob fully symbolizes the cosmic Tree of *Tif'eret*. His descendants, the twelve tribes, parallel *Tif'eret's* twelve potencies (or "boundaries"), while the seventy people who traditionally accompanied Jacob when he went to Egypt parallel *Tif'eret's* seventy branches

(corresponding to the seven *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* to *Shekhinah*). See above, [note 198](#); [p. 121](#), [n. 199](#).

On *Shekhinah* leaving and finally returning to Jacob, see *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 30; *Targum Yerushalmi* and *Targum Onqelos*, Genesis 45:27; *Pirquei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 38; *Midrash Tehillim* 24:3; Rashi on Genesis 45:27; Maimonides, *Shemonah Peraqim* 7; idem, *Guide of the Perplexed* 2:36; *Zohar* 1:180b, 197a-b, 216b.

[284.](#) **Samuel! Samuel!...** God's initiatory call to the young Samuel in the sanctuary at Shiloh. See *Zohar* 1:120b.

[285.](#) **But Moses! Moses!—no sign interposing...** Because starting from birth, Moses was complete and constantly accompanied by *Shekhinah*.

See *Shemot Rabbah* 2:6: "But *Moses! Moses!*—there is no קספ (*paseq*), pausal sign. Why?... With all the other prophets, He broke off speaking with them, whereas throughout Moses' life He never קפספ (*hiphsiq*), broke off."

See *Zohar* 1:120b; and 3:187b: "But Moses—who was undivided, of whom is written *Moses! Moses!* with no sign interposing..." Cf. *Sifra*, *Nedavah* 1:12, 3d; *Tosefta Berakhot* 1:14; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:21.

The full verse in Exodus 2 describes Moses' birth to Jochebed: *The woman conceived and bore a son, and she saw that he was good and she hid him three months*. On the significance of *that he was good*, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 20:1; *BT Sotah* 12a; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:20; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 2; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 4:9; 9:2; *Tanḥuma*, *Noah* 5, *Va'ethannan* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'ethannan* 1; *Midrash Tehillim* 9:7; *Zohar* 2:11b-12a, 19a (*MhN*); 3:187b.

On Moses' lifelong intimacy with *Shekhinah*, see also *Zohar* 2:11b; 3:174a; Vol. 5, p. 223, n. 94. Cf. above, above, [p. 198](#), [n. 420](#).

[286.](#) **Here, too, YHVH! YHVH!...** The pausal sign between the two names implies that the first refers to *Ze'eir Anpin* when He is characterized by Judgment, whereas the second

refers to when the influx of Compassion from *Arikh Anpin* renders *Ze'eir Anpin* "complete in every way." Alternatively, the first *YHVH* refers to *Ze'eir Anpin*, and the second to *Arikh Anpin*.

On the significance of the pausal sign between *YHVH!* *YHVH!* see *Zohar* 1:158b; 3:289b (*IZ*). On the significance of this repetition of the name *YHVH*, see also BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 17b; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 5, 22a; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:1. For various interpretations of this paragraph, see *Or Yaqar*; *Qol be-Ramah*; *Ruah David*; *Yafah Sha'ah*; *Yayin ha-Reqah*; *Sullam*; *Sha'arei ha-Idra*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

287. Moses spoke in a place of Judgment... When Israel sinned by worshiping the Golden Calf, Judgment loomed, threatening to destroy them. Moses saved his people by uttering the thirteen attributes of Compassion, thereby drawing these down from *Arikh Anpin* (known as the Holy Ancient One) to *Ze'eir Anpin*, who at that time was dominated by Judgment. See above, [note 111](#).

288. When the Holy Ancient One is revealed... When *Arikh Anpin* is revealed to *Ze'eir Anpin*, all becomes compassionate, and the flaring nose of *Ze'eir Anpin* is assuaged.

The verse in Isaiah reads in full: *For the sake of My name* אפי אאריך (*a'arikh appi*), *I delay My wrath* [or hyperliterally: *lengthen My nose*], *and for My praise* אהטם (*ehetom*), *I refrain* [or: *restrain Myself; restrain it*], *for you, so as not to cut you off*. The verbal root אהטם (*htm*), "to restrain, bridle, muzzle," is a cognate of the Hebrew noun אהטם (*hotem*), Aramaic אהטמא (*hutma*), "nose."

According to the verse, God promises Israel that He will be not be short-tempered but, rather, long-suffering. Here, Rabbi Shim'on links *ehetom* directly with *hotem* (or *hutma*), "nose," so the verb now means *I restrain the nose*, "I soothe the flaring nostrils of *Ze'eir Anpin* (the Short-Tempered One)," or "I manifest the patient quality of the nose," "I extend My nose (to Yours)." See above, [note 80](#).

289. From one nostril... Of *Ze'eir Anpin*. The Hollow of the Great Abyss is the domain of all demonic forces.

The phrase “anyone who manages to approach” may allude to Nadab and Abihu, the two sons of Aaron who were killed by divine fire because when offering incense *they offered alien fire before YHVH* (Leviticus 10:1). Conversely, proper sacrificial ritual assuages both the smoke and fire issuing from the nostrils of *Ze'eir Anpin*.

The image of “a fire consuming all other fires” derives from BT *Yoma* 21b, where the fire of *Shekhinah* is described as “a fire consuming fire,” that is, consuming the fiery angels. See *Tanḥuma, Yitro* 16; *Tosafot, Hagigah* 23a, s.v. *she-ein bo*; *Zohar* 1:18b-19a, 50b, 69a; 2:19b (*MhN*), 89b, 226b; 3:25b, 27b, 32b, 154b, 294a (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 63-65.

On the cosmic impact of sacrifices, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:878-90. On the effect of sacrificial smoke, see *Zohar* 1:45b (*Heikh*), 51a-b, 70a-b, 176b, 244a, 247b; 2:122b, 130a, 141a, 162a, 242b, 259b (*Heikh*); 3:30b, 32b, 294a (*IZ*); Vol. 3, p. 493, n. 863.

The verse in Numbers (which is quoted below at [note 293](#)), reads in full: *The people were complaining bitterly in the ears of YHVH, and YHVH heard and אַפָּ (appo), His wrath [or: His nose], flared, and the fire of YHVH blazed against them, consuming the edge of the camp.* For various interpretations of the clause “consuming anyone who manages to approach,” see *Or Yaqar; Yafah Sha'ah; Yayin ha-Reqaḥ; Sha'arei ha-Idra; Matoq mi-Devash*.

290. All depends upon the nose... The nose of *Ze'eir Anpin* can either flare in anger or be assuaged. The verse in Genesis describes God's response to Noah's sacrifices following the Flood, when He promised to never again destroy all life.

On the determinative quality of the nose, cf. above, [note 271](#). On the verse in Genesis, see *Zohar* 1:70a; 2:122b; 3:294a (*IZ*).

The verse in Deuteronomy 11 reads: אף יהוה (Af YHVH), *The wrath [or: the nose] of YHVH, will flare against you.* Cf. *ibid.* 7:4; Joshua 23:16. Similarly, the verse in Exodus reads: *My wrath [or: My nose] will flare.* Cf. Deuteronomy 31:17. Similarly, the verse in Deuteronomy 6 reads: *lest the wrath [or: the nose] of YHVH flare.*

291. Incline Your ear... *Ze'eir Anpin* is implored to *incline* His ear, which lies beneath His hanging hair, so that He will hear prayer. See above, [note 242](#).

The spiral structure of the inner ear (the cochlea) enables it (or the brain) to distinguish between good and evil speech. See *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdTs*); 3:294a (*IZ*). On the anatomy and physiology of the ear as it was understood in the thirteenth-century, see Gershon ben Solomon, *Sha'ar ha-Shamayim* 9, 28d-29a.

292. winged beings... Angels who convey human voices above.

On the verse in Ecclesiastes as alluding to angels, see *Devarim Rabbah* 6:10; *Zohar* 1:34b, 92a; 2:241b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 203.

293. Within this ear drips a trickle... The fluid of the inner ear. Technically, this fluid moves in response to sound waves, and that motion stimulates receptor cells, which in turn translate the motion into electrical nerve impulses that are transmitted to the brain. The brain interprets these electrical signals as sound.

On cavities of the brain, see above, [note 232](#). The full verse in Numbers reads: *The people became complainers of evil in the ears of YHVH, and YHVH heard and אפף (appo), His wrath [or: His nose], flared, and the fire of YHVH blazed against them, consuming the edge of the camp.*

294. This ear is concealed outside... By the earlobe. Anyone who reveals secrets is as if he impaired the configuration of divine hearing, which is intended to guard secrets. See *Zohar* 3:294b (*IZ*); and cf. above, [notes 6, 15](#).

295. When [Israel] cries out in distress... Then the hair covering the ears of *Ze'ir Anpin* is withdrawn, so that He can hear Israel's cry. His nose contracts and spews fire and smoke, arousing powers of Judgment to punish Israel's enemies.

On the *Gevuran*, see above, [notes 274-75](#). The word "contracts" renders אִתְּזוֹעַר (*itze'ar*), which plays on the name זַעִיר אֲנַפִּין (*Ze'ir Anpin*), literally "of a small face," and meaning "short-tempered," taking a short time for His nostrils to flare. See above, [notes 14, 27, 280](#).

296. that voice... The human cry of distress. On the two divine tears, see BT *Berakhot* 59a: "When the blessed Holy One remembers His children, who are plunged in suffering among the nations of the world, He sheds two tears into the Great Sea, and His voice resounds from one end of the world to the other." See above, [note 124](#).

297. YHVH heard and His nose flared... For the full verse, see above, [note 293](#).

298. Incline Your ear... Alluding to all the angelic forces dangling from the ears of *Ze'ir Anpin*. See *Zohar* 3:294a (*IZ*); cf. above at [note 292](#).

On the verse in Kings, see above [notes 242, 291](#). On the difference between the ears of *Ze'ir Anpin* and those of *Arikh Anpin*, see above, [note 242](#).

299. On the aspect of one cavity of the brain... The cavity corresponding to *Binah*, who includes fifty gates. This mental energy spreads throughout the body by means of the heart. Both the ear and the heart are associated with "testing," and "both expand from the same place," namely from *Binah*.

On this particular cavity of the brain and on the fifty gates of *Binah*, see above, [note 234](#). The verse in Psalms reads: *He tests hearts and kidneys*. The kidneys were thought to be the seat of conscience.

300. the Concealment of the Book... Referring to *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (The Book of Concealment). Cf. *Zohar*

2:177b (*SdTs*); Vol. 5, p. 564, n. 45. See above, [note 22](#).

The clause “so it is entirely” means throughout the realm of *Ze’eir Anpin*. The ear is connected with (“included in”) the brain—specifically with the cavity corresponding to *Binah*. The association of *Binah* (Understanding) with hearing is demonstrated by the fact that the verb שמע (*shm’*), “to hear,” can also mean “to understand.” See, e.g., Genesis 11:7; 42:23; Deuteronomy 28:49; Ezekiel 3:6.

“Masters of Qualities” renders מאריהון דמדין (*mareihon de-middin*), “masters of *middin*,” likely deriving from מדד (*mdd*), “to measure.” In the *Zohar* the expression apparently refers to kabbalists who know the מדות (*middot*), the divine “qualities, attributes” (*sefirot*), or who know שעור קומה (*shi’ur qomah*), “the measure of the [divine] stature.” See above, [note 81](#).

[301.](#) YHVH, I have heard of Your hearing... When the prophet Habakkuk perceived the entire auditory process of *Ze’eir Anpin* (as described above), he understood how this arouses forces of Judgment, so he was fittingly afraid.

See above, [note 14](#). The verse in Habakkuk reads: YHVH, I have heard שמעך (*shim’akha*), of Your renown [or: of Your hearing].

[302.](#) YHVH, Your deed... Whereas the first YHVH in this verse refers to *Ze’eir Anpin*, this second one is addressed to *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of Days).

See above, [note 286](#). The phrase “called by one Name” apparently means that both יהוה (YHVH) and אדני (*Adonai*) are pronounced *Adonai*.

[303.](#) ‘the complete Name’ ... In midrashic literature the double name יהוה אלהים (YHVH *Elohim*) is called “the complete Name.” Rabbi Shim’on indicates that this name includes both *Arikh Anpin* (called here Ancient of All) and *Ze’eir Anpin*. The double name YHVH YHVH also includes *Ze’eir Anpin* and *Arikh Anpin*, and alludes specifically to when *Arikh Anpin* illumines *Ze’eir Anpin* with Compassion.

On YHVH *Elohim* as the “complete name” in the context of planting the Garden of Eden, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 15:1;

Zohar 2:150a, 177b (*SdTs*). Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:15; 13:3; Zohar 2:213a; below, [notes 329, 380](#).

304. YHVH, Your deed... As mentioned above (at [note 302](#)), this second YHVH in the verse is addressed to *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of Days). The phrase *Your deed* refers to *Ze'eir Anpin*, who is generated by *Arikh Anpin*. The verse in Habakkuk reads: *YHVH, Your deed, in the midst of years revive it [or: revive him]*.

305. In the midst of years—Primordial Years... The enhancements of the beard of *Arikh Anpin* (or specifically, the final, all-encompassing enhancement) are called Primordial Years and *days of old*. In contrast, the enhancements of the beard of *Ze'eir Anpin* (or His *sefirot*) are called Years of the World and *days of the world*, since *Ze'eir Anpin* is known as *the world*.

See above, [note 202](#). The phrase *days of the world* renders ימי עולם (*yemei olam*), which means literally *days of eternity* (or *antiquity*). Here, Rabbi Shim'on construes *olam* as *world*, alluding to *Ze'eir Anpin*.

The phrase Primordial Years appears in the same verse from Malachi, which reads in full: *The offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to YHVH* קדמוניות וכשנים עולם (ki-yemei olam ukh-shanim qadmoniyot), *as in days of antiquity and former [or: primordial] years*. On the phrase שנות עולם (*shenot olam*), Years of the World, cf. Psalms 77:6: שנות עולמים (*shenot olamim*), *years of antiquity*.

306. Whom? Ze'eir Anpin... The verse now implies a plea that *Arikh Anpin* will *revive* (that is, sustain, illumine, and assuage) *Ze'eir Anpin* by means of *Arikh Anpin's* enhancements (His primordial years).

307. In wrath remember compassion... The conclusion of the verse now implies: When *Ze'eir Anpin* is wrathful, may You (*Arikh Anpin*) *remember compassion* and convey the quality of supernal *Hesed* to Him. Then, Compassion will reach all those below, not only those who deserve it but even the unworthy who just need it. See

Devarim Rabbah 2:1; *Leqah Tov*, Deuteronomy 3:23. Cf. BT *Berakhot* 7a.

308. all those who stand over us... The angels, eager to hear “these words,” namely the secrets spoken by Rabbi Shim’on and the Companions.

On the angels, see above, [note 5](#). On the canopy, see above, [notes 209–10](#). On the “itinerary” of the secrets, see above, [notes 138, 211](#).

309. You, cleaving to YHVH your God... In this world Israel cleaves to the Name *YHVH*, while after departing this world they merge with Him.

Shekhinah is often called “the bond (or bundle) of life.” See above, [p. 73](#), [n. 57](#). The verse in Deuteronomy 4 reads: *You, יהוה ביהוה הדבקים* (*ha-deveqim ba-YHVH*), *cleaving to YHVH, your God, are alive every one of you today!* Here, Rabbi Shim’on construes *ba-YHVH* hyperliterally as *in YHVH*. See Scholem.

310. holy anointing oil... That is, the flow of emanation from the supernal beard of *Arikh Anpin* to the more revealed beard of *Ze’eir Anpin*. See above at [note 84](#). (After the clause “to the beard of *Ze’eir Anpin*,” the thought breaks off in mid-sentence.)

311. The beard is nowhere to be found... The divine beard is not mentioned anywhere in the Bible. Even Solomon’s Song of Songs (whose depictions of the male lover are understood as referring to God) describes only *his cheeks*, not “his beard.” Cf. above, [note 129](#).

The reference to “the Concealment of the Book” alludes to *Sifra di-Tsni’uta* (The Book of Concealment). See *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdT*s); Vol. 5, p. 565, n. 49; above, [note 22](#). On the beard’s not being mentioned in the Bible, see also *Zohar* 2:177a (*SdT*s); Vol. 5, p. 556, n. 22.

On the beard as precious (or glorious), see BT *Shabbat* 152a, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu’a son of Korḥah: “The glory of a face is the beard.” See above, [note 82](#). The verse in Song of Songs reads: *his cheeks like a bed of spices* [or: *balsam*].

312. nine enhancements... Whereas the beard of *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of Ancients) includes thirteen enhancements (or features), the beard of *Ze'eir Anpin* includes only nine. When the beard of *Arikh Anpin* illumines that of *Ze'eir Anpin*, thirteen streams of emanation flow into the lower beard, yielding a total of twenty-two enhancements, which generate the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet, or of the Torah.

On the term תקונין (*tiqqunin*), “arrangements, enhancements” (or locks, curls, curlicues, formations, features), see above, [notes 38, 84](#). Cf. [notes 5, 32](#). On the nine enhancements of *Ze'eir Anpin*, see *Zohar* 2:122b, 177a–b (*SdT*s); 3:139a–141a (*IR*), 295a–b (*IZ*). On the thirteen enhancements of *Arikh Anpin*, see above, [note 84](#). On twenty-two as the sum of thirteen (pertaining to *Arikh Anpin*) and nine (pertaining to *Ze'eir Anpin*), see *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdT*s); 3:146b, 295a (*IZ*). Cf. 2:175b; Vol. 5, p. 524, n. 952. On the thirteen springs of oil, see above, [note 84](#).

313. covers an offering of spices... The beard covers the cheeks, described as “an offering of spices,” based on the depiction of the beloved in the verse from Song of Songs: *his cheeks like a bed of spices* [or: *balsam*]. See above, [note 83](#).

Rabbi Shim'on distinguishes between the actual wording of the verse—*like a bed of spices*—and the same phrase without *like*. Perhaps he means that “an offering of spices” is *like a bed of spices* and not exactly the same as *a bed of spices*. For another interpretation, see *Or Yaqar*.

314. with black hair... As opposed to the white hair of *Arikh Anpin*. See above, [notes 109, 113](#), and [237](#).

The verse in Song of Songs reads in full: *His thighs, pillars of marble, set upon pedestals of gold. His appearance is like Lebanon*, בחור כארזים (*baḥur ka-arazim*), *distinguished as the cedars* [or: *a young man like the cedars*]. See above at [note 238](#).

315. First enhancement... The first enhancement of the beard of *Ze'eir Anpin* consists of hair extending from in front of the ears to the top lip of the mouth. This enhancement corresponds to the first enhancement of the beard of *Arikh Anpin*. See above at [note 85](#).

The initial growth of the beard is stimulated by the primordial divine potency called בוציטא דקרדינותא (*botsitsa de-qardinuta*), “the Spark (or Scintilla) of Adamantine Darkness.” This term is a slight variation on בוצינא דקרדינותא (*botsina de-qardinuta*), “the Lamp of Adamantine Darkness.” See above, [note 224](#). On the term אױרא דכיא (*aveira dakhya*), “pure air (or ether),” see *ibid*.

316. Second enhancement... The hair growing from one side of the upper lip to the other, and beneath the lower lip from one side to the other. This enhancement corresponds to the second and fourth enhancements of the beard of *Arikh Anpin*. See above at [notes 86, 88](#).

317. Third enhancement... Consisting of the philtrum, the vertical groove running from right beneath the nose to the top of the lip. This enhancement corresponds to the third enhancement of the beard of *Arikh Anpin*, but the latter’s “path” is free of hair. The small coarse hairs filling *Ze'eir Anpin*’s facial path represent forces of Judgment. See above at [note 87](#); *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdTs*).

Furthermore, whereas for *Arikh Anpin*, a similar indentation appears below the mouth, no such “path” appears for *Ze'eir Anpin*. See above at [note 89](#).

318. Fourth enhancement... Mainly the hair covering the cheeks, which are called “the offering of spices.” See above, [note 313](#). This enhancement corresponds to the sixth enhancement of the beard of *Arikh Anpin*. See above at [note 90](#).

The phrase “His jowls” renders עלעױי (*il’oi*), which actually means “his ribs,” but in the *Zohar* also “his jaws” or, as here, “his cheeks.” See *Zohar* 2:27b, 122a (Vol. 5, pp. 146–47, n. 23); *Zohar* 3:139b (*IR*), 140b (*IR*).

319. Fifth enhancement... The round fleshy parts of the cheeks beneath the eyes, free of hair, appearing especially in a smile, and described here as “two apples.” This enhancement corresponds to the seventh enhancement of the beard of *Arikh Anpin*, although here the color red is specified, signifying Judgment. See above at [note 91](#); *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdT*s). On the 270 worlds, see above, [note 40](#).

320. Sixth enhancement... The widening of the beard beneath the mouth and extending down to the belly. This enhancement corresponds to the eighth enhancement of the beard of *Arikh Anpin*, although the latter extends farther, all the way to the navel. See above at [note 92](#); *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdT*s).

321. Seventh enhancement... Matching the twelfth enhancement of *Arikh Anpin*. See above after [note 94](#).

322. Eighth enhancement... Corresponding to the tenth and eleventh enhancements of the beard of *Arikh Anpin*, although there the description is more elegant: “One strand does not part from another, and they are measured by a perfect standard.” See above at [note 94](#).

“The neck” renders קדלָא (*qedala*), which often means “nape of the neck” but can also mean simply “neck” (as in *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 14:3; *Zohar* 1:209b). This latter meaning fits the description here.

323. Ninth enhancement... The hair behind (and “joining”) the visible hanging body of the beard (described in the sixth enhancement). This final enhancement corresponds to the thirteenth and final enhancement of the beard of *Arikh Anpin*. See above at [note 95](#).

The phrase “a mighty hero victorious in battles,” is based on *Targum Onqelos*, Genesis 10:9; Exodus 15:3. See above, [note 238](#).

324. By these nine enhancements... The enhancements of the beard of *Ze’eir Anpin* convey nine streams of emanation from *Arikh Anpin* above.

A man should glorify the divine beard and also tend to his own beard, arranging it according to the pattern above. Then he will be considered mighty by all who see him. See above, [note 98](#).

[325. Twirl the beard...](#) That is, elucidate and elaborate its enhancements. See above at [note 100](#).

[326. From confinement I called to Yah...](#) As Rabbi El'azar soon explains, these five verses in Psalm 118 allude to the nine enhancements of the beard of *Ze'eir Anpin*, which convey Judgment. By uttering these verses King David invoked those enhancements and, with their potency, vanquished his enemies.

Psalm 118:5 reads: *From confinement [or: From the straits; In distress] I called to Yah...* See *Zohar* 2:95a (Vol. 5, p. 4, n.13), 177b (*SdT*s); 3:295a (*IZ*). On the verses in Psalm 118, cf. Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 50a-b; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 117-18.

[327. nine enhancements, which are the name of YHVH...](#) As Rabbi El'azar soon explains.

[328. the Concealment of the Book...](#) Referring to *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (The Book of Concealment). See *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdT*s); Vol. 5, p. 566, n. 52; above, [note 22](#).

The five verses in Psalms allude to the nine enhancements. Six of these enhancements are signified by the divine names *Yah* and *YHVH*, which appear a total of six times. The remaining three enhancements are signified by the word *human*, which appears twice, plus the word *princes*, which is included "in the category of *human*."

On the division of nine enhancements into six and three, see *Zohar* 3:295a (*IZ*). For the five full verses in Psalms, see above at [note 326](#).

[329. Wherever אדם \(adam\), human, is mentioned here...](#) In these five verses from Psalms, whenever *human* (or *princes*) is mentioned, the same verse includes *YHVH*. The relevant verses read: *YHVH is with me, I do not fear; what can a human do to me? Better to shelter in YHVH than*

to trust in a human. Better to shelter in YHVH than to trust in princes.

The correlation of *adam* (*human*) with *YHVH* emphasizes their intimate relationship, stemming from the original divine creation of the human being. The fuller significance of *adam* is soon explained.

In midrashic literature the double name יהוה אלהים (*YHVH Elohim*) is called “the complete Name.” See *Bereshit Rabbah* 13:3; 15:1. Cf. 12:15. On *YHVH Elohim* as the “complete name” pertaining to the verse *YHVH Elohim formed the human*, see *Pesiqta Rabbati* 40, 167a; *Midrash Yelammedenu, Liqqudim* 1, 7 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:141, 143); *Zohar* 1:49a; 2:260a (*Heikh*); 3:46b, 48a, 141b (*IR*); Bahya ben Asher, *Leviticus* 12:2; Kasher, *Torah Shelema*, *Genesis* 2:7, n. 127. See above, [note 303](#).

The full verse in *Genesis* reads: *YHVH Elohim formed the human, dust from the earth, and blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and the human became a living being.*

330. twice: Yah, Yah... The two instances of this short divine name in the verse allude to the two cheeks of *Ze'eir Anpin*, where the beard begins to descend down the face. As the beard increases in size and hangs down, the fuller name *YHVH* (in the subsequent verses) pertains. Its full spelling signifies that this name “is not lacking.”

The reference to *YHVH* as “a name that is holy” may be intended as a contrast to the name *Elohim*, which can also apply to angels, human judges, and false *elohim*, “gods.” On the phrase תרי עלעוי (*terei il'oi*), “His two jowls,” see above, [note 318](#).

331. What can adam, a human, do to me?... According to the simple sense of the verse, this refers to David’s enemies, but that seems to contradict intimate connection between *adam* and *YHVH* as explained above (at [note 329](#)).

Rabbi El’azar explains that *Adam* also refers to the entire sefirotic body of *Ze'eir Anpin*. The influx of emanation (or soul)

from *Arikh Anpin* is called “the Holy Name,” while the sefirotic sheath along with this influx is called both *YHVH* and *Adam*.

The divine aspect of *Adam* is also signified by the fact that the numerical value of אדם (*adam*), forty-five, is equivalent to that of יהוה (*YHVH*), when the latter is spelled out completely: יוד הוא ואו הוא (*Yod He Vav He*). See above, [note 215](#).

On the image of the body as a sheath of the soul, see Daniel 7:15; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 31–32. The wording here —“what דמישלפא (*de-mishalefa*), is infused (or inserted)... whereas the sheath”—may derive from the description of David slaying Goliath: *David ran up and stood over the Philistine and took the sword from him וישלפה (va-yishlefa), and drew it, from its sheath and finished him off, cutting off his head with it. And the Philistines saw that their warrior was dead, and they fled* (1 Samuel 17:51). The verb שלף (*shlf*) means “to pull out, withdraw,” but here the *Zohar* employs it in the opposite sense: “to insert, infuse.” See Hellner-Eshed and Leader, *Idra Rabba*.

[332](#). if someone grasps the beard of the King... By uttering these verses, David invoked the enhancements of the beard of *Ze’eir Anpin*—grasping His beard, as it were—and the Divine King granted him all his desires.

On the significance of the beard, see BT *Shabbat* 152a, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu’a son of Korḥah: “The glory of a face is the beard.” See *Zohar* 2:186b; above, [note 82](#).

[333](#). This enumeration proceeds in two manners... There are two ways to derive the nine enhancements from the four verses of this Psalm. One way is described above at [note 328](#). The second consists of simply dividing the verses into nine units.

[334](#). From confinement... from the place... The beard emerges from a narrow (or constricted) place in front of the ears. This small area is signified not only by the phrase *from confinement*, but also by the short name *Yah*, whose double appearance in this verse denotes two small

areas, one on each side of the face. The fuller name *YHVH* alludes to the expansion of the beard. By invoking the beard's enhancements, David was able to subdue his enemies. See above, [notes 326, 330](#); *Zohar* 3:295a (*IZ*).

335. the Concealment of the Book... Referring to *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (The Book of Concealment). See *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdT*s); Vol. 5, p. 567, n. 54; above, [note 22](#).

The dream described here signifies an intimate relationship with God, and that the powers of Judgment associated with the beard of *Ze'eir Anpin* will subdue all the dreamer's enemies. On stretching out one's hand toward the beard of *Arikh Anpin*, see above, [notes 82, 99](#).

336. nine enhancements... See above, [note 312](#).

337. First enhancement... Rabbi El'azar begins to elucidate the first enhancement, which consists of hair extending from in front of the ears to the top lip of the mouth. See above at [note 315](#).

338. When the white hair of the Ancient of Days flows... See above, [note 34](#). The verse in Proverbs reads: חַכְמוֹת (*Hokhmot*), *Wisdoms, cry aloud outside, in the squares she lifts her voice*. The plural form *hokhmot, wisdoms*, has been described as a plural of majesty or intensification. Here, Rabbi El'azar indicates that *wisdoms* refers to the two divine brains—of *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of Days) and of *Ze'eir Anpin*—which both join together in *Ze'eir Anpin*, who lies *outside* the realm of *Arikh Anpin*. See above, [note 106](#).

339. Say, rather, four brains... *Ze'eir Anpin* contains three brains, and the fourth is the concealed brain of *Arikh Anpin*, the source of all mental activity.

On the concealed brain of *Arikh Anpin*, see above, [notes 34, 46](#). On the three cavities of the skull of *Ze'eir Anpin*, see above, [note 232](#).

340. So there are four brains in this Ze'eir Anpin... His three own brains plus the emanation from the concealed brain of *Arikh Anpin*. These four brains correspond to the four

compartments in the *tefillah* (phylactery) worn on the head, which in turn correspond to the four letters of the Holy Name *YHVH*. As indicated above ([note 303](#)), this name can allude to either *Ariḳh Anpin* OR *Ze'eir Anpin*.

Each of the two tefillin contains four passages from the Torah (Exodus 13:1-10, 11-16; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 11:13-21) written on parchment. In the *tefillah* of the hand all four passages are written on one piece of parchment, whereas the *tefillah* of the head is divided into four compartments, and each of the four passages, written on a separate piece of parchment, is inserted in one compartment. See BT *Menahot* 34b; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillin* 3:5; Vol. 1, p. 96, n. 719. On the significance of tefillin, see above, [p. 211](#), [n. 11](#). On the significance of the four compartments, see *Zohar* 1:14a; 2:43a-b (*Piq*); 3:236b, 262a-263a, 264a, 269a; *ZH* 31c.

The verse in Deuteronomy is linked specifically with the *tefillah* of the head in this famous passage from BT *Berakhot* 6a: “Rabbi Avin son of Rabbi Adda said in the name of Rabbi Yitshak, ‘How do we know that the blessed Holy One puts on tefillin? For it is said: *YHVH has sworn by His right hand and by the arm of His strength* (Isaiah 62:8). *By His right hand*—this is Torah, as is said: *From His right hand, a fiery law for them* (Deuteronomy 33:2). *And by the arm of His strength*—this is tefillin, as is said: *YHVH will give strength unto His people* (Psalms 29:11). How do we know that tefillin are a strength to Israel? For it is written: *All the peoples of the earth will see that the name of YHVH is proclaimed over you, and they will be in awe of you* (Deuteronomy 28:10), and it has been taught: Rabbi Eli’ezer the Great says, “This refers to the tefillin of the head.” Rabbi Naḥman son of Yitshak asked Rabbi Ḥiyya son of Avin, “These tefillin of the Master of the Universe—what is written in them?” He replied, ‘*Who is like Your people Israel, a unique nation on earth?* (1 Chronicles 17:21).’”

On this passage in *Berakhot*, see Vol. 1, p. 96, n. 720. On the verse in Deuteronomy 28 in connection with tefillin, see also BT *Berakhot* 57a, *Megillah* 16b, *Sotah* 17a, *Menahot* 35b, *Hullin* 89a; *Zohar* 1:13b; 2:43b (*Piq*); 3:262a-b, 269b. The verse in Deuteronomy reads: *All the peoples of the earth will see that the name of YHVH is called over you* [or: *proclaimed over you*] [or: *that you are called by the name of YHVH*].... This idiom means that YHVH recognizes Israel as His own. See 2 Samuel 12:28; Isaiah 4:1.

The phrase “רהיטי (*rehitei*), channels of, the compartments of tefillin,” echoes the phrase “רהטי (*rahatei*), channels of, the brain” (above at [note 239](#)). On the channels of the compartments of tefillin, see *Zohar* 3:262a; *TZ*, add. 6, 144b. Cf. *TZ* 6, 21b; *Zohar* 1:161a-b, 162a (*ST*); 3:293a-b; *ZH* 119a (*Tiq*). The verbal root רהט (*rht*) means “to run; move swiftly.” See Genesis 30:38, 41; Exodus 2:16; and Song of Songs 7:6: *The dangling locks of your head like royal purple; a king is captured ברהטים (*ba-rehatim*), by the flowing tresses*. This last verse is linked with tefillin in *Zohar* 1:14a; 3:269b; *TZ* 6, 21b; *TZ*, add. 6, 144b. Cf. Rashi on Song of Songs 7:6; *Zohar* 1:161a-b.

[341](#). Thus, *Wisdoms cry aloud outside*... The multiple divine brains are manifested only *outside*, namely in *Ze'eir Anpin*, which lies outside the realm of *Arikh Anpin*. The brain (or Wisdom) of *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of Ancients) remains concealed because the membrane covering His brain envelops it entirely. Conversely, the brain of *Ze'eir Anpin* extends into numerous pathways—the thirty-two paths of Wisdom.

See above, [notes 29](#), [31](#), [46](#), [232](#). The phrase “and not branching out” renders ולא אתפריש (*ve-la itperish*), which can also be rendered “and not expressed.” See the description of the brain of *Arikh Anpin* above at [note 46](#): ולא מתפרש (*ve-la mitparash*), “and not branching, into paths.”

[342](#). Since four brains join... The emanation from the concealed brain of *Arikh Anpin*, together with the three brains

of *Ze'ir Anpin*, constitute four brains, which generate four springs, originating in the wellspring of the concealed brain. See above at [note 233](#).

[343. This wisdom-included-in-four...](#) The multiple Wisdom of *Ze'ir Anpin* flows from His brains through the countless strands of hair on His head. These strands are coarse (in comparison to the smooth hair of *Arikh Anpin*), but their hardness enables them to penetrate the skull and convey the springs of mental energy from the brains within to numerous realms outside.

The expression תליין תלין על תלין (*taleyan tillin al tillin*), “hanging in heaps of wavy curls,” plays on the wording and the midrashic interpretation of Song of Songs 5:11: *His head finest gold, his locks תלתלים (taltallim), wavy [or: curly; luxuriant; fronds of a palm], black as a raven*. See BT *Eruvin* 21b: “קווצותיו תלתלים (*Qevutsotav taltallim*), *His locks wavy*. Rav Hisda said in the name Mar Ukba, “This teaches that one can expound on every single קוץ (*qots*), stroke [of the letters of Torah], תילי תילים (*tillei tillim*), heaps and heaps, of laws.” See above, [notes 32, 238](#).

On the black hair of *Ze'ir Anpin*, see above, [note 113](#). On the verse in Job, see *Zohar* 1:30b, 32a.

[344. These hairs of the beard...](#) Of *Ze'ir Anpin* are coarser than the hair on His head.

[345. Why are they rough?...](#) After all, the enhancements of the beard of *Ze'ir Anpin* include both Compassion and Judgment, and when the thirteen springs of emanation flow into His beard from *Arikh Anpin*, His enhancements become entirely compassionate. See above, [notes 84, 312](#).

[346. All these hairs of the beard...](#) Within *Ze'ir Anpin's* beard, the hairs of Compassion must be coarse in order to overcome Judgment, and the hairs of Judgment are inherently coarse.

[347. When the holy white beard is revealed...](#) When the white beard of *Arikh Anpin* is revealed, all of the hair in all

nine enhancements of the beard of *Ze'eir Anpin*—both the hairs of Compassion and those of Judgment—are illumined by the effulgence of the white beard, representing total Compassion. On the image of bathing, see above at [notes 53-54, 134](#).

348. Moses said another time... The first time that Moses uttered the divine attributes was after the Israelites sinned by worshiping the Golden Calf, as Judgment loomed, threatening to destroy the whole people. Moses saved them by invoking the thirteen attributes of Compassion (recorded in Exodus 34:6-7): *YHVH! YHVH! A compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger [or: long-suffering], and abounding in kindness [or: love] and truth [or: faithfulness], keeping kindness for the thousandth generation, removing iniquity, transgression, and sin; yet He does not wholly acquit, inflicting the guilt of fathers upon sons and upon sons of sons, to the third and fourth generations.* By invoking these thirteen attributes, Moses drew down the corresponding thirteen enhancements of the beard of *Arikh Anpin* to *Ze'eir Anpin*, who at that time was dominated by Judgment.

Later, as the people neared the land of Canaan, Moses sent twelve tribal representatives to scout out the land, and when they returned to the camp, ten of them offered a negative report, insisting that the land could not be conquered. Disheartened, the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron, and then God threatened to destroy the whole people. At this critical moment (“another time”), Moses again invoked the divine attributes, though in a shorter list: *YHVH! Slow to anger [or: long-suffering], and abounding in kindness [or: love], removing iniquity and transgression; yet He does not wholly acquit, inflicting the guilt of fathers upon sons, to the third and fourth generations* (Numbers 14:18).

Here this shorter list is understood to include nine attributes. Rabbi El'azar indicates that in this case Moses

did not include the attribute of (*abounding in*) *truth*, which he had mentioned in the fuller list recorded in Exodus, and which pertains to *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of Days, or the Ancient One), not to *Ze'eir Anpin*. Moses intended to draw down nine attributes, or enhancements, from *Arikh Anpin*, in order to illumine the beard of *Ze'eir Anpin* and assuage His harsh Judgment.

On the relation between the nine enhancements of *Ze'eir Anpin* and the emanation from *Arikh Anpin*, see above, [notes 324, 345, 347](#). On the thirteen attributes in Exodus and their effect, see above, [notes 99, 110-11, 287](#). On the notion that these attributes were uttered by Moses, see above, [note 111](#). On the two sets of attributes, see *Zohar* 3:146b-147a, 161b, 295b (*IZ*). On the attribute [*abounding in*] *truth*, cf. above, [note 176](#). According to 3:161b, Moses omitted the attribute [*abounding in*] *truth* because the scouts had spoken falsely about the Promised Land.

[349. The hairs of the head of *Ze'eir Anpin*...](#) These are all coarse, compared to the smooth hair of *Arikh Anpin*. *Ze'eir Anpin's* numerous heaps of hair issue from His multiple brains. The smooth hair of *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of Days) accords with the tranquility of His concealed brain.

The full verse in Daniel reads: *As I watched, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days sat—His garment like white snow, the hair of His head like clean fleece, His throne flames of fire, its wheels blazing fire.* On the coarseness of *Ze'eir Anpin's* hair and the phrase תלין על תלין (*tillin al tillin*), “heaps upon curly heaps,” see above, [note 343](#). On the “three brains in three cavities,” see above, [note 339](#). On the expression “like fine wine upon its lees,” see above, [note 30](#).

[350. coarse yet not coarse...](#) Compared to the smooth hair of *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of Days), the hair on *Ze'eir Anpin's* head is coarse; yet it is not so coarse (or not as coarse as the hair of His beard). The Wisdom of *Ze'eir*

Anpin flows through the hair on His head, though the supernal Wisdom of *Arikh Anpin* (His concealed brain) does not flow there directly.

The verse in Job describes how God alone knows *hokhmah* (wisdom). Here, for Rabbi El'azar, it implies that *Elohim* (referring here to *Ze'eir Anpin*) *understands its way*—that is, *Ze'eir Anpin* alone *understands* the pathways of His own brain (or Wisdom). Similarly, only *He* (namely *Arikh Anpin* Himself) *knows* the *place* (and nature) of His own concealed brain (or Wisdom).

In the *Zohar*, whereas the first- and second-person pronouns *I* and *You* can allude to relatively revealed divine aspects (which can identify themselves or be addressed directly), the third-person pronoun *He* can allude to a more concealed divine aspect. On this distinction and on this paragraph, see above, [note 47](#).

[351. Second enhancement...](#) The hair growing from one side of the upper lip to the other, and beneath the lower lip from one side to the other. This enhancement corresponds to the second and fourth enhancements of the beard of *Arikh Anpin*. See above at [note 316](#).

[352. Rise, Rabbi Abba](#) To elucidate this enhancement.

[353. When the array of this beard...](#) When the enhancements of the beard of *Ze'eir Anpin* are fully arrayed, and when He is assuaged by the higher enhancements of the beard of *Arikh Anpin*, then He becomes (and is called) *compassionate*. On the list of divine attributes in Exodus and their correspondence to the thirteen enhancements of *Arikh Anpin*, see above, [notes 99, 110](#).

The verse in Psalms figures prominently in the graphic depictions of God in earlier Jewish mysticism (*Shiur Qomah*). See Scholem, *Major Trends*, 365, n. 86. On the verse in Exodus, see above, [notes 99, 348](#).

[354. This second enhancement, when it shines...](#) When the second enhancement of the beard of *Ze'eir Anpin* is illumined by the radiance of *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the

Ancient of Days), it is called *abounding in kindness*. This description appears both in Exodus 34:6 (alluding to one of the thirteen enhancements of *Arikh Anpin*) and in Numbers 14:18 (alluding to one of the nine enhancements of *Ze'eir Anpin*).

On the relation between the passages in Exodus and Numbers, and on the expression *and truth*, see above, [note 348](#). For various interpretations of this and the following paragraphs, see *Or Yaqar*; *Qol be-Ramah*; *Ruah David*; *Yayin ha-Reqah*; *Sullam*; *Sha'arei ha-Idra*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

[355](#). This second enhancement is called *removing iniquity*... This description appears in Micah 7:18 (alluding to the second enhancement of *Arikh Anpin*). See above at [notes 110](#), [135](#). It also appears both in Exodus 34:7 (alluding to one of the thirteen enhancements of *Arikh Anpin*) and in Numbers 14:18 (alluding to one of the nine enhancements of *Ze'eir Anpin*).

The sentence “This second enhancement...” apparently means that this enhancement of the beard of *Ze'eir Anpin* would ideally have been called *removing iniquity*, corresponding to the second enhancement of *Arikh Anpin*. However, this is not so, due to the following (third) enhancement of *Ze'eir Anpin*, which consists of the path running directly beneath the nose of *Ze'eir Anpin* to the top of His lip. Whereas the corresponding path of *Arikh Anpin* is free of hair, this path of *Ze'eir Anpin* is filled with tiny coarse hairs representing Judgment, partially obstructing the path, and consequently *iniquity* cannot be easily removed nor *transgression* passed over. Eventually, in the fourth enhancement of the beard of *Ze'eir Anpin*, the qualities of *removing iniquity and passing over transgression* are fulfilled. See above, [note 317](#); below, [notes 358](#), [361](#).

[356](#). Three hundred and seventy-five kindnesses... The manifold quality of *Hesed* (Kindness, Love, Loving-kindness) within *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of

Days, or the Holy Ancient One) is vast. The corresponding quality within *Ze'eir Anpin* (namely the *sefirah* of *Ḥesed*) is more limited, and known as חסד עולם (*ḥesed olam*), “everlasting kindness,” or “kindness of the world” (that is, pertaining to *Ze'eir Anpin*, who is referred to as “the world”). See above, [notes 165, 168, 202, 305](#).

357. the Concealment of the Book... Referring to *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (The Book of Concealment). See *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdT*s); Vol. 5, p. 567; above, [note 22](#).

The vast *Ḥesed* of *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of Days) is fittingly called רב חסד (*rav ḥesed*), *abounding in kindness*, whereas the corresponding (yet more limited) quality of *Ze'eir Anpin* is called simply *Ḥesed*, *kindness*. The wording in Exodus 34 implies that the vast *abounding kindness* of *Arikh Anpin* illumines and protects (or “keeps”) the more limited *kindness* of *Ze'eir Anpin*.

On the phrase ורב חסד (*ve-rav ḥesed*), *and abounding in kindness*, as implying “inclining toward *ḥesed*,” see *Tosefta Sanhedrin* 13:3; *JT Pe'ah* 1:1, 16b; *Sanhedrin* 10:1, 27c; *BT Rosh ha-Shanah* 17a; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 38; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 24, p. 135; *Shemot Rabbah* 2:2.

358. This path descending... Namely, the philtrum, the vertical groove running from right beneath the nose to the top of the lip. The small coarse hairs filling this path represent forces of Judgment, which partially block the path, preventing *Ze'eir Anpin* from *passing over transgression*. Therefore, whereas the third enhancement of the beard of *Arikh Anpin* is called *passing over transgression*, this name is not applied to the corresponding enhancement of the beard of *Ze'eir Anpin*. (See above at [notes 110, 147](#)). Furthermore, whereas for *Arikh Anpin*, a similar groove exists below the mouth, the facial path of *Ze'eir Anpin* “descends to the top of the lips” and no farther. See above, [note 317](#).

The verse in Song of Songs reads: *His lips are lilies* [understood here as *roses*], *dripping liquid myrrh*. The redness of the *roses* and the *myrrh* implies Judgment. The

two reddish hues (or the two negative aspects) of the facial path signify its doubly threatening quality.

If someone is urging another to be silent, he will put a finger to his own lips, directly on the path beneath the nose. If he is very insistent on demanding silence, and wants to warn or threaten the other person, he “strikes twice with his hand on that path.” See above, [note 154](#).

[359.](#) Fourth enhancement... Mainly the hair covering the cheeks, which are called “the offering of spices.” See above, [notes 313, 318](#).

[360.](#) Supernal splendor issues... Originating in *Arikh Anpin* and manifesting in the facial hair that covers the cheeks of *Ze’eir Anpin*. This “splendid” part of the beard represents “garments of glory,” adorning *Ze’eir Anpin*. His entire configuration is called the “image of *Adam*.”

[361.](#) When this splendor is illumined... By the radiance of the supernal beard of *Arikh Anpin*, it spreads through the other enhancements of the beard of *Ze’eir Anpin*. Thereby *Ze’eir Anpin* is assuaged, and can be described as both *removing iniquity* and *passing over transgression*. The plural wording *his cheeks* alludes to both of these qualities, one on each cheek.

The two qualities appear together in Micah 7:18: *Who is a God like You, removing iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His people?* The first one appears also in Numbers 14:18 and Exodus 34:7. See above, [notes 348, 355](#).

[362.](#) the Concealment of the Book... Referring to *Sifra di-Tsni’uta* (The Book of Concealment). See *Zohar* 2:177a (*SdT*s); Vol. 5, p. 557; above, [note 22](#).

[363.](#) We have established this Beauty... Unlike the author of the Concealment of the Book, Rabbi Abba associates Beauty (and the verse in Proverbs 20) specifically with the ninth, final enhancement of the beard of *Ze’eir Anpin*. See below at [note 374](#). Ultimately, though, “they attain equilibrium”—that is, both the ninth

enhancement and the fourth enhancement (when it is illumined by *Arikh Anpin*) manifest the “beautiful” forgiving quality described in Proverbs 19:11: *His beauty is passing over transgression.*

364. Fifth enhancement... The round fleshy parts of the cheeks beneath the eyes, free of hair, appearing especially in a smile, and described here as “two apples.” See above, [note 319](#). On the 270 worlds, see above, [note 40](#).

365. from the radiance of two apples... That is, from the fleshy cheeks of *Arikh Anpin*. See above, [notes 170–72](#).

Rabbi Shim'on apparently interprets the second verse from Numbers as “May *Ze'eir Anpin* withdraw His wrathful face from you (or for you).” See *Sifrei*, Numbers 42; *Sifrei Zuta*, Numbers 6:26; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:7; *Zohar* 3:147a. Cf. Leviticus 20:3, 5; Ezekiel 14:8.

366. All the lights shining... The lights of *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Holy Ancient One), which illumine *Ze'eir Anpin*, who is known as “the World.” See above, [note 356](#).

367. Sixth enhancement... The widening of the beard beneath the mouth and extending down to the belly. See above, [note 320](#). On the various “edges of the beard,” see M *Makkot* 3:5; BT *Makkot* 20a–21a; above at [note 166](#).

368. Seventh enhancement... See above, [note 321](#).

369. Rise, Rabbi Yehudah To elucidate this enhancement.

370. This sentence by decree of the watchers... The divine sentence issues from the mouth of *Ze'eir Anpin* and is conveyed and decreed by countless angels, who are known as *the watchers* and also (by extension) as “mouth of *YHVH*.” The divine mouth and breath animate the *mighty throng* of angels, who are located “outside” the higher realms.

On being enveloped (literally “clothed”) by the divine breath (or spirit), see above, [note 196](#). The full verse in Psalms reads: *By the word of YHVH the heavens were made,*

and by the breath of His mouth all their array [or: all the host of them].

371. faithful prophets are enveloped... Inspired and “clothed” by the divine breath. See above, [note 196](#). The mouth of *Ze’eir Anpin* must be free of facial hair, so that His breath can flow unimpededly to all the angelic and prophetic mouths awaiting inspiration.

372. rules over all six... The seventh enhancement of the beard of *Ze’eir Anpin* rules over the preceding six, who are all sustained by the divine breath and arranged around the mouth. Cf. above, end of [note 171](#).

373. Eighth enhancement... See above, [note 322](#). The neck of *Ze’eir Anpin* is not visible except when He wages war.

“The neck” renders קדלא (*qedala*), which often means “nape of the neck” but can also mean simply “neck” (as in *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 14:3; *Zohar* 1:209b). This latter meaning fits the description here of the hair “beneath the beard, covering the neck.” However, the corresponding term in the Talmudic quotation (“On high...”) is עורף (*oref*), “nape of the neck.” See BT *Hagigah* 15a, in the name of Elisha son of Avuyah: “It is taught that on high there is no sitting, no rivalry, ולא עורף (*ve-lo oref*), no nape of the neck, and no fatigue.” This may mean that the heavenly beings constantly face *Shekhinah*, not turning their backs on Her, or that they have faces on all sides (as in Ezekiel’s description of the *hayyot*, “living beings.”) In the Zoharic passage here, I have translated the Talmudic quotation as “On high there is no neck...,” to match the image of the neck beneath the beard. For a different interpretation of the Talmudic statement, see Maimonides, Commentary on the Mishnah, *Sanhedrin* 10:1. Cf. above, [note 36](#).

“The Concealment of the Book” refers to *Sifra di-Tsni’uta* (The Book of Concealment). In the extant *Sifra di-Tsni’uta* there is no reference to *a thousand shields*, but see *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdTs*); Vol. 5, p. 566: “Short ones descend the throat, covering the neck.” See above [note 22](#).

On the various *Gevuran* (Powers), see above, notes [274-75](#). The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *Like the Tower of David is your neck, built in courses; a thousand shields hang upon it, all the weapons of the warriors.* On this verse, see *Zohar* 1:209b.

[374. Ninth enhancement...](#) The hair behind (and “joining”) the visible hanging body of the beard (described in the sixth enhancement). See above, [note 323](#).

The beautiful hanging body of the beard signifies the power of *Ze’eir Anpin*, whose core is the *sefirah* of *Tif’eret* (Beauty). This *sefirah* is also known as *Raḥamim* (Compassion), but it includes the polar opposites *Ḥesed* (Love) and *Gevurah* (Power).

On God appearing at the Red Sea as a young warrior, see above, [note 113](#). The phrase “a mighty hero victorious in battles,” is based on *Targum Onqelos*, Genesis 10:9; Exodus 15:3. See above, [note 238](#). The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *His thighs, pillars of marble, set upon pedestals of gold. His appearance is like Lebanon,* כארזים בחור (*baḥur ka-arazim*), *a young man like the cedars* [or: *distinguished as the cedars*].

[375. Masters of Qualities ...](#) מאריהון דמדין (*Mareihon de-middin*), “masters of *middin*,” likely deriving from מדד (*mdd*), “to measure.” In the *Zohar* the expression apparently refers to kabbalists who know the מדות (*middot*), the divine “qualities, attributes” (*sefirot*), or who know שיעור קומה (*shi’ur qomah*), “the measure of the [divine] stature.” See above, [note 81](#).

Rabbi Shim’on’s Companions “have been weighed in the balance” and found worthy. The image of “entering and emerging” derives from the famous description of four rabbis who “entered the orchard,” that is, who engaged in mystical contemplation of the divine chariot. Only Rabbi Akiva “entered in peace and emerged in peace.” In the *Zohar*, “entering and emerging” refers to a kabbalist who has entered the realm of mystery and emerged unscathed,

one who has plumbed the secrets and discovered how to endure and apply them in his life. See above, [note 7](#).

On the expression “Better for him if he had never been created!” see above, [p. 308](#), [n. 60](#). On the passage beginning here and extending below to [p. 428](#) at [n. 381](#), see Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 110-19.

376. The principle of all... *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of Ancients) and *Ze'eir Anpin* are essentially one, since the former includes and is manifested in the latter. See *Zohar* 3:143a (*IR*); 290a–b (*IZ*); cf. 2:178b (*SdTs*).

When *Ze'eir Anpin* is fully arrayed in His enhancements, He assumes the image of Primordial Adam, which comprises all images and all names. This image resembles, yet transcends, that of the earthly human being.

On the divine image resembling that of the human being, see Ezekiel 1:26, describing what lies above the angelic *ḥayyot* (living beings): *Above the firmament over their heads—like the appearance of sapphire, image of a throne. And upon the image of a throne, an image like the appearance of a human being upon it above.* See also Genesis 1:26–27.

On the all-inclusive nature of the human image, see above, [p. 261](#), [n. 36](#). The description “an image comprising all names” may allude to the fact the numerical value of אדם (*adam*), forty-five, is equivalent to that of the name יהוה (*YHVH*), when the latter is spelled out completely: יוד הוא ואו הוא (*Yod He Vav He*). According to Kabbalah, the name *YHVH* includes all divine names. See above, [notes 160](#), [215](#).

377. image of those above and those below... Since the image of *Adam* includes all, *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Holy Ancient One) arrayed both Himself and *Ze'eir Anpin* in this image. See the preceding note. On the human as a microcosm, see above, [p. 250](#), [n. 2](#).

378. What is the difference... If both *Arikh Anpin* and *Ze'eir Anpin* are arrayed in the image of *Adam*, what is the difference between them? Rabbi Shim'on explains that although the two are evenly balanced and ultimately one, human beings fail to perceive this oneness and their immorality generates Judgment.

Instead of מינן... מינן (*mi-nan... mi-nan*), “by us... by us” (attested in several manuscripts: P17, Pr13, T1), other witnesses (L3, M8, N49, *Or Yaqar*, Mantua, and Cremona)

read: מכאן... מכאן (*mi-kan... mi-kan*), “from here... from there,” implying that paths begin to branch out from *Arikh Anpin*, whereas Judgment appears in *Ze’eir Anpin*. See Vital (in *Hadrat Melekh*). On the phrase “from our perspective,” see above, [note 205](#).

“The Reapers of the Field” are those who harvest secrets of Torah, which can be pictured as sprouting in the field of *Shekhinah*. See *Or Yaqar*; above, [note 3](#); [p. 192](#), [n. 401](#). The full verse in Psalms reads: *The counsel [or: secret] of YHVH is for those who revere [or: fear] Him, and to them He reveals His covenant*. See above, [pp. 82–83](#), [n. 82](#).

[379](#). ויִצַר (*Va-yiytser*), **Formed—with two yods...** The two *yods* in the word ויִצַר (*va-yiytser*), and *He formed*, allude to a double arrangement, namely the manifestation of *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Holy Ancient One) in *Ze’eir Anpin*. Thus יִצַר” (*yiytser*) can be construed as י צ ר ” ” (*yod yod tsar*), *yod, yod, formed*.

On the two *yods* of ויִצַר (*va-yiytser*), see *Bereshit Rabbah* 14:4; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 2:7; BT *Berakhot* 61a; *Otiyyot de-Rabbi Aqiva (Battei Midrashot, 2:412)*; *Zohar* 2:177a (*SdTs*); 3:46b; Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 135; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 112–13.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *YHVH Elohim formed the human, dust from the earth, and blew into his nostrils חַיִּים נְשִׁמַת (nishmat ḥayyim), the breath of life, and the human became לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה (le-nefesh ḥayyah), a living being*.

[380](#). **He formed a form within a form...** This formulation derives from rabbinic sources. See BT *Berakhot* 10a, in the name of Rabbi Shim’on son of Pazzi: “Come and see how human nature differs from divine nature. A human being draws a figure on the wall but cannot cast into it breath and soul, bowels and intestines. But the blessed Holy One is not so. יִצַר צוּרָה בְּתוֹךְ צוּרָה (*Tsar tsurah be-tokh tsurah*), He designs a form within a form [the fetus within the womb], casting into it breath and soul, bowels and intestines. This is what Hannah said: *There is no one*

holy like YHVH, for there is no one beside You; there is no צור (tsur), rock, like our God (1 Samuel 2:2). What does this mean: there is no tsur like our God? There is no צייר (tsayyar), artist, like our God!"

See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 8; *BT Megillah* 14a; *Midrash Shemu'el* 5:6; *Tanḥuma, Tazri'a* 2, *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Tazri'a* 3; *Midrash Tehillim* 18:26; *Zohar* 1:90b-91a 3:44a.

Here the "form within a form" refers to the double name *YHVH Elohim*, which appears at the beginning of the verse in Genesis: וַיֵּצֵר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים (Va-yiytser YHVH Elohim), *YHVH Elohim formed, the human*. The name *YHVH* alludes to *Arikh Anpin*, while *Elohim* alludes to *Ze'eir Anpin*. In midrashic literature the double name *YHVH Elohim* is called "the complete Name." See above, [notes 303, 329](#).

381. In this supernal image called Adam... In Primordial Adam, in whose androgynous image the human being is fashioned. On *Adam* as comprising male and female, see above, [pp. 12-13, n. 36](#).

382. אֵת (Et)... This tiny word is usually an accusative particle with no clear independent sense. However, already in rabbinic times, Naḥum of Gimzo and his disciple Rabbi Akiva taught that the presence of *et* in a biblical verse amplifies the apparent meaning. (See *BT Pesahim* 22b, *Hagigah* 12a-b.)

Here Rabbi Shim'on interprets the wording אֵת הָאָדָם (*et ha-adam*), *et the human*, as including all forms of existence issuing from the androgynous Primordial Adam. For the full verse, see above, [note 379](#).

383. dazzling topaz... Such a gem would emerge from the *dust of the earth*. Here the image may convey a creative process beginning deep within the divine realm. The image of "a signet ring" could suggest stamping an impression "deep within."

"Dazzling topaz" renders טברקא (*tavreqa*), a neologism apparently combining טבאג (*tav'ag*), a precious stone,

perhaps “topaz,” and ברק (*baraq*), “flash of lightning.” See *Targum* on Song of Songs 5:14; *Zohar* 1:92b.

384. Why all this?... What was the purpose of the whole creative process? To draw forth the hidden divine essence and infuse it into *Ze’eir Anpin* as His soul-breath. Gradually, this cosmic soul-breath animates all that exists.

385. And the human became a living soul... Primordial Adam is animated by the cosmic *nishmeta* (soul-breath), pouring forth. Ultimately, this *nishmeta* manifests in all, so nothing exists independent of divine energy. See *Or Yaqar* (translated in Matt, *The Essential Kabbalah*, 24).

386. Whoever separates this... If anyone imagines that the divine force is separate from the world, he is, in effect, separating this cosmic soul-breath from all that exists, thereby implying that some other power animates in the world. Such false dualism constitutes a severe sin.

387. In this Adam... In the configuration of *Ze’eir Anpin*, Primordial Adam, the male and female aspects appear. As mentioned above (at [note 374](#)), the ninth and final enhancement of the beard of *Ze’eir Anpin* is called *Tif’eret*, situated at the divine chest (where the beard ends). *Tif’eret* expands into two chests, and is drawn to the back of the body, where the configuration of נוקבא (*Nuqba*), Female, begins to take shape.

For Rabbi Shim’on, the verse in Isaiah now implies that *Tif’eret* encompasses male and female. He apparently understands *adam* as male and *a house* as symbolizing the female.

On the androgynous nature of Adam, see *Midrash Tehillim* 139:5: “*Behind and in front You formed me* (Psalms 139:5). What is *behind and in front*? They were created [as a single creature] with two faces. So it was with Adam: behind him was the form of Eve—as is said: *YHVH Elohim built the side [He had taken from the human into a woman]* (Genesis 2:22).” See above, [pp. 18–19](#), [n. 54](#). On the passage here, see *Zohar* 3:295b–296a (*IZ*).

388. one lock of hair... This lock of *Ze'eir Anpin's* hair stimulates the growth of the hair of the Female. The color red signifies Judgment, which dominates in the Female.

The color purple includes a range of hues between red and blue. On the inclusive quality of purple, see *Zohar* 1:147b (*ST*); 2:135a (Vol. 5, p. 249, n. 167). On the verse in Song of Songs, see *Zohar* 3:296a (*IZ*).

389. This Tif'eret spreads... Penetrating through His body to the back, where the Female is taking shape. See above, [note 387](#).

390. Again this Tif'eret spreads... *Tif'eret* is also known as *Rahamim* (Compassion), a term that derives from רחם (*rehem*), “womb.”

The verse in Jeremiah reads:... *I will surely show him compassion* [or: *I will surely receive him back in love*].

391. This Tif'eret is comprised... The *sefirah* of *Tif'eret* combines and harmonizes the polar opposites *Hesed* (Love) and *Din* (Judgment). As mentioned above ([note 388](#)), Judgment dominates in the Female.

392. 248 enhancements... Corresponding to the 248 members of the human body.

On these 248 members (joints or bones covered with flesh and sinews), see M *Oholot* 1:8. The number 248 is the numerical value of the word רחם (*rehem*), “womb,” from which derives the word רחמים (*rahamim*), “compassion.”

393. Five types of lewdness... “Lewdness” renders עריותא (*eryata*), “nakednesses.” The Talmud lists three types of female lewdness. See BT *Berakhot* 24a: “Rav Hisda said, ‘A woman’s leg is ערוה (*ervah*), nakedness [i.e., lewd, indecent, licentious, enticing]...’ Samuel said, ‘A woman’s voice is *ervah*.’ Rav Sheshet said, ‘A woman’s hair is *ervah*.’”

Here Rabbi Shim’on adds two other types of female lewdness—an exposed hand or foot—which he admits are not included in the Talmudic source. In the Female, these five types correspond to five judgments, which are

apparently related to five *Gevuran* (Powers)—and which spread throughout the 248 limbs of Her body.

On five *Gevuran*, see above, [note 274](#). On the 248 limbs, see the preceding note. On the passage in *Berakhot*, see JT *Hallah* 2:3, 58c; BT *Qiddushin* 70a. Cf. above, [p. 302](#), [n. 45](#). On the two additional types of lewdness, see *Nefesh David*.

[394](#). **the Concealment of the Book...** Referring to *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (The Book of Concealment). See *Zohar* 2:178a (*SdT*s); Vol. 5, p. 568; above, [note 22](#). See also *Zohar* 3:296a–b (*IZ*); cf. *Zohar* 1:96a.

The configuration of *Ze'eir Anpin* took shape. His phallus spans 248 worlds, corresponding to all 248 limbs of the body, apparently implying that the phallus conveys all male bodily energy or that it is the consummation of the male body.

The reference to the letter ם (*yod*) alludes to the tradition identifying this letter with the mark of circumcision. The human procedure of circumcision involves two stages. First, the foreskin is cut and removed, disclosing the mucous membrane. Then, the membrane is torn down the middle and pulled back, revealing the corona (including the mouth), which symbolizes the letter *yod*. Concerning the phallus of *Ze'eir Anpin*, once the *yod* is revealed supernal *Hesed* is manifested.

“Covering” renders כסותא (*kesuta*), alluding here to the phallus, perhaps as a euphemism for Aramaic ערייתא (*eryeta*)—Hebrew ערוה (*ervah*)—“nakedness, genitals,” or because the penis normally remains “concealed.” Below (at [note 396](#)) the term *kesuta* describes the vagina. See Liebes, *Peraqim*, 243.

On *Yesod* as consummation of the body, see *Zohar* 1:149b, 153b–154a, 158a, 162b, 246b; 2:224a, 225a, 258b (*Heikh*), 259b (*Heikh*); 3:6a, 53b, 66b, 296b (*IZ*). On the letter *yod* as the mark of circumcision, see above, [p. 78](#), [n. 72](#). On the stages of circumcision, see above, [p. 82](#), [n. 81](#).

On the connection between *Hesed* and the revelation of the letter *yod*, see *Zohar* 2:36a.

395. Abraham was not called ‘complete’... He fully attained the quality of *Hesed* only after being circumcised, when the corona of his penis was revealed, symbolizing the letter *yod*. See the preceding note.

The verse in Samuel (sung by King David) reads: *I have been tamim, blameless [or: complete], before Him, and have kept myself from sin.* Rabbi Shim'on explains the connection between being *complete* and not sinning as follows: once a man is circumcised, he becomes *complete*, by revealing the letter *yod*. He must then be extremely careful not to insert this *yod* “into a foreign domain,” that is, not to have sexual relations with a foreign woman.

Genesis 17:1-2 reads: *When Abram was ninety-nine years old, YHVH appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am El Shaddai. Walk in My presence and be תמים (tamim), complete [or: perfect, blameless, wholehearted, unblemished], and I will grant My covenant between Me and you and I will increase you very greatly.”* This divine directive is soon followed by the covenantal command of circumcision (verses 9-14). On *tamim* and circumcision, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 46:5; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 25:6; M *Nedarim* 3:11; BT *Nedarim* 31b-32a; *Zohar* 1:59b, 95a-b, 200b, 246a; 3:14a, 166a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 228, 376.

The phrase “bundle of life” often refers to *Shekhinah*. See above, [note 309](#); [p. 73, n. 57](#). The full verse in Malachi reads: *Judah has broken faith; an abhorrent act has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem. For Judah has desecrated the sanctuary of YHVH, which He loves, and has married the daughter of an alien god.* See above, [p. 315, n. 79](#).

396. Once this phallus extended... Then the genital organs of the Female were formed. The union of the Male and Female sweetens (or assuages) the *Gevurah*—or *Din*

(Judgment)—that dominates in the Female. With their union, *Adam* becomes complete.

The vulva and vagina are described here as ער״תא (*eryeta*), “nakedness, genitals,” and ערוה דכלא (*ervah de-khola*), “total nakedness, nakedness of all, complete genitals,” and also as כסותא (*kesuta*), ‘covering,’ of the whole Female body.” As mentioned above, the term *kesuta* may be a euphemism for “nakedness, genitals.” Alternatively, it refers to the fact that the genitals normally remain “concealed.” Or, “covering” alludes to the description of the vagina as a place “to conceal... that phallus.” See *Zohar* 3:296a (*IZ*); above, [note 394](#).

The phrase *ervah de-khola*, “total nakedness, nakedness of all,” has the same literal meaning as ער״תא דכלא (*eryeta de-khola*), which appears elsewhere in the *Zohar*, though in a somewhat different sense. See *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdTs*) (Vol. 5, p. 565, n. 48); 3:74b (Vol. 7, p. 503, n. 473), 77b (Vol. 7, p. 527, n. 538). On the five *Gevuran*, see above, [note 274](#).

[397](#). Therefore, among all those crowns... Before *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of Ancients) prepared the adornments of *Ze’eir Anpin*, the Female remained unsweetened and the various worlds and arrangements could not endure.

The passage in Genesis (36:31–39) begins: *These are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before a king reigned over the Children of Israel*. These kings do not constitute a dynasty since none of the successors to the throne is a son of his predecessor. In seven consecutive verses Genesis records *And [so and so] died*, and in the *Zohar* these royal deaths represent the destruction of unviable emanations tainted by harsh Judgment (which is identified as *Edom*). Only of the final, eighth king is a wife mentioned and no death recorded.

Here *the kings who reigned in the land of Edom* are identified with harsh powers of Judgment within the realm of the Female, which could not endure until they were

assuaged by union with the Male. The wording *who reigned*—rather than *who were*—implies that these forces were intended to control and conduct the world(s). See *Or Yaqar*.

On the passage in Genesis, the theme of worlds that did not endure, and the symbolism of *Edom*, see above, [notes 18, 216](#). The words “adornments,” “arrangements,” and “enhancements” all render תקונין (*tiqqunin*) or תקוני (*tiqqunei*). On the semantic range of *tiqqun*, see above, [notes 5, 32, 38](#). The word “sweetened” renders אתבסמא (*itbasema*), אתבסמו (*itbesamu*), and אתבסם (*itbesam*). The root בסם (*bsm*) can also mean “to become firm.” See above, [note 221](#).

[398](#). **If so—that they are all Judgment...** If all the kings mentioned in this passage from Genesis supposedly represent forces of Judgment, what about the sixth one, *Saul from Rehoboth-on-the-River*? After all, רחובות (*Rehovot*), *Rehoboth*, means “broad places; expanses,” and *Rehoboth-on-the-River* alludes to the River of *Binah*, from whom all the *sefirot* flow for the expansively. This sublime realm is not characterized by Judgment.

On the significance of the word *rehovot*, see *Zohar* 1:141b. The full verse in Genesis reads: *Samlah died, and Saul from Rehoboth-on-the-River reigned in his stead*.

[399](#). **All of them are Judgment...** All of the kings mentioned in Genesis 36 represent Judgment, except for the eighth and last one, Hadar. Only of him is a wife mentioned and no death recorded.

As for Saul, he too represents Judgment—specifically one aspect issuing *from Rehoboth-on-the-River*, who is *Binah*. She Herself is characterized by Compassion, but is also the source of Judgment. On Her fifty gates, see above, [note 234](#).

[400](#). **None of them endured...** These kings, or forces of Judgment, were not completely destroyed. Rather they did not endure within the realm of the Female until the eighth king, Hadar, appeared, whose name means

“Majesty.” His glorious name implies that he conveyed the sweetening power of *Hesed*.

On the fate of the kings of Edom, see above, [notes 216-23](#). The phrase “מלכו (*malkhu*), kingdom, of the Female side,” may allude to the name *Malkhut* (Kingdom), pertaining to the Female.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *Baalhanan son of Achbor died, and Hadar reigned in his stead; the name of his city was Pau, and the name of his wife was Mehetabel daughter of Matred daughter of Me-zahab*. See *Zohar* 3:292a-b (IZ).

401. What is meant by פֵּעוּ (*Pa'u*), *Pau*?... Rabbi Shim'on interprets the name פֵּעוּ (*Pa'u*), *Pau*, as based on the Aramaic root פְּעִי (*p'y*)—Hebrew פִּעָה (*p'h*)—“to cry out.”

Through the quality represented by Hadar, the last of the eight kings, a person is inspired by the Holy Spirit and enabled to exclaim prophetically.

This interpretation of פֵּעוּ (*Pa'u*), *Pau*, is based on a midrashic interpretation of the name פִּוּעָה (*Pu'ah*), *Puah*, one of the two Israelite midwives in Egypt who (according to Exodus 1:15-21) defied Pharaoh and let the male Israelite babies live. See BT *Sotah* 11b: “*Puah*—this is Miriam. Why was she called פִּוּעָה (*Pu'ah*)?... שְׁהֵיְתָה פִּוּעָה (*She-hayetah pho'ah*), Because she cried out, through the Holy Spirit, saying, ‘My mother [Jochebed] is destined to bear a son [Moses] who will save Israel!’”

402. And the name of his wife was Mehetabel... No wife is mentioned for any of the eight Edomite kings except Hadar. The appearance of Mehetabel along with Hadar signifies the harmonious union of male and female. See above, [note 223](#).

403. מֵהֵיטְבָאֵל (*Meheitav'el*)... Rabbi Shim'on may be interpreting this name as comprising two elements: טַב (*tav*), “good,” and אֱלֹהִים (*Elohim*). The forces of Judgment within the Female, represented by the name *Elohim*, are assuaged by the Male “goodness.”

See *Or Yaqar*; cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 83:4. On *Elohim* as signifying Judgment, see above, [p. 184](#), [n. 375](#). On the Divine Male as “good,” see above, [p. 215](#), [n. 20](#).

404. Daughter of מטרה (Matred)... The name מטרה (*Matred*) here implies טרדה (*tirdah*), “trouble, distress,” signifying the harsh judgments associated with *Gevurah*, or *Din* (Judgment). The union of Mehetabel and Hadad assuages these judgments, restoring harmony.

Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 83:4. The word “restorations” renders תקונין (*tiqqunin*). On the semantic range of the term תקונה (*tiqquna*), see above, [note 5](#).

405. Daughter of מי זהב (Mei zahav)... This name means literally “Waters of Gold,” alluding to Compassion (symbolized by water) and Judgment (symbolized by gold).

406. Until here, Woman cleaves to Male... Until this point, *Ze’eir Anpin* and the Female have been united as an androgynous whole, yet now their arms and legs begin to separate.

407. Arm of the Male... The two arms of *Ze’eir Anpin* represent the *sefirot* of *Ḥesed* (on the right) and *Gevurah* (on the left). Each arm consists of three joints: the shoulder, elbow, and wrist. The two arms are not entirely combined, since *Ḥesed* on the right remains distinct from *Gevurah* on the left. The three joints (or aspects) of *Ḥesed* are at times included in the three joints of *Gevurah*, but not vice versa. Consequently, the more general Hebrew term זרוע (*zero’a*)—Aramaic דרועא (*dero’a*)—“arm,” refers to the left arm (which can include the three joints of the right), whereas the right arm is called specifically ימין (*yamin*), “right.”

The “three joints of the patriarchs” likely alludes to the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif’eret*, symbolized respectively by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—each of whom attained, embodied, or “inherited” one of these *sefirot*. All three of these divine potencies exist in the first of them: the right arm, *Ḥesed*.

Perhaps the distinction between *zero'a* (arm) and *yamin* (right) is based on biblical passages where the two terms appear in parallel: Isaiah 62:8; Psalms 44:4; 98:1. Actually, though, in all those passages, *zero'a* most probably refers to God's right "arm," and *yamin* to God's "right hand."

Exodus 15:6 reads in full: ימינך (Yeminekha), *Your right hand* [or: *Your right*], O YHVH, *glorious in power. Yeminekha, Your right hand* [or: *Your right*], O YHVH, *smashes the enemy.* The verse in Psalm 118 reads: ימין יהוה (Yemin YHVH), *The right hand* [or: *The right*] of YHVH, *is raised high; yemin YHVH, the right hand* [or: *the right*] of YHVH, *performs valiantly.*

On the three joints in the arm (and in the leg), see above, [note 251](#). For various interpretations of this paragraph, see *Or Yaqar; Yafah Sha'ah; Yayin ha-Reqah; Sullam; Sha'arei ha-Idra; Matoq mi-Devash.*

408. Surely they are found... The potencies associated with joints of the arm originate in the three cavities of the skull of *Ze'eir Anpin* (associated respectively with *Hokhmah, Binah, and Da'at*). However, from there they spread throughout the body, appearing first (or especially) in the right arm. On the three cavities of the brain, see above, [notes 232-36](#).

409. Sit at My right hand... The full verse reads: *Of David. A psalm. YHVH's utterance to my lord: "Sit at My right hand until I make your enemies your footstool."* In this verse the speaker, referring to the king as his lord or master, is apparently a court poet. Here, Rabbi Shim'on views the speaker as King David, who yearns for *Ze'eir Anpin* to say to His Female, *Sit at My right hand*—that is, at the rung of *Hesed*—where David will join Her.

David is intimately associated with the Female (*Shekhinah*), and together they represent the fourth leg of the Divine Throne, whose other three legs are *Hesed, Gevurah, and Tif'eret* (associated with the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob). All four *sefirot* constitute a throne for the highest

level of Divinity (or they support *Binah*, who constitutes that Throne).

Rabbinic tradition applies the verse from Psalm 118 to David, youngest of Jesse's sons, *rejected* by his brothers and relegated to tending the flock. In the *Zohar*, the "rejection" of a *stone* alludes to the diminishment of the light of *Shekhinah* (symbolized by David). At times, due to human misconduct, She receives less illumination from the *sefirot* above Her (*the builders*). The image of *the cornerstone* represents *Shekhinah's* vital role in the sefirotic structure and process. See 1 Samuel 16:11; BT *Pesahim* 119a; *Midrash Shemu'el* 19:7; *Yalqut ha-Makhiri*, Psalms 118:22, par. 28; *Bahir* 61 (91), 131 (190); *Zohar* 1:20a-b, 72a, 89b (*ST*), 197b, 231a, 246b; 2:232b; 3:152b, 182a.

The verse in Daniel reads: *As for you, go on till the end; you will rest, and arise for your share* לקץ הימין (le-qets ha-yamin), *at the end of days*. The word ימין (*yamin*) is an aramaized form of the Hebrew ימים (*yamim*), "days," but here Rabbi Shim'on understands it as the Hebrew ימין (*yamin*), "right, right hand." Thus, God is promising Daniel that he will receive his reward *at the end of the right hand*—that is from *Hesed*, or from *Shekhinah*, who is the consummation of the flow from *Hesed* and who ideally ascends there when *Ze'eir Anpin* invites Her to *sit at My right hand*. See *Eikhah Rabbah* 2:6; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 17:5; *Zohar* 1:54a-b, 62b-63a, 75a (*ST*), 152b, 193a, 210b, 233b, 234b-235a; 2:134a-b, 181b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 73-75, 368-71; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 80-81 (102-3).

On the patriarchs constituting the Divine Chariot-Throne, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 47:6 (in the name of Resh Lakish): "The patriarchs themselves constitute the Chariot." On this theme and on David's role along with the patriarchs, see above, [pp. 49-50](#), [n. 139](#); Vol. 3, p. 134, n. 311; Vol. 5, pp. 315-316, n. 353. On the verse in Psalm 110, see *Zohar* 1:50b, 243a; 2:162b.

410. When this right sits... Apparently meaning, when the right arm sits still with its three joints. However, when the wicked dominate the world, they arouse the three joints of harsh Judgment in the left arm, and *Ze'eir Anpin* stretches out His arm to punish the guilty. This is actually the right arm, but since it now participates in the just punishment along with the left arm it is called by the term normally designating the left arm: זרוע (zero'a), *arm*.

See above, [note 407](#). For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Yafah Sha'ah*; *Yayin ha-Reqah*; *Sullam*; *Sha'arei ha-Idra*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

411. When these three are included... Apparently meaning when all three joints of the right arm are fully included with the three joints of the left, then the divine arm is called entirely *right*, and it functions to save Israel and destroy her enemies.

The verse in Exodus reads: *Your right hand* [or: *Your right*], *O YHVH, glorious in power. Your right hand* [or: *Your right*], *O YHVH, smashes the enemy*. For various interpretations, see the sources mentioned at the end of the previous note.

412. To this right are joined... An immense number of angelic forces are joined to the right arm, and half as many to the left. The complete power of the divine arm includes (and depends upon) both right and left. The term *Tif'eret*—signifying the trunk of the sefirotic body, the core of *Ze'eir Anpin*—encompasses both.

The full verse in Isaiah reads: מולך לימין משה זרוע תפארתו (Molikh li-ymin Moshe zero'a tif'arto), *Who sent the arm of His beauty* [or: *His beautiful arm*] *to be at Moses' right* [or: *right hand*], *splitting the waters before them to make Himself an everlasting name*. See *Zohar* 3:34b, 283b.

Here Rabbi Shim'on may be interpreting the first half of the verse as follows: *Who sent to be at Moses' right*—signifying the right arm. *The arm*—signifying the left arm (as explained above, [note 407](#)). *The arm of tif'arto, His*

beauty—implying one with the other; because *Tif'eret* is symbolized by *Moses* (who is linked with the right arm by the phrase *at Moses' right*), so now if *Moses' rung*, *Tif'eret*, is explicitly linked with the left arm (by the phrase *the arm of tif'arto*, *His beauty*), this demonstrates that *Tif'eret* encompasses both right and left. On the element 370, see above, [note 27](#).

[413](#). That right hand is called Holy Assistance...

The assumption that normally “‘hand’ denotes the left” may be based on the fact that יָד (*yad*), “hand,” is a feminine noun, and the feminine is often associated with the left. Cf. the rabbinic interpretation (BT *Menaḥot* 37a) of the unusual spelling יָדְכָה (*yadekhah*), *your hand* (Exodus 13:16), with a superfluous ה (*he*)—rather than יָדְכָה (*yadekha*)—which is understood as implying יָד כְּהָה (*yad kehah*), “weak hand,” referring to the left hand (of those who are right-handed).

Here Rabbi Shim'on indicates that despite the association of “hand” with the left side, “it constitutes assistance.” Furthermore, “if they are worthy, *the right hand of YHVH*—the hand is included with the arm....” This sentence apparently means that if Israel is worthy, the right hand is included with the left arm, ensuring assistance and deliverance. (See above, [note 411](#).) If Israel is not worthy, then the “Lower Hand of *YHVH*” is manifested, apparently referring to the left hand on its own.

On the Upper and Lower Hands, cf. *TZ* 55, 88b–89a. The expression “Holy Assistance” may allude to Psalms 20:3: *May He send you help* [or: *assistance*] מִקֹּדֶשׁ (*mi-qodesh*), *from the sanctuary* [or: *from holiness*]. The verse in Samuel is spoken by Abner (King Saul's commander-in-chief) to David. For various interpretations of this paragraph, see the sources mentioned at the end of [note 410](#).

[414](#). When harsh judgments are aroused... The secret alluded to here is explained in *Zohar* 3:79a, which quotes this sentence, adding, “This has been said in קִדְשָׁא אִדְרָא (*idra qaddisha*), the Holy Assembly.” The secret is that

when the demonic Serpent is aroused by human wickedness, it conjoins with *Shekhinah*, contaminating Her. See Vol. 7, p. 541, nn. 571–72.

The full verse in Psalms reads: *The counsel [or: secret] of YHVH is for those who revere [or: fear] Him, and to them He reveals His covenant.* See above, [pp. 82–83](#), [n. 82](#). On the term *idra*, see above, [note 4](#).

[415. the Concealment of the Book...](#) Referring to *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (The Book of Concealment). See *Zohar* 2:178a (*SdT*s); Vol. 5, p. 568; above, [note 22](#).

The judgments of either the Male (*Ze'eir Anpin*) or the Female alone would doom the entire world. Only by their being formed together can their contrasting tendencies balance one another, ensuring that the world endures. Eventually, *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of Ancients) separated them and reunited them, as explained below.

On the contrast between male and female judgments, cf. *Zohar* 2:187a. See also *Mekhilta, Bahodesh* 2: “All beginnings are hard.” This rabbinic formulation appears in *Zohar* 1:174a; 2:187a.

[416. When He separated them...](#) According to rabbinic tradition, the first human was created as an androgynous being, with two faces in opposite directions.

See *Midrash Tehillim* 139:5: “*Behind and in front You formed me* (Psalms 139:5). What is *behind and in front*? They were created [as a single creature] with two faces. So it was with Adam: behind him was the form of Eve—as is said: *YHVH Elohim built the side [He had taken from the human into a woman]* (Genesis 2:22).”

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 14:1: “Rabbi Yishma’el son of Nahman said, ‘When the blessed Holy One created Adam, He created him androgynous; and He sawed him and gave him two backs, one on this side and one on that.’ Rabbi Shim’on son of Lakish said, ‘When the blessed Holy One created Adam, He created him *דו פרצופין* (*du partsufin*), with two

faces; and He sawed him and gave him two backs, a back for the male and a back for the female.’” See above, [note 387](#); [pp. 18–19](#), [n. 54](#).

Here the androgynous image is applied to the divine *Adam*, consisting of *Ze’eir Anpin* and the Female. In order to separate these two halves of *Adam*, *Arikh Anpin* first cast a deep slumber upon *Ze’eir Anpin* and then separated the Female from *Ze’eir Anpin*’s back, adorning Her and concealing Her for Sabbath (the divine day), when the divine couple would reunite, but this time face-to-face.

But how can sleep be applied to *Ze’eir Anpin*? Rabbi Shim’on explains by quoting the verse from Psalms, where God’s sleep implies His seeming indifference to Israel’s suffering.

The word דורמיטא (*dormita*), “a deep slumber,” appears as a variant reading in *Bereshit Rabbah* 17:5 (on Genesis 2:21) as one type of תרדמה (*tardemah*), *a deep slumber*.” See the apparatus in Theodor’s edition; *Yedei Moshe* and *Hiddushei ha-Radal*, ad loc.; *Arukh ha-Shalem*, s.v. *marmata*; *Zohar* 1:207b; *ZH* 23b (*MhN*). Cf. Latin *dormio*, “to sleep”; *dormito*, “to be sleepy.”

On God adorning Eve, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 18:1: “*YHVH Elohim built הצלע (ha-tsela), the side* (Genesis 2:22)... It was taught in the name of Rabbi Shim’on son of Yoḥai: ‘He adorned her like a bride and brought her to him.’” Cf. *BT Berakhot* 61a: “Rabbi Shim’on son of Menasia expounded, ‘Why is it written: *YHVH Elohim built the side*? This teaches that the blessed Holy One braided Eve’s hair and brought her to Adam.’” See above, [pp. 19–20](#), [n. 58](#).

The context in Genesis 2:21–22 reads: *YHVH Elohim cast a deep slumber on האדם (ha-adam), the human, and he slept, and He took one מצלעותיו (mi-tsal’otav), of his ribs* [or: *of his sides*], *and closed the flesh in its place. YHVH Elohim built the rib* [or: *the side*] *He had taken from the human into a woman and He brought her to the human.* On צלע (*tsela*) as

“side,” see above, [p. 18](#), [n. 54](#). The verse in Psalms reads: *Awake! Why do You sleep, O Lord?...*

417. And He took one of his sides... After *Arikh Anpin* separated the Female side of the *Adam* and adorned Her, Compassion and Kindness replaced the quality of Judgment, which had appeared in Her original position in the androgynous being.

The verse in Ezekiel demonstrates that the word *flesh* implies softness and gentleness, as in the phrase *a heart of flesh*. The verse in Genesis reads: *and closed the flesh in its place* [or: *in her place*]. For the full verse, see the preceding note.

On *one* as signifying the Female, cf. *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:14. On *צֵלַע* (*tsela*) as “side,” see the preceding note.

418. As Sabbath was about to enter... See *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 17: “It is not written here: [*He ceased from all His work*] that [*God*] had created and made, but rather [*that God had created*] לַעֲשׂוֹת (*la’asot*), to make (Genesis 2:3), for the Sabbath came first and their work [i.e., *all His work* of Creation] was not completed. Rabbi Benaya said, ‘This refers to the demons, for He created their souls, and as He was creating their bodies, the Sabbath day was hallowed. He left them, and they remained soul without body.’”

Here, as Sabbath is about to begin, the Female (who is called *Matronita*) approaches *Ze’eir Anpin* for their reunion face-to-face, so He leaves the creation of the demons unfinished.

On the passage in *Tanḥuma*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 7:5; 11:9; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 17:7; *Zohar* 1:14a, 47b–48a, 178a; 2:155b, 178b (*SdTs*); 3:19a, 43a, 48b; *ZH* 32d–33a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 397. Cf. *M Avot* 5:6: “Ten things were created on Friday eve at twilight:....Some say, ‘Also the demons.’”

On the conclusion of this paragraph, cf. the statement attributed to Rabbi Yoḥanan (in BT *Sanhedrin* 106a), describing the intimacy between God and Israel: “Woe to

the nation that may be found [attempting to hinder or interfere] when the blessed Holy One enacts the redemption of His children! Who would cast his garment between a lion and a lioness when they are coupling?" See above, [pp. 112-13](#), [n. 175](#).

On the Sabbath union of the divine couple, see above, [p. 104](#), [n. 150](#). On the term *Matronita*, see the Glossary.

419. The conjugal duty... Scholars who know the mystery of the weekly Sabbath union of the divine couple realize that they should imitate this holy act by uniting with their spouses each Sabbath night.

The Mishnah (*Ketubbot* 5:6) discusses how often husbands of various professions are required to fulfill the commandment of *עונה* (*onah*), "conjugal rights," i.e., to satisfy their wives sexually. According to Rabbi Eli'ezer, "The *onah* mentioned in the Torah [applies as follows]: Those who are unoccupied, every day; laborers, twice a week; donkey-drivers, once a week; camel-drivers, once every thirty days; sailors, once every six months."

The Talmud (BT *Ketubbot* 62b) adds: "When is the *onah* of the disciples of the wise? [i.e., What is the proper interval between two successive times of fulfilling this *mitsvah*?] Rav Yehudah said in the name of Shemu'el, 'From one Sabbath eve to the next.'" See above, [pp. 9-10](#), [n. 30](#)

420. When they united... When *Ze'eir Anpin* and the Female united, each of their various judgments was assuaged by their partner's quality. Such sweetening is characteristic of the Sabbath. On the judgments of *Ze'eir Anpin* and the Female, see above, [note 415](#).

421. the Concealment of the Book... Referring to *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (The Book of Concealment). See *Zohar* 2:177b (*SdT*s); Vol. 5, pp. 568-69, n. 58; above, [note 22](#).

Arikh Anpin (also known as the Holy Ancient One) sought to know whether the harshness of Judgment had been assuaged by the union of the divine couple. However, even though "these two cleaved to one another," harsh Judgment

(symbolized by Cain) issued from the Female. According to Genesis, Eve claimed that in giving birth to Cain *I have acquired a man with YHVH*. But Rabbi Shim'on insists that "it was not so," since the Female (symbolized by Eve) had conceived (the soul of) Cain by being injected by the demonic Serpent.

On Cain being engendered by the union of the serpent and Eve, see *Pirquei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 21 (according to David Luria's emendation, based on *Yalqut Shim'oni*, Genesis 35): "The serpent-rider [Samael] copulated with her and she conceived Cain. Afterward her husband, Adam, copulated with her and she conceived Abel."

Cf. BT *Shabbat* 145b-146a, in the name of Rav Yosef: "When the serpent copulated with Eve, he injected her with זוהמא (*zohama*), filth [or: slime, lust]." See above, [p. 45](#), [n. 130](#); [p. 127](#), [n. 214](#).

Elsewhere, the *Zohar* indicates that Cain was formed from both the serpent's slime and Adam's seed, which may correspond here to the influence of both the demonic Serpent and *Ze'eir Anpin*. See Vol. 7, p. 520, n. 520; above, pp. 251-52, n. 5; *Zohar* 2:167b. The passage beginning with "*The Adam knew his wife*" and extending below to [p. 442](#) at [n. 425](#) appears in *TZ* 69, 113b.

422. When this Cain emerged... Cain represents harsh Judgment, and once his soul had emerged from the Female, Her aspect of Judgment was weakened and She was assuaged (or purged). Then She gave birth to the soul of Abel, who was "sweeter." However, the harsh Cain prevailed over the gentle Abel.

On Abel, see above, [pp. 251-52](#), [n. 5](#); *Zohar* 1:36b; 2:167b-168a. On the souls (or spirits) of Cain and Abel, see above, [p. 46](#), [n. 131](#).

423. When they were in the field... The verse concludes: *Cain rose against Abel his brother and killed him*. This field symbolizes the Female, who is known as Field of Apple Trees. Cain (representing the harsh

Judgment within the Female) defeated Abel, who represents Her milder Judgment.

The blessed Holy One cast (the soul of) Cain down to the demonic abode, whereas Abel was immersed within the Female (symbolized by the Great Sea).

On the sweetening of divine tears, see above, [note 124](#). On the image of the Field of Apple Trees, see above, [p. 23, n. 66](#).

[424](#). From them, souls descend into the world... From the aspects of Cain and Abel's souls, certain human couples draw down new souls into the world. The virtue, conduct, and intention of these couples determine whether they will draw down a soul from the aspect of Cain or of Abel.

Although the souls of Cain and Abel are concealed in different realms (as explained in the preceding note), they extend toward each other and form one organism. For various interpretations of the paragraph, see *Or Yaqar*; *Bei'urei ha-Gera*; *Yafah Sha'ah*; *Yayin ha-Reqah*; *Sullam*; *Sha'arei ha-Idra*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

[425](#). Happy are the righteous... Their holiness enables them to draw down a soul from the union of *Ze'eir Anpin* and the Female, who together constitute the divine *Adam*, where the sefirotic crowns cluster. On the importance and consequences of holy sexual union, see above, [p. 3, n. 7](#).

[426](#). For all these holy words... Uttered just now by Rabbi Shim'on.

In the verse from Deuteronomy *YHVH* alludes to *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of Days), who is ultimately identical with *Ze'eir Anpin* (called here *Elohim*), since the former includes and is manifested in the latter. See above, [note 376](#).

On the eagerness of the angels ("those above") to hear these secrets, see above, [note 5](#). On the titles "Masters of

Qualities” and “Reapers of the Field,” see above, [notes 3, 81](#); [p. 192](#), [n. 401](#).

[427](#). I see the upper below and the lower above...

Based on the story in BT *Pesahim* 50a about Rabbi Yosef, the son of Rabbi Yehoshu’a son of Levi, who “became ill and fell into a coma. When he recovered, his father asked him, ‘What did you see?’ He replied, ‘I saw an upside-down world: the upper below and the lower above.’ He said to him, ‘My son, you saw a clear world.’” See *Zohar* 2:100b.

Here “the upper below” apparently refers to the fact that the entire sefirotic structure is reflected on earth in the shape of the human being. For various interpretations of the paragraph, see *Or Yaqar*; *Yafah Sha’ah*; *Yayin ha-Reqah*; *Sullam*; *Sha’arei ha-Idra*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

[428](#). The righteous one is the foundation of the world... The verse reads וצדיק יסוד עולם (*Ve-tsaddiq yesod olam*), whose simple sense is: *The righteous one is an everlasting foundation*. However, this is understood midrashically as *The righteous one is the foundation of the world*. In Kabbalah, *the righteous one* refers to *Yesod*.

Yesod includes all six aspects that are within *Netsah* and *Hod*, the divine legs. This sextet may consist of the six *sefirot* from *Hesed* to *Yesod*, or of the total of six joints contained in the two legs (two hips, knees, and ankles). The verse in Song of Songs reads: *His thighs, pillars of שש (shesh), marble*. Here, Rabbi Shim’on plays with another meaning of *shesh*, “six.” See above, [p. 74](#), [n. 59](#).

On the three joints in the arm and in the leg, see above, [note 251](#). On the midrashic reading of the verse in Proverbs, see BT *Yoma* 38b, *Hagigah* 12b; *Bahir* 71 (102); Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 34.

The word “cluster” renders קרטופא (*qartufa*). In rabbinic Aramaic this means “a crack,” but here it is likely based on קטופא (*qetufa*), “a cluster.” See *Bei’ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 187, s.v. *qartufa*; Luria, *Va-Ye’esof David*, s.v. *qartifa*; Liebes,

Peraqim, 350; below, [notes 432, 480](#). Cf. above, [p. 154](#), toward the end of [n. 279](#); [pp. 217–18](#), [n. 28](#).

429. the Concealment of the Book... Referring to *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (The Book of Concealment). See *Zohar* 2:178a (*SdTs*); Vol. 5, p. 569, n. 59; above, [note 22](#).

In the structure of *Adam* (*Ze'eir Anpin*) are included sefirotic “upper crowns” and also “lower crowns” (referring to “outside” forces, discussed below).

This reference to “general” and “particular” derives from rabbinic hermeneutical rules concerning “a generalization” and “a specification.” For these hermeneutical rules, see *Sifra*, intro, 1, 7–8; 1a, 2a–b. Cf. *Zohar* 1:16b, 47b, 246b; 2:3a, 25a–b (*Piq*), 176a–b, 178a (*SdTs*); 3:179b, 264a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 335–36; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 107–8.

On the sefirotic symbolism of the fingers, see *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:3: “Ten *sefirot belimah*—equivalent to the ten fingers, five opposite five.” See *Midrash Tadshe* 10 (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 3:174); *Bahir* 87 (124), 94 (138); Nahmanides on Exodus 17:12; 30:19; Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod*, 29b–c; idem, *Sha'ar ha-Razim*, 57; *Zohar* 1:20b–21a; 2:57a, 67a, 75b–77a, 178a, 208a; 3:145a (*Piq*), 146b, 186a–b, 195b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 254.

430. Lower crowns, in toes of the feet... The outside (or demonic) forces cling to the lowest aspect of *Adam* in order to derive sustenance. They are “outside [the trunk of] the [divine] body,” and they have no body of their own, just as the demons created immediately before the first Sabbath have no body. See above, [note 418](#). On the phrase “outside the body,” see Liebes, *Peraqim*, 237.

431. On that day His feet will stand... *on the Mount of Olives*. From this description of *YHVH*, it seems that *His feet* are entirely holy, so how can they be connected with demonic forces? Rabbi Shim'on explains that the *feet* represent forces of Judgment that defeat the enemies of Israel. Some of these are “dregs” (remnants of the process

of emanation), and the lowest forces cling to the demonic crowns.

“Dregs” renders קזטיפין (*qaztiphin*), a neologism perhaps based on Aramaic כוספא (*kuspa*), “pomace, husk, residue.” See Vol. 2, p. 351, n. 259; Vol. 3, p. 10, n. 69; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 348. Cf. see above, [p. 28](#), [n. 80](#). On the verse in Zechariah, see *Zohar* 1:86a; 2:258a (*Heikh*).

[432.](#) All those arrangements above... All the elements of *Ze'eir Anpin* and the Female together constitute the complete *Adam*. The divine life force flows through this body, eventually illumining all worlds.

“A cluster” renders קיטפין (*qitpin*), based on קטופא (*qetupha*), “a cluster.” See *Zohar* 1:17b; 2:38a, 49b, 175a; *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 190, s.v. *qitpa*; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David*, s.v. *qitpin*. Cf. above, [note 428](#).

[433.](#) All those crowns... The demonic forces, who have no body and are not included in (the trunk of) the body of *Adam*. See above, [notes 418](#), [430](#). The phrase “to gain information from them” refers to sorcery.

[434.](#) What explains their craving... Demons are attracted to scholars of Torah, through whose holy bodies they seek to be included in a physical form and in the divine body. On demons being attracted to scholars, cf. above, [p. 59](#), [n. 12](#); and also BT *Berakhot* 6a (quoted in Vol. 5, p. 104, n. 297).

[435.](#) If so, what about holy angels... Who have no physical body. Rabbi Shim'on insists, however, that angels do possess a spiritual body. Otherwise, they would not participate in the divine body of *Adam*, would not be holy, and could not endure. As opposed to holy angels, demonic forces, who have no bodies at all, are dangerously impure.

The word “realm” renders כללא (*kelala*), “totality, entirety, category.” The verse in Ezekiel describes the angelic wheels of God's Chariot-Throne, whose *rims* [or: *brows*] *were full of eyes*. See Greenberg, *Ezekiel*, 47.

436. All of them derive from the spirit of the left...

When Adam was created, he contained both a soul (or spirit) deriving from the right and one deriving from the left. Once he sinned, demonic forces issued “from the spirit of the left.” These bodiless demons roam through the world and regularly enter their abode (the Hollow of the Great Abyss), where they cling to the soul of Cain, which had inhabited a body but was then cast down to this Abyss.

On Adam’s two souls, see *Zohar* 2:178a-b (*SdTs*) (Vol. 5, pp. 570-71, nn. 62-63); 3:48b (Vol. 7, pp. 303-4, nn. 154-55). On the bodiless demons, see above, [note 418](#). On Cain’s soul, see above, [notes 421-24](#). On Cain and the demons, see above, [p. 288, n. 7](#).

The verse in Leviticus, referring to one who is ritually impure due to a skin disease, reads: *Impure is he; alone shall he dwell; outside the camp shall his dwelling be.*

437. With the spirit called Abel... The soul of Abel was somewhat assuaged when it issued from the Female, and was later immersed back in Her (symbolized by the Great Sea). Thus his soul remained “in the realm of the holy body.” The demonic forces emerging along with him are also somewhat assuaged, sometimes appearing in what seems to be a bodily form, yet not really possessing bodies. Existing in close proximity to the holy realm, they hear information about what is going to happen, and convey this to other demons and to sleeping humans in their dreams.

On Abel’s soul, see above, [notes 422-24](#). According to BT *Berakhot* 55b, angels convey prophetic dreams, whereas demons convey false ones. In the *Zohar*, demonic forces often convey false information through deceitful dreams, whereas if the information is accurate, it usually concerns only events that are soon to unfold.

See *Zohar* 1:83a, 130a-b, 150b, 183a, 199b-200a, 238a; 2:130a, 195b, 251b (*Heikh*), 264a (*Heikh*), 267a (*Heikh*); 3:25a, 48b, 52b, 76b, 156b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:809-14. On the demons’ limited knowledge of the

future, see BT *Berakhot* 18b, *Hagigah* 16a, *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 3; *Pirquei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 7; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 17:7; *Zohar* 1:83a, 130a, 200a; 2:195b, 251b (*Heikh*); 3:25a.

438. the Concealment of the Book... Supposedly referring to *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (The Book of Concealment), though the passage quoted here does not appear in the extant *Sifra di-Tsni'uta*. See above, [note 22](#).

Once *Ze'eir Anpin* and the Female had been sweetened, and Judgment was assuaged, they united a third time, and the soul of Seth emerged. His soul represents sweet harmony, and when it appeared, all worlds merged into one cosmic body, animated by a divine spirit.

Seth's birth is described in Genesis 5:3: *Adam lived a hundred and thirty years and he engendered in his likeness, according to his image, and called his name Seth.* According to a midrashic interpretation, Seth alone was in Adam's likeness, unlike both Cain and Abel. See BT *Eruvin* 18b; *Pirquei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 22; Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 1:7; *Zohar* 1:55a; 2:167b-168a, 231b; *ZH* 8c-9b.

See *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:12: "He called his name שֵׁת (*Shet*), *Seth*, because upon him the world הוּשְׁתָּה (*hushtat*), was founded." See *Midrash Aggadah*, Genesis 4:25; Numbers 7:13; above, pp. 251-52, n. 5.

On the formulation "Shekhinah above, Shekhinah below," see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit* 19 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:30); *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:33); *Sefer Razi'el*, 36a; *Bahir* 116 (171); Jacob ben Sheshet, *Meshiv Devarim Nekhoḥim*, 194; idem, *Sefer ha-Emunah ve-ha-Bittahon*, 412; *Zohar* 1:159b, 246a; Recanati on Genesis 1:6, 5a; Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 179.

On the positive significance of a third pregnancy, see above, [pp. 48-49](#), [n. 136](#). On *Adam* as comprising male and female, see above, [pp. 12-13](#), [n. 36](#). The full verse in Isaiah reads: *One called to another, saying, "Holy, holy, holy is YHVH of Hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory."*

439. Once they were sweetened... Once *Ze'eir Anpin* and the Female united harmoniously, sweetening one another, Compassion (symbolized by *silver*) and Judgment (symbolized by *gold*) intermingled. The woman pictured in Song of Songs is identified here with the Female, who now combines both qualities (Compassion and Judgment).

The interdependence of male and female is demonstrated by the palm tree. These trees are dioecious: male and female flowers grow on separate trees. Male flowers produce pollen, whereas female flowers develop into fruit. As early as 2300 B.C.E., Mesopotamian farmers had learned to hang a male flower in a female tree to enhance pollination. See above, [note 223](#).

A person who refuses to marry thereby excludes himself from the category of *Adam*, which is both male and female. Consequently, in the afterlife he will be excluded from the divine realm of *Adam*. Rather, he is consigned to the realm of demons, who are bodiless. This apparently implies that the souls of the wicked actually become demons.

Cf. BT *Bava Batra* 116a, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "Whoever does not leave a son to succeed him incurs the full wrath of the blessed Holy One." See BT *Yevamot* 63b; *Zohar* 1:13a, 48a, 66a, 90a, 115a, 186b, 228b; *ZH* 89b (*MhN, Rut*).

On *Adam* as comprising male and female, and on the significance of being married, see above, [pp. 12-13](#), [n. 36](#). On demons being bodiless, see above, [note 418](#). On the souls of the wicked becoming demons, see Vol. 7, p. 159, n. 494.

440. for Judgments have been assuaged... Judgments (symbolized by *gold*) have been assuaged by Compassion (symbolized by *silver*).

See the preceding note. On the formulation "there is no Judgment that does not contain Compassion," see *Zohar* 3:65a.

441. In strings of beads... In the following verse from Song of Songs, *bangles of gold* are paired with *spangles of silver*, while in this verse *bangles* are paired with *strings of beads*. This enables Rabbi Shim'on to associate the second element of each pair: *strings of beads* resemble *spangles of silver*, both symbolizing Compassion. See the preceding two notes.

442. Your neck—in the realm of Female... Both the Temple and Jerusalem are pictured as the *neck*—elevated, beautiful, and vital—and both symbolize the Female (known as *Matronita*), “the Temple above.”

On the Temple as the neck, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 93:12; *Eikhah Rabbah, Petihta* 13; 5:5; BT *Megillah* 16b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:4; *Zohar* 1:171b, 209b. On Jerusalem as the neck, see *Targum Yonatan*, Rashi, and David Kimḥi on Isaiah 8:8; *Zohar* 1:171b.

443. all is formed as Adam... The divine *Adam*, comprising male and female. This sefirotic totality is the focus of faith, so it is called Faith.

444. When the soul departs from anyone called Adam... That is, from a Jew. This limited sense of *Adam* is based on a teaching attributed to Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai in BT *Yevamot* 60b–61a: “*You, My flock, flock of My pasture, are human [and I am Your God] (Ezekiel 34:31). You are called human; Gentiles are not called human.*” See Vol. 4, p. 484, n. 425.

According to Deuteronomy 21:23 (referring to one who has been executed for a capital offense, after which his body is hung and exposed), *You shall not leave his corpse on the tree overnight, rather you shall surely bury him on that day, for a hanged body is under God's curse, and you shall not defile your land.* Based on this verse, the Mishnah teaches that all corpses should normally be buried on the day of death. See M *Sanhedrin* 6:5; above, [p. 57, n. 8](#).

The full verse in Psalms reads: וְאָדָם (ve-adam), *And the human, does not abide [literally: spend the night] in glory;*

he is likened to beasts that perish. Rabbi Shim'on interprets this as: "The corpse of *Adam* must not *spend the night* unburied, for this would deny the *glory* of the divine *Adam*, in whose image the body was formed. If the corpse is left unburied, *he is likened to beasts that perish.*" Cf. *Zohar* 2:179a (*SdT*s); Vol. 5, p. 580, n. 83.

445. the Concealment of the Book... Supposedly referring to *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (The Book of Concealment), though the passage quoted here does not appear in the extant *Sifra di-Tsni'uta*. See the reference at the very end of the preceding note; above, [note 22](#).

If the corpse is left unburied overnight, this causes a defect in the cosmic body, which is formed by all worlds through the harmonious union of *Ze'eir Anpin* and the Female. (See above, [note 438](#).) When the Female, or *Shekhinah* (known as "the holy crown of the King" and *Righteousness*), sees the disgrace of this precious body, She refuses to "spend the night in [Holy] Land."

The full verse in Isaiah, referring to the corruption of Jerusalem, reads: *How has the faithful city become a harlot? She who was full of justice, righteousness lodged in her—but now murderers!*

446. The sons of Elohim... The context is the mythological fragment preserved in Genesis 6:1-4: *When humankind began to increase on the face of the earth and daughters were born to them, the sons of Elohim saw that the daughters of humankind were beautiful, and they took themselves wives, whomever they chose. YHVH said, "My spirit [or: breath] shall not abide in the human forever, for he, too, is flesh [or: for he is but flesh]. Let his days be a hundred and twenty years." The Nephilim [or: fallen ones] were on earth in those days—and afterward as well—when the sons of Elohim came in to the daughters of humankind, who bore them children. These are the heroes of old, men of renown.*

Here Rabbi Shim'on indicates that *the sons of Elohim* fell into the demonic realm, the Hollow of the Great Abyss (into which the soul of Cain was cast). See above, [note 423](#).

On the fallen angels, see 1 Enoch 6-11; Jubilees 5; BT *Yoma* 67b; *Aggadat Bereshit*, intro, 39; *Midrash Avkir*, 7 (cited in *Yalqut Shim'oni*, Genesis 44); *Pirgei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 22; *Zohar* 1:9b, 19b, 23a (TZ), 25a-b (TZ), 37a, 37a (Tos), 58a, 126a, 133b; 2:178b-179a (SdTs), 212b; 3:60b, 76b, 184b, 194a, 207b-208b, 212a-b, 233a-b; ZH 81a-b (*MhN*, *Rut*); Ginzberg, *Legends*, 1:147-51; Bamberger, *Fallen Angels*. Cf. Testament of Solomon 6:1-3.

For various interpretations of this passage (extending below to [p. 450](#) at [n. 450](#)), see *Or Yaqar*; *Qol be-Ramah*; *Bei'urei ha-Gera*; *Yafah Sha'ah*; *Yayin ha-Reqah*; *Sullam*; *Sha'arei ha-Idra*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

447. the well-known Adam That is, *Ze'eir Anpin*. The daughters here may represent Lilith and her associate Na'amah (or Agrat daughter of Maḥalat), the demonic females who torment sinners. See *Zohar* 2:178b (SdTs) (Vol. 5, pp. 572-73, n. 67; 3:60b (Vol. 7, pp. 394-95, n. 113).

The image of the demonic daughters of *Adam* recalls the midrashic motif that when Adam separated from Eve, demonic creatures clung to him, generating new demons in the world. See *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 26; *Bereshit Rabbah* 20:11; Vol. 7, pp. 303-4, n. 155.

448. these are the heroes מעולם (me-olam), of old... Rabbi Shim'on interprets מעולם (*olam*), *of old*, as *from the world*—that is, deriving from *Ze'eir Anpin*, who is known as *the world*. See above, [notes 202](#), [305](#). Cf. *Zohar* 2:179a (SdTs); Vol. 5, p. 580, n. 82. For the biblical context, see above, [note 446](#).

449. Men of השם (ha-shem), the Name... The simple sense is *men of renown*, but here Rabbi Shim'on reads the phrase hyperliterally, alluding to the Divine Name, through whose power demonic forces can generate other spirits, which issue into the world.

See *Zohar* 1:37a; 2:179a (*SdTs*); Vol. 5, p. 580, n. 82. Cf. 3:176b. For the biblical context, see above, [note 446](#).

[450.](#) ***The Nephilim were on earth...*** These *fallen ones* are identified with the angels Uzza and Aza'el, who fell to earth. Rabbi Shim'on distinguishes them from *the sons of Elohim*, who fell into the Hollow of the Great Abyss and were thus not *on earth*. For the biblical context and its treatment in later sources and the *Zohar*, see above, [note 446](#).

[451.](#) ***YHVH regretted...*** The subject *YHVH* refers here to *Ze'ir Anpin*, who *regretted having made* האדם (*ha-adam*), *the human, on earth*—as opposed to the divine *Adam* (*Ze'ir Anpin* and the Female), who emerged from *Arikh Anpin*.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *YHVH regretted having made the human on earth, and He was pained* [or: *and He was grieved*] *to His heart*.

[452.](#) ויתעצב (***Va-yit'atsev***), ***And He was pained...*** This reflexive or passive form applies to *Ze'ir Anpin* Himself. If the verse read ויעצב (*Va-ye'atsev*), this would mean that *Ze'ir Anpin pained Arikh Anpin*, which is impossible because the sublime and transcendent realm “is not pained.”

[453.](#) ***To His heart...*** Implying that *Ze'ir Anpin* expressed His pain to *Arikh Anpin*, “the heart of all hearts.”

[454.](#) ***I will wipe out*** האדם (***ha-adam***), ***humankind...*** *Ze'ir Anpin* (named *YHVH*) declares that He will *wipe out* האדם (*ha-adam*), *humankind*—not the divine *Adam* (*Ze'ir Anpin* and the Female). Yet, the two are interdependent, so the wickedness of the lower *Adam* tainted the higher one.

[455.](#) ***Were it not for Wisdom...*** The cosmic impact of human wickedness was so great that it nearly doomed all of existence, which would have reverted to primordial chaos, requiring another act of Creation (and presumably even a new emanation of the divine *Adam*, who had been tainted). However, the concealed Wisdom (or brain) of *Arikh Anpin* decided to save Noah (who was worthy and *found favor in*

the eyes of YHVH) along with at least a pair of each species of life.

By a creative misreading, Rabbi Shim'on interprets the verse in Proverbs 8 to mean: *I am Wisdom*. שיכנתי (*Shikkanti*), *I cause to dwell*—that is, “*I enable [earth] to dwell [in existence]*”. The full verse reads: *I am Wisdom. I dwell in shrewdness; cunning knowledge I find*. On the concealed Wisdom of *Arikh Anpin*, see above, [note 29](#).

456. All brains depend upon this brain... Upon the brain of *Arikh Anpin*. This brain (or Wisdom) arranged the entire structure of the divine *Adam* (*Ze'eir Anpin* and the Female).

The full verse in Ecclesiastes reads: *Wisdom strengthens the wise מעשרה (me-asarah), more than ten, rulers who are in the city*. But the preposition *me* can also mean “*from, by,*” which enables Rabbi Shim'on to reinterpret the verse as: *Wisdom strengthens the wise me-asarah, by ten, rulers*, indicating the source of this strength—namely the ten *sefirot*, which comprise (or include) “the complete array of (the divine) *Adam*.”

For a similar reinterpretation of *me-asarah*, see *Qohelet Rabbah* on 7:19; *Zohar* 2:156b. On the ten sefirotic rulers, see *Zohar* 3:145a (*Piq*).

457. Adam is the arrangement... The sefirotic structure of *Adam* is animated by an inner spirit, issuing from *Arikh Anpin* (named here *YHVH*). Cf. above at [note 438](#).

Rabbi Shim'on may be reading the verse as: *For יראֵהּ הָאָדָם (ha-adam yera'eh), Adam is seen, by the eyes, but יראֵהּ יְהוָה (yera'eh), is seen, by the heart*. For another possible interpretation, see Hellner-Eshed, *Qeri'ah ba-Idra Rabba*.

458. In this array appears perfection... The sefirotic array of *Adam* rests upon the Throne (or the array of *Ze'eir Anpin* rests upon the Throne, symbolizing *Shekhinah*).

The verse in Daniel now implies that *Ze'eir Anpin* (*one like a human being*) *reached Arikh Anpin* (also known as *the Ancient of Days*). The verse in Ezekiel, describing what lies

above the angelic *hayyot* (living beings), reads in full: *Above the firmament over their heads—like the appearance of sapphire, image of a throne. And upon the image of a throne, an image like the appearance of a human being upon it above.*

459. Until here, words are concealed... Rabbi Shim'on marks the conclusion of the secret teachings of *Idra Rabba*.

On Rabbi Shim'on's opening line, see Daniel 12:9-10. Cf. *Zohar* 1:30b (Vol. 1, p. 185, n. 638). On the titles "Masters of Qualities" and "Reapers of the Field," see above, [notes 3, 81](#); [p. 192, n. 401](#). On those "who have entered and emerged," see above, [notes 7, 375](#).

460. If by these words revealed here... If as a result of all the profound secrets revealed here, the Companions would depart from the world right now, that would be fitting, for such mysteries have never been—and perhaps should not be—disclosed.

See below at [note 463](#); Or *Yaqar*; Cordovero, Or *Ne'erav* 4:1; *Sullam*; *Sha'arei ha-Idra*; Hellner-Eshed, *Qeri'ah ba-Idra Rabba*. The concluding clause can also be rendered: "so that [these words] would not be revealed to any inhabitant of the world," that is, so that the secrets would not spread any further. "The chamber" renders אֶדְדֵּרָא (*iddera*), "threshing floor; barn; chamber." See above, [note 4](#).

461. I retract... Rabbi Shim'on insists that he revealed these secrets for a worthy purpose; so none of the Companions should die.

One who has delved deeply into the secrets of Torah and of God's nature will eventually enter the heavenly gates without any shame. See *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 1; *Midrash Mishlei* 10; *Zohar* 2:123b; 3:46a, 196b, 287b (*IZ*), 291a-b (*IZ*), 295a (*IZ*); *ZH* 2c (*SO*), 8d (*MhN*), 70d (*ShS*). Cf. *Zohar* 1:4a, 221a-222a; 2:134b; 3:205b.

For the expression "I have not acted for my own glory..." in the context of revealing secrets, see BT

Megillah 3a; *Zohar* 2:102a; 3:291a (IZ). Cf. *Ta'anit* 20a, *Bava Metsi'a* 59b; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 6. The title Ancient of Ancients refers to *Arikh Anpin*.

462. Before these Companions emerged... Three of the participants perish, overwhelmed by the intensity of the revelations.

The phrase “threshing chamber” renders אִדְרָא (*iddera*), “threshing floor, barn, chamber,” and refers here to the assembly of the *Idra Rabba*. See above, [note 4](#). “That canopy” is the one that was spread over Rabbi Shim'on and the Companions during the *Idra Rabba*. See above, [notes 209-10, 308](#).

On the death of the three Companions, see *Zohar* 1:217a; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 51-55, 63; Asulin, “Qomatah shel ha-Shekhinah,” 177-82; Hellner-Eshed, *Qeri'ah ba-Idra Rabba*. In one Zoharic passage (2:61a-b) the death of Rabbi Yeisa is described as a reward, while in another (3:79a) it is described as a punishment. Cf. 3:39b. On the death of Rabbi Hizkiyah, see Sobol, “Ein Mal'akh Ehad Oseh Shetei Sheliḥuyyot,” 299-303; Asulin, “Ha-Pegam ve-Tiqquno,” 228-29; Hellner-Eshed, *Qeri'ah ba-Idra Rabba*. On the chronology of the deaths of Rabbi Hizkiyah, Rabbi Yeisa, and Rabbi Shim'on himself, see *Zohar* 3:71a; *Yayin ha-Reqaḥ*; *Nitsotsei Zohar*, n. 6; *Sha'arei ha-Idra*; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 183, n. 148; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

463. Rabbi Shim'on uttered a word... And the angels carrying the canopy descended. (Or, the remaining Companions became calm.)

Rabbi Shim'on wonders whether the three Companions have died as a punishment for the revelation of these secrets. See above, [note 460](#). On the comparison with Moses at Mount Sinai, see above, [notes 136-37](#). On the verse in Exodus, see *Zohar* 2:15a (*MhN*).

On re-experiencing what happened at Sinai, cf. JT *Hagigah* 2:1, 77b; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 16:4; BT *Berakhot* 63b,

Hagigah 14b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:10; 2:5; *Rut Rabbah* 6:4; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 1:10; 7:8; *Zohar* 3:69a, 179b. Cf. *Zohar* 3:152a.

464. At the cost of his firstborn... The verse appears in Joshua following the conquest and destruction of Jericho. It reads in full: *At that time Joshua pronounced an oath, saying, "Cursed before YHVH be the man who undertakes to build this city of Jericho: at the cost of his firstborn he shall lay its foundation, and at the cost of his youngest he shall set up its gates."*

Here, remarkably and paradoxically, the cursed act of rebuilding Jericho represents the holy act of "constructing" or restoring the divine realm, which Rabbi Shim'on and his Companions have accomplished by expounding the secrets. Such a bold act imperils its participants and entails an extreme sacrifice. On the verse in Joshua and its significance, see 1 Kings 16:34; JT *Sanhedrin* 10:2, 28b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:158; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 52.

The sentence "All the more so..." means: There is certainly no cause for grief, since the Companions cleaved to God as they departed.

465. While words were being revealed... While the secrets were being expounded, the angels above trembled.

According to rabbinic tradition, certain virtuous heroes (including Moses, Aaron, and Miriam) died not by the power of the Angel of Death but rather by the kiss of God. In *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah*, this privilege is extended to all the righteous.

See *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 34:5; BT *Bava Batra* 17a (and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *she-lo shalat*); *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 12; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:2; *Devarim Rabbah* 11:10; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 42; *Tanḥuma, Va'ethannan* 6; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'ethannan* 6; Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 3:51; Vol. 5, p. 168, n. 81.

The phrase “were being sweetened” renders מתבסמין (*mitbassemin*), which could also be translated: “were becoming inebriated.” On the 250 worlds, see *Zohar* 2:88b. On the canopy, see above, [note 462](#).

[466. Why these ones?...](#) The three Companions who died had previously participated in another *Idra*—most likely “The *Idra* of the Dwelling”—but they did not emerge successfully (or with full comprehension). See above, [notes 7, 375](#).

As mentioned above (in [note 7](#)), the image of “entering and emerging” derives from the famous story of four rabbis who “entered the orchard,” that is, who engaged in mystical contemplation. Of these four, only Rabbi Akiva “entered in peace and emerged in peace.” Thus, three of the four did not “emerge in peace.” Similarly here, three of the Companions previously “entered and did not emerge,” and they now fail to emerge alive. See Sobol, “Ein Mal’akh Eḥad Oseh Shetei Shelihuyyot,” 301, n. 54.

[467. You, cleaving to YHVH your God...](#) This apparently refers to the three Companions who have departed, *cleaving to YHVH* and thereby attaining eternal life. It could also refer to Rabbi Shim’on and his remaining six Companions, who still *are alive* and intimately close to God.

[468. no place they looked at...](#) This contrasts sharply with the Talmudic account of what happened when Rabbi Shim’on and his son, Rabbi El’azar, emerged from the cave in which they had hidden from the Romans for twelve years. See BT *Shabbat* 33b: “They emerged and saw people plowing and sowing. [Rabbi Shim’on] said, ‘They are forsaking eternal life [that is, the study of Torah] and engaging in temporary life!’ Every place they gazed upon was immediately burnt up. A heavenly echo issued, saying to them, ‘Have you emerged in order to destroy My world? Return to your cave!’”

The continuation of the Talmudic story resonates with the description here in the *Zohar*. “They went back [into the cave] and dwelt there for twelve months, saying ‘The punishment of the wicked in Hell is for twelve months.’ A heavenly echo issued, saying, ‘Leave your cave!’ They emerged, and wherever Rabbi El’azar wounded [by his glance], Rabbi Shim’on healed. He said to him, ‘My son, you and I are sufficient for the world.’ On the eve of Sabbath, they saw an old man holding two sprigs of myrtle and running at twilight. They said to him, ‘What are these for?’ He replied, ‘In honor of Sabbath.’ ‘Isn’t one enough for you?’ One for *Remember* [*the Sabbath day*] (Exodus 20:8), and one for *Keep* [*the Sabbath day*] (Deuteronomy 5:12).’ He said to his son, ‘See how precious are the *mitsvot* to Israel!’ Their minds were set at ease.”

On the association of fragrance with wisdom or revelation, see BT *Shabbat* 88b, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu’a son of Levi: “With every single utterance issuing from the mouth of the blessed Holy One, the whole world was filled with spices.”

469. that no one could look at them As when Moses descended from Mount Sinai. See Exodus 34:29–30: *When Moses came down from Mount Sinai—with the two tablets of the Covenant in Moses’ hand as he came down from the mountain—Moses did not know that the skin of his face was radiant because of His speaking with him [or: because of his speaking with Him]. Aaron and all the Children of Israel saw Moses, and look, the skin of his face was radiant, and they were afraid to come near him.* See above, [note 137](#).

470. Ten entered and seven emerged... Initially, Rabbi Shim’on together with nine Companions entered the field to explore the mysteries, but now Rabbi Yose son of Ya’akov, Rabbi Hizkiyah, and Rabbi Yeisa have perished. See above, [note 8](#).

471. mountains of pure balsam... According to a rabbinic tradition, thirteen rivers of balsam await the

righteous in the world that is coming. Here, the rivers have been transformed into mountains. See above, [p. 77](#), [n. 67](#), and the reference to *mountains of spices* in Song of Songs 8:14.

[472.](#) **the eyes of YHVH...** Angelic powers supervising the world.

See *Zohar* 1:218a (Vol. 3, p. 315, n. 72). The verse in Zechariah reads: *These seven are the eyes of YHVH, ranging over the whole earth*. See above, [notes 50](#), [60](#), [258](#).

[473.](#) **We are six lamps...** The six surviving Companions symbolize the six *sefirot* from *Hesed* to *Yesod*, which receive the flow of emanation from *Binah*, symbolized by Rabbi Shim'on.

Binah is the seventh *sefirah* counting from below (with *Yesod* considered number one). Rabbi Shim'on is often referred to as בוצינא קדישא (*Botsina Qaddisha*), "the Holy Lamp." See above, [p. 139](#), [n. 250](#).

[474.](#) **Sabbath of all those six...** Just as Sabbath is the source of blessing for all the other six days of the week, so Rabbi Shim'on inspires and illumines all six Companions.

See *Bahir* 105 (159); *Zohar* 2:63b, 88a. The quotation *Sabbath for YHVH, holy* conflates the wording in Exodus 16:23 (*a holy Sabbath for [or: to] YHVH*) and 20:10 (*a Sabbath for [or: to] YHVH*). On scholars resembling Sabbath, see *Zohar* 3:29a-b (*RM*), 124b (*RM*); *TZ*, *Haqdamah* 2a.

[475.](#) **that hairy one with girded loins...** Namely, the prophet Elijah, who is described as *a hairy man with a leather loincloth bound round his loins [or: with a leather belt bound round his waist]* (2 Kings 1:8). Cf. 1 Kings 18:46.

Rabbi Shim'on wonders why Elijah (a master of mysteries) was absent from this gathering, during which the deepest secrets were thrashed out. See above, [note 4](#).

In rabbinic literature, Elijah reveals heavenly secrets to worthy individuals. (See, e.g., BT *Bava Metsi'a* 58b.) In Kabbalah mystical experiences are known as revelations of Elijah. See Vol. 1, p. 7, n. 43.

476. three diadems illumining his face... Perhaps corresponding to the three Companions who perished.

The *Idra Rabba* is described as “the day of הלולא (*hillula*), ‘festivity, wedding feast, wedding celebration.’” This may allude to the union of *Ze’eir Anpin* and the Female, or to the joyous intimacy of Rabbi Shim’on (and his Companions) with God. See *Zohar* 3:291a-b (*IZ*); below at [note 478](#).

See also the account in BT *Hagigah* 14b, where Rabbi Yehoshu’a expounds on the mysteries of the Divine Chariot, “and the ministering angels came and gathered to listen, like people coming and gathering to watch the entertainments for a bridegroom and bride.” Cf. JT *Hagigah* 2:1, 77a.

What seems to be the wedding cake is described as קרדוטא גליפא (*qarduta gelifa*), “the carved groat cake.” *Qarduta* apparently derives from כרדוט (*kardut*), employed by *Targum Yonatan* to translate the rare biblical term כונים (*kavvanim*), “cakes,” in Jeremiah 7:18; 44:19. In other Targumic passages *kardut* means “a sleeved tunic” (based on Greek *cheiridotos*), but in the Jeremiah passages it may represent a corruption of Greek *chondrites*, “made of groats.”

See *Arukh ha-Shalem*, s.v. *kardat*; David Kimḥi on Jeremiah 7:18; 44:19; *Zohar* 1:234a (Vol. 3, p. 417, n. 569); 2:81b (Vol. 4, p. 447, n. 295), 174a (Vol. 5, pp. 514-15, n. 923); *Bei’ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 190, s.v. *qurdita*; *Derekh Emet*; Luria, *Va-Ye’esof David*, s.v. *qanditei*; above, [p. 20](#), [n. 59](#). For another interpretation, see Hellner-Eshed and Leader, *Idra Rabba*.

“Diadems” renders קטפורי (*qatporei*), a neologism apparently based on קטרא (*qitra*), “knot, bond,” thus “band, diadem.” See Luria, *Va-Ye’esof David*, s.v. *qatpora*; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 352. Cf. *Derekh Emet*.

477. Seven days before you entered... Elijah explains that he begged God to be invited to the gathering (in which God Himself would appear), but he was instead sent on a rescue mission.

On the phrase “the threshing chamber,” see above, [note 4](#). On Rav Hamnuna Sava, see above, [p. 105](#), [n. 154](#). On the valley (or plain) of Ono, see Nehemiah 6:2; *Zohar* 3:217b.

The phrase “by edict of the royal crown” renders דמלכא בקרונא (*bi-qrona de-malka*). *Qerona* may be based on Castilian (and Latin) *corona*, “crown.” The word “rampart” renders חילא (*heila*), apparently based on Hebrew חיל (*heil*), “rampart.”

The clause “and they were trapped in the magical entanglement” renders ואתקטרו בקטרוי (*ve-itqetaru be-qitroi*), “and they were caught in its bonds (or knots).” On the magical or sorcerous connotation of “knot,” see *Zohar* 2:25a, 37b–38a, 52b, 69a; 3:149a; *ZH* 54d; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 397.

[478](#). the canopy carried by all those columns... That is, by angels. See above, [notes 209–10](#), [462](#).

The angels explain to Elijah that God delights in the souls of the three Companions who have departed this world and who represent His “share” or sacrificial offering. On the wedding celebration, see above, [note 476](#).

[479](#). Rabbi Pinḥas son of Ya’ir, your father-in-law... On account of Rabbi Shim’on’s success in penetrating the divine secrets, his father-in-law’s soul was adorned in heaven, and Elijah saw Rabbi Pinḥas selecting his spot in Paradise.

Pinḥas son of Ya’ir, a second-century rabbi who lived in Palestine, was renowned for his saintliness and ability to work miracles. (See *JT Demai* 1:3, 22a; *BT Hullin* 7a–b; *Devarim Rabbah* 3:3.) In the *Zohar* he is a revered member of Rabbi Shim’on’s circle. See 1:11a–b; 3:36a, 59b–60b, 62a–b, 200b–202a, 203a, 240b, 225b, 288a, 296b (*IZ*); *ZH* 12b (*MhN*), 19a (*MhN*).

Such special recognition is to be expected since—according to *BT Shabbat* 33b—Rabbi Pinḥas was the son-in-law of Rabbi Shim’on. However, the *Zohar* elevates Pinḥas further by transforming him into Rabbi Shim’on’s father-in-law. This new role could be the result of a simple mistake:

confusing חתן (*hatan*), “son-in-law,” and חותן (*hoten*), “father-in-law.” However, the switch may also be deliberate, an instance of interchanging father and son. See Vol. 1, p. 75, n. 566; Vol. 7, p. 211, n. 12; Emden, *Mitpaḥat Sefarim*, 29.

On the chronological problem posed by Rabbi Pinḥas’s death preceding Rabbi Shim’on’s, see *Nitsotsei Zohar*. On a deceased father’s soul being rewarded for his son’s virtuous conduct, see above, [p. 249](#), [n. 77](#). On the image of “rivers of mountains of pure balsam,” see above, [note 471](#). On selecting a place in Paradise, see *Zohar* 1:217b-218a; 3:287b (*IZ*); *ZH* 19a (*MhN*).

[480](#). Are the righteous bound in a cluster of crowns... Since Elijah has just arrived from Paradise, Rabbi Shim’on asks him a question about souls of the righteous who abide there after departing from this world.

On the crowns of the righteous in the afterlife, see BT *Berakhot* 17a: “A pearl in the mouth of Rav: ‘In the world that is coming, there is no eating or drinking or procreation or business or jealousy or hatred or competition; rather, the righteous sit with their crowns on their heads, basking in the radiance of *Shekhinah*.’”

On souls of the righteous being crowned (or ascending) on festivals and Sabbaths, see *Zohar* 1:134b (*MhN*); 2:97b, 141b-142a, 212a; 3:70b, 159b. The word “cluster” renders קרטופא (*qartufa*). See above, [note 428](#).

[481](#). And even all those outside... Elijah indicates that on holy days even the souls of the wicked ascend from Hell.

According to *Bereshit Rabbah* 11:5, one of the dwellers in Hell reports: “Whoever does not observe the Sabbath willingly in your world observes it here against his will.... All week long we are punished and on the Sabbath we are granted rest.” See above, [p. 103](#), [n. 149](#).

The notion that the suffering of the wicked in Hell also abates on new moons derives from Ashkenazic sources. See *Zohar* 1:62b; 2:100a; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*,

40. On the verse in Isaiah as referring to the soul's ascent, see *Zohar* 1:41a (*Heikh*), 62b, 115b-116a (*MhN*); 2:156b-157a; 3:70b, 159b, 182b; *ZH* 18b (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 30 (36).

482. the patriarchs—Holy Chariot... According to *Bereshit Rabbah* 47:6 (in the name of Resh Lakish): “The patriarchs themselves constitute the [Divine] Chariot.” See above, [p. 49](#), [n. 139](#). In Kabbalah the three patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) symbolize respectively the *sefirot* *Hesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*.

483. the seventh of all those days is crowned... The Sabbath is the culmination of the week, symbolizing *Shekhinah*, who is filled with the flow of emanation from all six *sefirot* from *Hesed* to *Yesod*.

Rabbi Shim'on, surrounded by his six Companions, is “seventh of the six,” corresponding to Sabbath (and to *Shekhinah* or *Binah*). See above, [notes 473–74](#).

The “three delights found on the seventh” are the three Sabbath meals, which correspond respectively to the Female, *Ze'eir Anpin*, and *Arikh Anpin*. On these three meals, see above, [p. 104](#), [n. 151](#).

The context in Isaiah (58:13–14) reads: *If you refrain from trampling the Sabbath, from engaging in your affairs on My holy day, and call the Sabbath “delight,” the holy of YHVH “honored”; if you honor it by not going your own ways, pursuing your affairs, or speaking a word, then you will delight upon YHVH, and I will cause you to ride upon the heights of the earth, and feed you the inheritance of your father Jacob—for the mouth of YHVH has spoken.* The phrase *speaking a word* may refer to idle, mundane, or excessive talk; discussing business; or legal proceedings.

1. Speak to Aaron and to his sons... The context in Numbers (6:22-27), describing the priestly blessing, reads: *YHVH spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, 'Thus shall you bless the Children of Israel, saying to them: [or: Say to them:] May YHVH bless you and protect you. May YHVH shine His face upon you and be gracious to you. May YHVH lift up His face to you and grant you peace.' They shall set My name upon the Children of Israel, and I Myself will bless them."*

The priestly blessing was recited twice daily in the Temple in Jerusalem. Following the Temple's destruction and the cessation of the sacrificial cult, it became the main remnant of priestly ritual and was also inserted before the last blessing of the *Amidah*.

Parts of this section of the *Zohar* (beginning here and continuing to the end of *Parashat Naso*) resemble in style the *Midrash ha-Ne'lam*. See Scholem; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 204-5, n. 88.

2. וחסד יהוה (Ve-ḥesed YHVH), The love of YHVH... The term חסד (*ḥesed*) means "love, loving-kindness, grace"; the cognate noun חסידות (*ḥasidut*) means "devotion, piety." The term יראה (*yir'ah*) means "awe, reverence, fear."

On the relationship of the various qualities mentioned here, cf. the famous teaching attributed to Rabbi Pinḥas son of Ya'ir in M *Sotah* 9:15: "Zeal leads to cleanliness, cleanliness to purity, purity to holiness [per Kaufmann MS], holiness to humility, humility to fear of sin, fear of sin to *ḥasidut* (devotion, love, piety), *ḥasidut* to the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit to the revival of the dead, and the revival of the dead comes through Elijah, remembered for good."

See *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 23:15; JT *Shabbat* 1:3, 3c; *Sheqalim* 3:4, 47c; BT *Avodah Zarah* 20b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 1:9 (on 1:1); *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 10, p. 191; *Midrash Mishlei* 15:33.

3. Whoever emerges from awe... Proceeding from this fundamental quality to humility.

The verse in Proverbs reads: עֲקֵב עֲנוּוָה (Ekev anavah), *The heel of humility* [or: *What follows humility; the reward of humility*], is awe of [or: fear of] YHVH. This verse is quoted in many of the sources cited at the end of the preceding note, demonstrating that humility leads to fear of sin: *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 23:15; *JT Shabbat* 1:3, 3c; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 1:9 (on 1:1); *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 10, p. 191; *Midrash Mishlei* 15:33. See also *ZH* 45d; *TZ*, *Haqdamah* 5b.

The verse in Psalms reads: *The love of YHVH is forever and ever upon יִרְאַתָּה (yere'av), those in awe of Him* [or: *those who fear Him*]. See the preceding note.

4. Every person who possesses ḥasidut, devotion... The verse in Malachi describes a priest as an angel [or: messenger] of YHVH Tseva'ot [or: YHVH of Hosts]. Since the priest is associated with the sefirah of Ḥesed, it follows that anyone possessing the quality of ḥasidut (devotion) resembles a priest and thus deserves the title Angel of YHVH Tseva'ot.

On the priest as angel, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 119; *Pirquei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 37; *Tanḥuma, Shelaḥ* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Metsora* 3; *Shelaḥ* 1; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 16:1; *Midrash Tehillim* 52:1. All of these sources (except for *Pirquei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer*) quote the verse from Malachi.

5. Just as an angel... The archangel Michael serves as the heavenly priest, issuing from Ḥesed, and human priests on earth resemble him and symbolize Ḥesed.

On Michael as “the great prince,” see Daniel 12:1. On his association with Ḥesed, see *Zohar* 1:235a. On his serving as the heavenly priest, see *BT Hagigah* 12b, *Zevaḥim* 62a, *Menahot* 110a; *Midrash Tehillim* 134:1; Vol. 7, pp. 174–75, n. 20.

6. in the Holy Idra... Apparently referring to *Idra Rabba*, although this teaching does not appear in the extant *Idra Rabba*. See *Or Yaqar*. On the term *Idra* (technically, *Iddera*), see above, [pp. 319–20](#), [n. 4](#).

In biblical Hebrew the word עולם (*olam*) means “eternity,” and in the verse from Psalm 103 the simple sense of מעולם ועד עולם (*me-olam ve-ad olam*) is *from eternity to eternity*, or *forever and ever*. Here, though, Rabbi Yitshak adopts the later sense of *olam*, “world,” so that he construes the phrase as *from world to world*. The two “worlds” may represent *Binah* and *Shekhinah*, or *Ze’eir Anpin* and the Female (corresponding to *Shekhinah*).

On the meaning *from world to world* (based on a similar phrase in Psalms 106:48), see M *Berakhot* 9:5; *Tosefta Berakhot* 6:21; *Zohar* 1:34a, 153b, 158b, 210a, 247b, 248b; 2:22a, 53b, 144a; 3:285b, 297b; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 342–43. For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Ateret Tsevi*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

7. Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “If so... Why doesn’t the verse employ the definite article to describe each of the two divine worlds, as in the nearly identical phrase in Psalms 106:48: מן העולם ועד העולם (*min ha-olam ve-ad ha-olam*)?”

8. two worlds, turned back into one The lack of the definite article implies that the two worlds are not essentially separate and can reunite.

9. How long will you seal your words?... Rabbi El’azar offers a clearer interpretation. The two “worlds” in the verse from Psalms represent “Adam above and Adam below,” namely the sefirotic structure of *Ze’eir Anpin* (from *Ḥokhmah* to *Yesod*) and the human being below. *Ze’eir Anpin* is known as *the world*, as in the phrases *days of the world* and *years of the world*.

The phrase *days of the world* renders ימי עולם (*yemei olam*), which means literally *days of eternity* (or *antiquity*) and is usually translated as *days of old*. In the *Idra Rabba*, Rabbi Shim’on construes *olam* as *world*, alluding to *Ze’eir Anpin*; and here, Rabbi Shim’on’s son, Rabbi El’azar, adopts this interpretation. See above, [note 6](#); [pp. 375–76](#), [n. 202](#). The

verse in Isaiah reads: *He raised them and exalted them* עולם כל ימי (kol yemei olam), *all the days of old*.

On the phrase שנות עולם (shenot olam), *years of the world*, cf. Psalms 77:6: שנות עולמים (shenot olamim), *years of antiquity*. See above, [p. 407](#), [n. 305](#).

The question “How long will you seal your words?” appears in *Bahir* 18 (26), 135 (195). In the first of these passages, it represents a response to three elements turning into one, resembling the context here. For various interpretations of this paragraph, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 42-44; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

10. Upon those who fear Him... Or, upon those in awe of Him. See above, end of [note 3](#).

11. Totality of male and female This is what makes a person truly *Adam*.

See BT *Yevamot* 62b-63a, in the name of Rabbi El’azar: “Any אדם (*adam*), man, who has no wife is not an *adam*, as is said: *Male and female He created them... and He named them adam* (Genesis 5:2).” See above, [pp. 12-13](#), [n. 36](#).

12. Certainly so... Rabbi El’azar agrees with Rabbi Yehudah, but he indicates that by being male and female, a person attains *yir’ah* (awe or fear), humility, and *hesed* (love) or *hasidut* (devotion). Here, “sin-fearing” implies that one who is married will not be tempted by sexual sin.

Furthermore, the *hesed* (love) manifested by a human couple stimulates the divine quality of *Hesed*, and the world cannot exist or endure without both forms of love.

The verse in Psalms reads עולם חסד יבנה (olam hesed yibbaneh), which is normally understood to mean *Forever will love be established*, but is construed midrashically as *The world is built by love*. See above, [p. 368](#), [n. 168](#).

13. This refers to the priests... Their souls derive from *Hesed*, and they convey the flow of emanation from this *sefirah* to the people of Israel below.

According to M *Yoma* 1:1, the phrase in Leviticus *and for his house* [or: *and for his household*] refers to “his

wife.” Here, Rabbi El’azar applies this to the theme of marriage, by which the priest becomes fully *Adam*.

14. If so, why and His righteousness?... *Righteousness* implies Judgment. It would be more fitting for the verse to read וְהָסְדוֹ (*ve-ḥasdo*), and *His love, to children’s children*, because *love engenders children*, or because through *love* one becomes worthy of *children’s children*, or because the priest is associated with *Hesed* (Love).

15. בְּזֹאת (Be-zot), With this... As the Divine Presence, *Shekhinah* is known as זֹאת (*zot*), *this*, because She is constantly present right here. The wording in Leviticus—בְּזֹאת (*Be-zot*), *With this, shall Aaron enter the sanctuary*—implies that Aaron should enter the Holy of Holies while focusing on *Shekhinah* and “with Her.”

The verse in Genesis now implies that *Shekhinah* (*zot*) was *taken* (or derives) from the Male, who is characterized by *Hesed*. She receives the flow of emanation from Him and thereby “includes” Him. *Shekhinah*, the Divine Woman, is also known as *Tsedeq* (Righteousness), issuing from the side of Judgment, which is associated with the color red. The wording *His righteousness* indicates that *Shekhinah* (*righteousness*) is paired with the male *Hesed*, and they sweeten one another.

According to rabbinic tradition, the high priest who serves in the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur must be married. Here this restriction is extended to any priest who serves (or blesses the congregation), based on a custom that was followed in Ashkenaz though not in Spain. The idea is that a priest must imitate the divine archetype by being married; otherwise he cannot serve. As mentioned above, the wording in Leviticus—*for his house*—implies “for his wife.”

See M *Yoma* 1:1; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Avodat Yom ha-Kippurim* 1:2; Zedekiah Anav, *Shibbolei ha-Leqet*, 23; *Zohar* 1:239b; 3:5b (Vol. 7, pp. 15–16, n. 45),

37b; Emden, *Zoharei Ya'bits*; Kunitz, *Sefer Ben Yoḥai*, § 68; Katz, *Halakhah ve-Qabbalah*, 45, 50; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 28, 51.

Leviticus 16:3 reads in full: *With this shall Aaron enter the sanctuary, with a bull from the herd for a purification offering and a ram for an ascent offering.* On this verse and on *Shekhinah* as *Zot*, see above, [p. 211](#), [n. 11](#).

Adam's exclamation in Genesis, following the creation of Eve, reads in full: *This one at last, bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh! This one shall be called Woman, for from man was this one taken.* See *Zohar* 3:48b.

16. Because *Shekhinah* does not dwell... Through marriage, one becomes a complete *Adam*, attracting *Shekhinah*. See above, [note 11](#); *Zohar* 3:37b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 223; and BT *Sotah* 17a, in the name of Rabbi Akiva: "Man and woman: if they are worthy, *Shekhinah* abides between them; if not, fire consumes them."

Once *Shekhinah* dwells within the priests, She conveys *Ḥesed* to them, so they are called *ḥasidim*, "devoted ones." The simple sense of the verse in Psalm 145 is that the *devoted ones* יברכוכה (*yevarakhukha*), *will bless You*, but Rabbi Yitshak construes this as יברכו כה (*yevarakhu koh*), *will bless Shekhinah*, who is known as *Koh*, "thus, here" (matching Her name *Zot*, "this"). Through Her, the blessing reaches the people of Israel. Similarly, the verse in Numbers—כה (*Koh*), *Thus, shall you bless*—now implies that the priests should bless *Shekhinah* (known as *Koh*), who then conveys blessing to *the Children of Israel* (as the verse concludes). Cf. Numbers 6:27: *They shall set My name upon the Children of Israel, and I Myself will bless them.*

On *Koh* as a name of *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:90b, 96a, 152b, 174b; 2:23b, 37b, 79b, 139b; 3:146a, 147a, 148a, 264b, 267a; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Oraḥ*, 12a-13a.

The context in Deuteronomy (33:8-11) records Moses' blessing to the tribe of Levi, from whom the priests were

descended. On the Urim and Thummim, see Vol. 6, p. 322, n. 174.

17. Thus shall you bless—in the holy tongue... See *Sifrei*, Numbers 39; M *Sotah* 7:2; BT *Sotah* 33b, 38a; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:4.

18. This Tsedeq (Righteousness) is called Koh (Thus)... *Shekhinah*, who is known as *Tsedeq* (Righteousness), is also called *Koh* (Thus), as explained above, [note 16](#).

The verse in Numbers describes a divine blow of punishment against the people. The letters of the word מַכָּה (*makkah*), a *blow*, can be read as מִכָּה (*mi-koh*), *from Koh*, which means the same as מִן כֹּה (*min koh*), indicating that *Shekhinah* (known as *Koh*) conveys such punishment. Cf. Deuteronomy 25:3; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 13a; *Zohar* 2:37b; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 204–5, n. 88.

Exodus 7:16 contains Moses' declaration to Pharaoh immediately before the first plague: *YHVH, God of the Hebrews, sent me to you, saying: "Let My people go, that they may serve Me in the wilderness." And look, you have not listened until koh, now.* Rabbi Abba interprets this to mean that Pharaoh will not listen until *Shekhinah* strikes him.

The following verse in Exodus reads: *Thus says YHVH: בְּזוֹת (Be-zot), "By this, shall you know that I am YHVH."—Look, I am about to strike with the staff in my hand on the water that is in the Nile, and it will turn into blood.* According to Rabbi Abba, *Be-zot, By this, shall you know now* means: By the punishment brought upon you by *Shekhinah* (known as *Zot*), *shall you know*.

"All is one" means that both *Zot* and *Koh* allude to the same divine potency: *Shekhinah*. Yet Pharaoh was stubborn: *he turned and went into his house, and he did not take to heart zot, this, too.* By disregarding *Shekhinah* (known as *Zot*), Pharaoh doomed his country. On *Shekhinah* as *Zot*, see above, [note 15](#). On Exodus 7:16–17, 23, see *Zohar* 2:37b; 3:41a; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 12b.

19. From this *Koh*, judgments are aroused... Judgments issue from *Shekhinah*, but when the Male (characterized by *Hesed*) unites with Her, She is assuaged. The responsibility of blessing the people is entrusted to the priest (who derives from *Hesed*), so that he may stimulate the sweetening of *Shekhinah*, who then conveys blessing to Israel. See above, [note 16](#).

20. אמור (*Amor*), *Saying, to them...* The verse reads: *Thus shall you bless the Children of Israel, אמור (amor), saying, to them.* (For the full context, see above, [note 1](#).) The word *amor* is an infinitive absolute, which is often understood in this verse as an imperative: *Say (to them)*. Rabbi Abba emphasizes that the verse does not employ the normal imperative—אמר (imeru), “say”—because at a certain point in the history of the Second Temple, “when the unruly increased,” the priests did not utter the Divine Name aloud (according to its authentic pronunciation) when blessing the people. The “undefined” formulation *amor, saying*, implies this toned-down delivery of the Name.

See BT *Qiddushin* 71a: “Our Rabbis taught: At first the Name of Twelve Letters was transmitted to everyone. Once the unruly [who misused the Name] increased, it was transmitted to the humble of the priesthood, and these ‘swallowed’ it during the sweet chanting of their fellow priests.”

The exact nature of “the [Divine] Name of Twelve Letters” is unknown. In medieval literature, it is sometimes associated with the three occurrences of *YHVH* in the priestly blessing (Numbers 6:24-26). See *Bahir* 80 (111): “... numbering three, numbering twelve.” According to *Or Yaqar* (on *Zohar* 3:78b), the twelve-letter name is יהוה אדני (Ehyeh *YHVH Adonai*). See *Zohar* 1:16a, 19b; 2:58a, 201b; 3:78b, 146b (*RM*), 147a, 172b; Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 92, 290, n. 32.

On the connotation of quietness associated with the verb אמר (*'mr*), see above, [p. 58](#), [n. 10](#). For various

interpretations of this paragraph and the following one, see *Or Yaqar; Miqdash Melekh; Soncino; Sullam; Matoq mi-Devash*.

21. Alternatively, Amor, Saying... Rabbi Yehudah explains that if the people are worthy, the priests express the Name *to them*; otherwise, they merely say it quietly. On the connotation of quietness associated with the verb אמר ('mr), see the end of the preceding note.

22. I, Daniel, alone saw the vision... According to a rabbinic tradition, *the men who were with me* were three prophets. See BT *Megillah* 3a: “Who were these *men*? Rabbi Yirmeyah said (or some say, Rabbi Ḥiyya son of Abba said), ‘These were Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. They were superior to him, and he was superior to them. They were superior to him, for they were prophets and he was not a prophet. He was superior to them, for he saw [this vision] and they did not see. But if they did not see, why were they frightened? Although they themselves did not see, their guardian angel saw.’”

Here Rabbi Yitshak remarks that “the holy has become common,” that is, the holy prophets accompanying Daniel did not see the vision. Conversely, “the common is holy,” that is, Daniel (who was not a prophet) saw the vision without being frightened.

Daniel was not a prophet in the sense of being sent to deliver a divine message to the people. See Rashi, *Megillah* 3a, s.v. *de-inhu nevi'ei*. On the passage in *Megillah*, see BT *Sanhedrin* 93b–94a. On the expressions “the holy has become common (or profane)” and “the common is holy,” cf. Vol. 7, p. 487, n. 421; p. 540, n. 568.

23. בזאת (be-zot), in this, do I trust... *Zot* (*This*) is a name of *Shekhinah*, the Divine Presence who is always right here. In this psalm King David, who is linked with *Shekhinah*, declares that even in danger he trusts in Her.

On *Shekhinah* as *Zot*, see above, [note 15](#); [p. 211](#), [n. 11](#). On the verse in Psalms, see *Zohar* 1:93b.

24. The blessed Holy One made David... David (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) represents the fourth leg of the Divine Throne, whose other three legs are the sefirotic crowns *Hesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* (symbolized, or “inherited,” by the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob). All four *sefirot* constitute a throne for the highest level of Divinity (or they support *Binah*, who constitutes that Throne). See above, [pp. 435–36](#), [n. 409](#).

25. David inherited the kingdom... The Davidic kingdom symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is known as *Malkhut* (Kingdom) and who protects David’s descendants.

26. because he was a descendant of David... From the tribe of Judah. Consequently, Daniel was also linked with *Shekhinah* (“the allotted share of his ancestor,” David), and he saw and endured the vision that derived from Her. Although Daniel’s companions were prophets, they were not as closely linked to *Shekhinah*, so they did not see this vision. On Daniel’s descent from King David, see BT *Sanhedrin* 93a–b; Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, 6:414, n. 76.

27. When Koh, Thus, is aroused... When *Shekhinah*—who is known as *Koh*, *Thus*—is aroused. By spreading their hands and conveying the divine blessing, the priests (who derive from *Hesed*) stimulate *Hesed*, thereby assuaging the quality of Judgment within *Shekhinah*.

The verse in Numbers now implies that the priests will *bless Shekhinah* (known as *Koh*), who will convey blessing to *the Children of Israel*. See above, [notes 16](#), [19](#). For the context in Numbers, see above, [note 1](#).

28. Therefore the priest, no one else... Since the priest symbolizes *Hesed*, he alone must bless the people.

The context in Deuteronomy (33:8–11) records Moses’ blessing to the tribe of Levi, from whom the priests were descended. The simple sense of the verse in Psalm 145 is that the *devoted ones* יברכוכה (*yevarakhukha*), *will bless You*, but Rabbi Shim’on construes this as יברכו כה (*yevarakhu koh*),

will bless Shekhinah, who is known as *Koh*. Through Her, the blessing reaches the people of Israel. See above, [note 16](#).

According to a rabbinic tradition, the wording *Thus shall you bless* implies that the priests must invoke *YHVH* (known as “the Explicit Name”) and that the blessing must be recited in Hebrew. On *thus* implying the name *YHVH*, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 39; BT *Sotah* 38a; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:4. On *thus* implying Hebrew, see the same sources plus M *Sotah* 7:2; BT *Sotah* 33b; above, [note 17](#).

[29](#). When the priest below rises... To bless the people. At that moment, all the *sefirot* (from *Hesed* to *Shekhinah*) are stimulated to be blessed from *Binah*, who is pictured as “the depth of the well.”

[30](#). This may be compared to a king... Similarly, during the priestly blessing, *Tif'eret* prepares to unite with *Shekhinah* (known as *Matronita* and Assembly of Israel).

The phrase “Assembly of Israel unspecified” implies that the term can refer to either the people of Israel or their divine counterpart, *Shekhinah*. Here, the latter sense is primary, although the earthly Assembly of Israel participates in the joy and blessing of *Shekhinah*. On the term *Matronita*, see the Glossary. On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, [p. 11](#), [n. 32](#).

[31](#). He must raise the right above the left... While uttering the blessing, the priest should raise his right hand above the left, thereby empowering the divine right hand, *Hesed* (Love), over the divine left hand, *Din* (Judgment). In the verse in Leviticus, the word יָדָו (*yadav*), *his hands*, is spelled without a second ׁ (*yod*) and can therefore be read as יָדוֹ (*yado*), *his hand*, implying the primacy of the right hand.

See above, [pp. 89–90](#), [n. 106](#). On the formulation, “because of the esteem of the right over the left,” see *ZH* 87a (*MhN, Rut*).

[32](#). He will rule over you The biblical context is God’s curse of Eve following the sin in the Garden. The verse reads in full: *To the woman He said, “I will greatly increase*

your birth pangs, with pain will you bear children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." For Rabbi El'azar, *he will rule over you* implies that the right hand (symbolizing the male) will dominate the left hand (symbolizing the female).

33. When a priest wishes to spread his hands... Before spreading his hands and blessing the people, the priest's hands must be washed by a Levite. This stipulation follows an Ashkenazic custom, adopted here by the *Zohar*, which later became standard practice for the priestly blessing in the synagogue.

The quotation *You shall sanctify the Levites* does not appear in the Bible, despite the formula "as is written." The same "quotation" appears in *Zohar* 3:109b (RM); TZ 18, 34a; 21, 55b; 39, 79b; 47, 84b. Cf. Numbers 8:17-18. Perhaps the invented nature of the quotation hints at the recent origin of the custom. On the phenomenon of Zoharic biblical quotations differing from the Masoretic text, see above, [p. 333](#), [n. 36](#); Vol. 7, p. 8, n. 24.

The verse in Numbers is addressed to Aaron. The sentence here "*Your father's tribe—the entirety*" means that this biblical phrase includes not only the priests but also the Levites.

On the requirement for the priest to wash his hands before reciting the priestly blessing, see BT *Sotah* 39a; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:4. On the Ashkenazic origin of the custom that a Levite should wash the priest's hands, see Katz, *Halakhah ve-Qabbalah*, 38-39; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 25; Hallamish, *Ha-Qabbalah*, 167. On this practice, see also ZH 87a (*MhN, Rut*).

34. the Concealment of the Book... Supposedly referring to *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (The Book of Concealment), though the passage quoted here does not appear in the extant *Sifra di-Tsni'uta*. According to this tradition, a Levite must first wash his own hands before washing the priest's.

35. Why a Levite?... Why shouldn't the priest's hands be washed by a fellow priest? Because that fellow priest might have a physical defect, rendering him unfit to serve.

The "platform"—Aramaic דוכנא (*dukkana*); Hebrew דוכן (*dukhan*)—was a raised section in the Temple Courtyard on which the Levites stood and sang songs of praise to accompany the sacrifices. On the supposed quotation *You shall hallow* [or: *sanctify*] *the Levites*, see the preceding note.

36. He is also called 'pure'... This title fits the Levites, as implied by the verse in Numbers, which reads in full: *Take the Levites from the midst of the Children of Israel and purify them.*

37. When the priest spreads his hands... To bless the people. The fingers of his hands should be spread apart to stimulate blessing for each of the ten *sefirot*, which they symbolize. Furthermore, the ten *sefirot* correspond to the letters of the name *YHVH* (which was originally pronounced in the Temple during the priestly blessing).

The description of the priest's fingers not touching one another differs from the common configuration: the priest's hands touch (or nearly touch) at the tips of the thumbs, with the first two fingers of each hand separated on one side from the thumb and on their other side from the last two fingers. This figure became the emblem of the priests and is often inscribed on their tombstones.

On the priest's spreading his fingers, see *Targum*, Song of Songs 7:8; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:8; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15, 72a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:9; *Tanḥuma, Naso* 8; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Naso* 15; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:2; *Arukh ha-Shalem*, s.v. *ḥalon*; Eleazar of Worms, *Ha-Roqeah*, 323; Zedekiah Anav, *Shibbolei ha-Leqet*, 23; Asher ben Yeḥiel, *Megillah* 3:21; Jacob ben Asher, *Tur, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 128; Joseph Caro, *Beit Yosef, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 128:12; idem, *Shulḥan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 128:12; Abraham Gombiner, *Magen Avraham, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 128:19; Elijah ben Solomon

(Gaon) of Vilna, *Ma'aseh Rav*, 167; Berliner, *Randbemerkungen*, 1:41; Hayyim Eleazar Shapira, *Nimmugei Oraḥ Hayyim* 128:12; Waldenberg, *Tsits Eli'ezer* 11:6; Nimoy, *I Am Not Spock*, 104-5; idem, *I Am Spock*, 67-69.

On the symbolism of the ten fingers, see above, [pp. 443-44](#), [n. 429](#). On the sefirotic significance of the letters of the name *YHVH*, see above, [p. 83](#), [n. 83](#).

38. desired that those above would be blessed... That the *sefirot* would receive a flow of blessing, which they then convey to all those below. By his act of blessing, the priest ("holiest of the holy below") stimulates the blessing of the *sefirot*. See above, [note 29](#).

On God desiring the priestly blessing, see BT *Sotah* 38b. According to an essential principle of Kabbalah, "By an action below is aroused an action above." See above, [pp. 41-42](#), [n. 122](#).

As mentioned above, the simple sense of the verse in Psalm 145 is that the *devoted ones* יברכוכה (*yevarakhukha*), *will bless You*, but Rabbi Shim'on construes this as יברכו כה (*yevarakhu koh*), *will bless Shekhinah*, who is known as *Koh*. Through Her, the blessing reaches the people of Israel. See above, [note 16](#).

39. Any priest who does not know... The priest must be aware of the profound impact that his words and actions can have.

The full verse in Malachi reads: *For the lips of a priest guard [or: keep] דעת (da'at), knowledge, and teaching [or: and Torah] is sought from his mouth; for he is a messenger [or: an angel] of YHVH Tseva'ot*. Here, the phrase "da'at, unspecified" means that this term refers not only to human *knowledge* but to the *sefirah* known as *Da'at*. By his potent blessing, the priest sustains (and "keeps") this *sefirah* by stimulating a flow of emanation from the highest *sefirot*.

The phrase "*Torah, unspecified*" means that this term alludes also to the Divine Torah, namely to *Tif'eret* (known as

Written Torah) and *Shekhinah* (known as Oral Torah). By his blessing, the priest unifies these two aspects of Torah. On the verse in Malachi, see above, [note 4](#).

On the significance of the letters of the Holy Name (YHVH), see above, [note 37](#). On the intention of the priest, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 116; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 521; *Zohar* 1:45b (*Heikh*), 89b (*ST*); 2:57a; 3:8b, 18a, 35a; *ZH* 82a (*MhN, Rut*); Bahya ben Asher, *Kad ha-Qemah*, 292; Lieberman, *Tosefet Rishonim*, 2:207.

40. the Concealment of the Book... Referring to *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (The Book of Concealment). See *Zohar* 2:178a (*SdT*s), Vol. 5, pp. 569–70, n. 60.

The more revealed name is יוד הֵא וָאוּ הֵא (Yod He Vav He), which represents the name יהוה (YHVH) spelled out completely, letter by letter. This name refers to *Ze'eir Anpin* (the configuration of *sefirot* from *Hokhmah* to *Yesod*) or to *Ze'eir Anpin* and the Female (corresponding to *Shekhinah*).

The more concealed name is apparently אֶהְיֶה (*Ehyeh*), “I will be,” a name deriving from the revelation to Moses at the burning bush: אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה (*Ehyeh asher ehyeh*), *I will be who I will be* [or: *I am who I am*] (Exodus 3:14). This name refers to *Arikh Anpin* (corresponding to the highest *sefirah*, *Keter*). On *Arikh Anpin* and *Ze'eir Anpin*, see above, [pp. 323–24](#), [n. 14](#); [p. 330](#), [n. 27](#).

41. Even the revealed one is concealed... Even the name יוד הֵא וָאוּ הֵא (Yod He Vav He)—the fully spelled out version of יהוה (YHVH)—“is concealed by other letters,” that is, it is pronounced as the name אֲדֹנָי (*Adonai*), “My Lord.” Such concealment is required because *Arikh Anpin* Himself is present within *Ze'eir Anpin*.

By combining the letters of the Holy Name, the priest draws down all twenty-two aspects of Compassion from above, which are included in “twenty-two letters.” These twenty-two letters may consist of the ten letters יוד הֵא וָאוּ הֵא (Yod He Vav He) plus the twelve letters אֶלֶף דָּלֶת נוּן יוֹד (Alef Dalet Nun Yod), which is the full spelling of אֲדֹנָי (*Adonai*), letter by letter.

Alternatively, the twenty-two letters may consist of a secret name deriving from the first twenty-two letters of the priestly blessing. These first twenty-two letters are יהוה יאר פספסים דיו נסים (Yevarekhekha YHVH ve-yishmerekha. Ya'er YHVH), *May YHVH bless you and protect you. May YHVH shine.* The secret name deriving from these letters is אַנקתם פסתם (nqtm pstm ppsym dyv nsym). On this name, see Cordovero, *Pardes Rimmonim* 21:14; *Sefer Razi'el*, 42b, 44b-45a; Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 92-94.

The twenty-two “crowns of Compassion” consist of thirteen attributes of Compassion associated with *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient One) and nine attributes of Compassion associated with *Ze'eir Anpin*. See above, [pp. 349-50, n. 99](#); [pp. 408-9, n. 312](#).

42. When there was modest concealment... Originally, when the priests recited the blessing daily in the Temple, they pronounced the Divine Name aloud because “there was modest concealment,” that is, people guarded the sanctity of the Name. But when the impudent increased and misused the Name, it was “sealed in its letters,” that is, its true pronunciation was hidden and all that was heard was the name אֲדֹנָי (*Adonai*), “My Lord.”

See BT *Qiddushin* 71a: “Our Rabbis taught: At first the Name of Twelve Letters was transmitted to everyone. Once the unruly [who misused the Name] increased, it was transmitted to the humble of the priesthood, and these ‘swallowed’ it during the sweet chanting of their fellow priests.” See above, [note 20](#).

43. all these twenty-two aspects... Moses conveyed the total of twenty-two attributes (or aspects) of Compassion (thirteen and nine) on two separate occasions, not all together.

The first time that Moses uttered the divine attributes was after the Israelites sinned by worshiping the Golden Calf, as Judgment loomed, threatening to destroy the whole

people. Moses saved them by invoking the thirteen attributes of Compassion (recorded in Exodus 34:6-7): *YHVH! YHVH! A compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger [or: long-suffering], and abounding in kindness [or: love] and truth [or: faithfulness], keeping kindness for the thousandth generation, removing iniquity, trespass, and sin; yet He does not wholly acquit, inflicting the guilt of fathers upon sons and upon sons of sons, to the third and fourth generations.* By invoking these thirteen attributes, Moses drew down the corresponding thirteen enhancements of the beard of *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient of Ancients) to *Ze'eir Anpin*, who at that time was dominated by Judgment, and thereby Judgment was assuaged.

Later, as the people neared the land of Canaan, Moses sent twelve tribal representatives to scout out the land, and when they returned to the camp, ten of them offered a negative report, insisting that the land could not be conquered. Disheartened, the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron, and then God threatened to destroy the whole people. At this critical moment, Moses again invoked the divine attributes, though in a shorter list: *YHVH! Slow to anger [or: long-suffering], and abounding in kindness [or: love], removing iniquity and trespass; yet He does not wholly acquit, inflicting the guilt of fathers upon sons, to the third and fourth generations* (Numbers 14:18). Here, this shorter list is understood to include nine attributes, which appear in *Ze'eir Anpin* but derive from *Arikh Anpin*. Moses intended to draw down Compassion from *Arikh Anpin* in order to illumine and assuage the harshness of *Ze'eir Anpin*. See above, [p. 418](#), [n. 348](#).

44. All these twenty-two attributes... These are concealed in the verses of the priestly blessing (as explained above, [note 41](#)). Furthermore, the name יהוה (*YHVH*) appears three times in these three verses, totaling twelve letters. (Cf. above, toward the end of [note 20](#).)

Numbers 6:23 reads: *Thus shall you bless the Children of Israel, אמור (amor), saying, to them.* (For the full context, see above, [note 1](#).) The word *amor* is an infinitive absolute, which is often understood in this verse as an imperative: *Say (to them)*. Rabbi Yehudah emphasizes that the verse does not employ the normal imperative אמרו (*imeru*), “say,” because the priest was required to meditate upon the spiritual significance of his blessing—“saying” the words to himself before, or as he was, pronouncing them. See above, [note 20](#). On the quiet or contemplative connotation of the verb אמר (*'mr*), see above [notes 20-21](#); [p. 58, n. 10](#).

Furthermore, the numerical value of the word אמור (*amor*), *saying*, is 247, alluding to the 248 bodily members minus one. The one member upon which “all of them depend” may be the phallus, which conveys all male bodily energy or is considered the consummation of the male body. When the priestly blessing is recited, *Yesod*—the divine phallus—conveys blessing to all lower worlds.

On the 248 bodily members (actually joints or bones covered with flesh and sinews), see M *Oholot* 1:8; above, [p. 430, nn. 392-94](#). On the centrality of the phallus, see above, [pp. 430-31, n. 394](#). For various interpretations of the “one” vital member, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

[45. To them...](#) The conclusion of the verse alludes to all who benefit from the priest’s blessing, depending upon his contemplation.

[46. Human and beast You deliver...](#) Rabbi Yose wonders why David the Psalmist mentions both *human* and *beast* in the same phrase, as if they are comparable.

The full verse reads: *Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains; Your judgments, the great abyss; human and beast You deliver, O YHVH.* See above, [pp. 77-78, n. 70](#).

[47. if they are worthy, human...](#) If people act virtuously, God delivers them as befits human beings; if not, God still preserves them but only as befits animals.

48. Master, I am seeking mystery... Rabbi Yose desires a deeper explanation.

49. All has been said Rabbi El'azar informs him that his answer implied a deeper meaning, which he now proceeds to explain.

50. The blessed Holy One called Israel אדם (*adam*), *human*... Corresponding to the sefirotic *Adam*, Primordial Adam.

See BT *Yevamot* 60b-61a, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "*You, My flock—flock of My pasture—are human [and I am Your God]* (Ezekiel 34:31). You are called *human*; Gentiles are not called *human*." See Vol. 4, p. 484, n. 425. For various interpretations of this paragraph and the following one, see *Or Yaqar; Miqdash Melekh; Sullam; Matoq mi-Devash*.

51. If they are worthy, *adam, human*... If Israel lives virtuously, they are truly *human*, embodying the divine qualities of Primordial Adam. If not, they fall into the category of *beast*. Still, both receive blessing.

52. No blessing below appears... Both good and evil derive from above. The verse in Hosea indicates that goodness descends from *heaven* to *earth*.

According to rabbinic tradition, God first punishes or defeats a nation's heavenly prince and then deals with the earthly nation itself. This notion is often linked with Isaiah 24:21: *YHVH will punish the host of the heights on high and the kings of the earth upon the earth*. Here the verse is quoted a bit differently: *I will punish the host of the heights on high and the kings of the earth on the earth*.

See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 2; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 8:14; *Devarim Rabbah* 1:22; *Tanḥuma, Bo* 4, *Beshallah* 13, *Mishpatim* 18; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bo* 6, 19; *Shemot Rabbah* 9:9; 21:5; 23:15; *Midrash Tehillim* 82:3; *Zohar* 1:69a, 86a; 2:6b, 18a-b (*MhN*), 29a, 46b, 49a, 54b, 175a, 232b; 3:8a. On the phenomenon of Zoharic biblical quotations differing from the Masoretic text, see Vol. 7, p. 8, n. 24.

53. אמור (*amor*), saying... The word *amor* is an infinitive absolute, which is often understood in this verse as an imperative: *Say (to them)*. Rabbi Yehudah indicates that the verse does not employ the normal imperative—אמר (imeru), “say”—because the more “general” formulation *amor, saying*, implies a wider focus for the blessing: “those above and those below.”

The beginning of the priestly formula—*May YHVH bless you*—alludes to the blessing bestowed from above upon *Shekhinah*, who is also referred to in the preceding verse by Her name *Koh*: כה (Koh), *Thus, shall you bless*. The continuation of this preceding verse specifies *the Children of Israel*, to whom *Shekhinah* conveys the blessing. The people are also referred to by the conclusion of the next verse: (*May YHVH bless you*) *and protect you*.

On the significance of the wording *amor*, see above, [notes 20–21, 44](#). On *Shekhinah* as *Koh*, see above, [notes 16, 18](#).

54. May YHVH shine His face... The beginning of the second line of the priestly formula again refers to the blessing bestowed from above upon *Shekhinah*, whereas the continuation of this line refers to the people below. Similarly with the two parts of the concluding verse of the priestly blessing.

55. All are blessed as one... Whereas Rabbi Yehudah divides up each of the three verses of the priestly blessing into two halves—one referring to the blessing of *Shekhinah* and the other to the blessing of the people—Rabbi Abba indicates that both above and below are blessed by the twenty-two letters of the Divine Name concealed within the full blessing. On these twenty-two letters, see above, [note 41](#).

56. But look at what is written... According to a midrashic interpretation, the wording of the last verse of the priestly blessing—*May YHVH lift up His face to you*—implies “May He withdraw His wrathful face from you (or for you).” So there really is “Judgment to be found.”

For this midrashic reading of the verse, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 42; above, [p. 423](#), [n. 365](#). The speaker here is either Rabbi Abba (posing a question to himself), Rabbi Yehudah, or the anonymous editor.

[57. Rabbi Abba said...](#) The priestly blessing ensures that whatever Judgment existed will be entirely eliminated.

[58. When the priest spreads his hands...](#) As he prepares to pronounce the priestly blessing, *Shekhinah* settles upon his hands.

On the prohibition against looking at the priests when they are blessing, see JT *Megillah* 4:7, 75c; BT *Hagigah* 16a; above, [p. 25](#), [n. 71](#).

[59. since they don't see Her, why does it matter?...](#) According to a midrashic interpretation of the verse in Exodus, a person sees the Divine Presence only at the moment of death. If so, why does it matter whether anyone looks at the priests while they are blessing, since they cannot see *Shekhinah*?

See *Sifra*, *Nedavah* 2:12, 4a, in the name of Rabbi Dosa: "Scripture states: *No human can see Me and live* (Exodus 33:20). In their lifetime they do not see, but in their death they do!" See above, [pp. 56-57](#), [n. 7](#).

[60. Because the Holy Name is intimated...](#) The priest's ten fingers symbolize the ten *sefirot*, which correspond to the name *YHVH*. See above, [note 37](#).

[61. when the Concealed One, the Ancient of Ancients...](#) When *Arikh Anpin* manifests in *Ze'eir Anpin*. See above, [notes 40-41](#).

Although the *Zohar* indicates that "the people should sit in awe," the normal practice was for the congregation to stand for the priestly blessing. See *Targum*, Song of Songs 7:8; Abraham ben Isaac of Narbonne, *Sefer ha-Eshkol*, 1:44; Menaḥem Meiri, *Beit ha-Beḥirah*, *Megillah* 24b; Abraham Gombiner, *Magen Avraham*, *Orah Hayyim* 128:22; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Ovadiah Yosef, *Yeḥavveh Da'at* 5:15.

62. In these three verses... Each of the three verses of the priestly blessing begins with the holy letter ך (yod), the first letter of יהוה (YHVH). By reciting these verses, the priest stimulates the flow of blessing from *Arikh Anpin* (also known as the Ancient One, or Ancient of All) to *Ze'eir Anpin*. The first part of the opening verse—*May YHVH bless you*—implies: “May *Arikh Anpin* bless *Ze'eir Anpin*.” The conclusion of the verse—*and protect you*—implies: “May *Ze'eir Anpin* convey blessing to those below.” Similarly, with the other two verses. Cf. above, [notes 53–54](#).

The reference to three *yods* probably alludes to the practice of indicating the name YHVH with simply three *yods*. See *Leqah Tov*, Exodus 3:15; Numbers 6:26, p. 93a; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; above, [p. 111](#), [n. 172](#). Cf. below, [p. 512](#), [n. 63](#).

63. Whoever is distressed by a dream... See BT *Berakhot* 55b: “Amemar, Mar Zutra, and Rav Ashi were once sitting together. They said, ‘Let each one of us say something that the others have not heard.’ One of them opened, ‘If one has seen a dream and does not know what he saw, let him stand before the priests at the time when they spread their hands [to bless the congregation] and say as follows: “Master of the universe! I am Yours and my dreams are Yours. I have dreamt a dream and I do not know what it is. Whether I have dreamt about myself or others have dreamt about me, or I have dreamt about others, if they are good dreams, confirm them and reinforce them like the dreams of Joseph. And if they require a remedy, heal them, as the waters of Marah were healed by Moses our teacher, and as Miriam was healed of her leprosy and Hezekiah of his sickness, and the waters of Jericho by Elisha. As You turned the curse of Balaam the wicked into a blessing, so turn all my dreams into something good for me.” He should conclude [his prayer] along with the priests, so that the congregation may answer, “Amen!” If he cannot do so, he should say, “O

Majestic One on high, abiding in might, You are peace and Your name is peace. May it be Your will to bestow peace on us.”” See JT *Berakhot* 5:1, 9a.

64. They shall set My name... The full verse reads: *They shall set My name upon the Children of Israel, and I Myself will bless them.* For the context, see above, [note 1](#).

65. ושמׁו (ve-samu), They shall set... The Divine Name *YHVH* represents all ten sefirotic crowns, and by uttering their blessings with the proper intention the priests “arrange” the *sefirot* fittingly.

On the sefirotic significance of the letters of *YHVH*, see above, [p. 83](#), [n. 83](#). The verse in Numbers 4 describes the labor of the Kohathites, one Levitical clan.

66. then I Myself will bless them... The simple sense of the verse is that God will bless Israel, but according to a midrashic reading *them* refers to the priests. They stimulate blessing in the sefirotic realm, and in return God blesses them. As explained in the preceding note, *they shall set* implies that the priests will “arrange” the *sefirot* fittingly.

On the midrashic interpretation of *I Myself will bless them*, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 39, 43; BT *Hullin* 49a; *Tanḥuma, Lekh Lekha* 4; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Lekh Lekha* 5; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:8; *Zohar* 1:199b; 2:67a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 255. Cf. BT *Sotah* 38b.

The verse in Genesis 27 records Isaac’s blessing to Jacob (who he thinks is Esau). The verse in Genesis 12 records God’s blessing to Abram.

67. Any priest not beloved... According to BT *Sotah* 39a (in the name of Rav Ḥisda), before the priests recite the actual blessing they should utter a prior blessing: “Blessed are You, *YHVH* our God, ruler of the universe, who has sanctified us with the holiness of Aaron and commanded us to bless His people Israel in love.” Here the *Zohar* draws the logical (though extreme) conclusion that since the blessing should be offered “in love,” any priest who is not loved by the people, or who does not love them,

should not spread his hands in blessing. See Scholem; Hallamish, *Ha-Qabbalah*, 298–99; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 28–29.

The full verse in Proverbs reads: *He that has a good [or: generous] eye יְבוֹרָךְ (yevorakh), will be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor.* By a change in vocalization, the verse is construed differently: *He that has a good eye יְבָרָךְ (yevarekh), will bless.* See BT *Sotah* 38b, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi: "We give the cup of blessing for the recital of Grace after Meals only to one who has a generous eye, as is said: *He that has a generous eye יְבוֹרָךְ (yevorakh), will be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor.* Do not read *yevorakh, will be blessed*, but rather *יְבָרָךְ (yevarekh), will bless.*" See *Zohar* 3:63b, 145a (*Piq*), 211b; above, pp. 339–40, n. 57.

68. what is written about Balaam... He is identified as *son of Beor*, and according to one rabbinic tradition Beor was none other than Laban, who acted cruelly toward the patriarch Jacob and was himself a master of sorcery.

The verse in Numbers reads: *Utterance of Balaam son of Beor, utterance of the man שְׁתוּם הָעֵין (shetum ha-ayin).* The original meaning of *shetum ha-ayin* may be either *whose eye is closed* or *whose eye is open*. Here Rabbi Yitshak equates *shetum* with סְתוּם (*setum*), "closed." Balaam "סְתֵימ (seteim), closed, his good eye," so that his words of blessing toward Israel would not be fulfilled.

On Laban as Balaam's father, Beor, see BT *Sanhedrin* 105b; *Zohar* 1:126a; 2:192a; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:303, n. 229; 6:123, n. 722. Cf. Vol. 3, p. 7, n. 50. On Laban's powers of witchcraft, see Vol. 5, p. 173, n. 95.

On Laban's cruelty toward Jacob, see Genesis 29–31. According to Deuteronomy 26:5, when an Israelite brings the offering of firstfruits to the priest, he recites a brief account of the people's history, beginning: אֲרָמִי אֲבֹד אָבִי (*Arami oved avi*), *An Aramean astray [or: wandering, fugitive, perishing] was my father*, probably referring to Jacob or

Abraham. Later, this clause was interpreted to mean: *An Aramean was destroying my father*, referring to Laban the Aramean's attempt to destroy Jacob. See the Passover Haggadah; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 301; *Midrash Tanna'im* and *Targum Onqelos*, Deuteronomy 26:5. Cf. *Targum Yerushalmi*, ad loc.; and Hoffman's [note 5](#) on the passage in *Midrash Tanna'im*.

On the phrase *shetum ha-ayin*, see BT *Sanhedrin* 105a, and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *shetum ha-ayin*; *Zohar* 1:68b; 2:69a, 237a; 3:63b; Milgrom, *Numbers*, on the verse.

69. Certainly so... That blessing can be conveyed only with an open benevolent eye.

The verse in Daniel reads: *Open Your eyes and see our desolation*. For Rabbi Yehudah, this implies that once God's eyes see Israel's *desolation* He will redeem and bless them. See above, [p. 395](#), [n. 266](#). On Rav Hamnuna Sava, see above, [p. 105](#), [n. 154](#). On the wording of his blessing, cf. above, [p. 339](#), at [n. 53](#).

70. Do not eat the bread... The verse reads: *Do not eat the bread of רע עין (ra ayin), a stingy one [literally: one with an evil eye], nor desire his delicacies*. See above, [p. 166](#), end of [n. 318](#).

71. to listen to Balaam... Why doesn't the verse read *to listen to Balak*, the king of Moab who instigated and arranged everything, commissioning Balaam to curse Israel? After all, Balaam never actually uttered any curse against the people.

The full verse in Deuteronomy reads: *YHVH your God did not want to listen to Balaam, and YHVH your God turned the curse into blessing for you, for YHVH your God loves you*.

72. for he gives of his bread... The *Zohar* associates this *bread* with *the bread of his God* mentioned in Leviticus, referring to sacrifices and here signifying the flow of emanation that comes from the upper *sefirot*—*from the most holy*. Through offering his blessing, the priest who *has a good [or: benevolent] eye* conveys this sustaining

nourishment *to the poor*—that is, to *Shekhinah*, who is described as having nothing of Her own, only what She receives from above.

The verb *יְבוֹרַךְ* (*yevorakh*), *will be blessed*, may imply that the priest himself is *blessed* by this process. Or, the verb is read as *יְבַרַךְ* (*yevarekh*), *will bless*, meaning that the priest *will bless Shekhinah*. See above, [notes 66–67](#); *Zohar* 2:218a–b (Vol. 6, pp. 245–46, n. 422).

For various interpretations of this paragraph, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the phrase *he that has a good eye*, cf. *Zohar* 2:105a–b (Vol. 5, p. 79, n. 224).

The verse in Leviticus states that a priest who has a physical deformity is not disqualified from receiving his share of the sacrifices. It reads in full: *The food [or: the bread] of his God, from the most holy and from the holy, he may eat.*

[73](#). He will not enter heavenly Jerusalem... According to rabbinic tradition, God participates in Israel's exile, and the verse in Hosea is understood to mean that until Israel returns to Jerusalem, and God (*the Holy One*) is present once again with them there (*in your midst*), *He will not enter* heavenly Jerusalem (*the city*). Here, heavenly Jerusalem symbolizes *Shekhinah*, with whom the blessed Holy One will reunite fully only when Israel returns from exile. Since the *sefirot* in their entirety represent the Divine Name *YHVH*, this Name is incomplete until the reunion above is consummated. Rabbi Yose may be interpreting the verse to mean: As long as *the Holy One (Shekhinah) is in your midst* (accompanying you in exile), *I will not enter the city*—that is, 'I will not reunite with Her.' See Vital.

On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see above, [pp. 71–72](#), [n. 49](#). On the sefirotic significance of the letters of *YHVH*, see above, [p. 83](#), [n. 83](#). According to a rabbinic tradition, God's name and throne are both incomplete as long as Israel's archenemy Amalek survives in the world. See *Pesiqta de-*

Rav Kahana 3:16; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 12, 51a; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tetse* 11; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tetse* 18; *Midrash Tehillim* 9:10; 97:1.

On the verse in Hosea, see BT *Ta'anit* 5a (in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan), and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *lo avo* and *Yerushalayim*; *Tanḥuma, Pequdei* 1; *Midrash Tehillim* 122:4; *Zohar* 1:1b, 231a; 2:224b; 3:15b, 68b, 262b. Cf. Revelation 21:2; *Targum Yonatan*, Psalms 122:3.

74. I have seen the face of *Shekhinah*... According to rabbinic tradition, “whoever welcomes [literally: receives the face of] the wise is considered as if he welcomes *Shekhinah*.” See *Mekhilta, Amaleq (Yitro)* 1. Cf. JT *Eruvin* 5:1, 22b: “Rabbi Shemu’el said in the name of Rabbi Zeira, ‘... Whoever welcomes his teacher is considered as if he welcomes *Shekhinah*.’... Rabbi Yishma’el taught... ‘One who welcomes his friend is considered as if he welcomes *Shekhinah*.’”

The *Zohar* sometimes transforms the rabbinic simile into an actual description of the righteous, who are called the face of *Shekhinah* “because *Shekhinah* is hidden within them: She is in concealment and they are revealed” (2:163b). Note that here the speaker is Rabbi Zeira, which matches the name in the passage from JT *Eruvin*, quoted in the preceding paragraph of this note.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 63:6; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:5; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 27; *Zohar* 1:9a, 94b; 2:5a (*MhN*), 38a, 50a, 94b, 198a, 225a; 3:6b, 59b, 201b, 265b, 298a; *ZḤ* 11c (*MhN*); Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 370. Cf. Genesis 33:10.

The expression “to learn some of those sublime words” derives from the Talmud and appears often in the *Zohar*. See BT *Berakhot* 8a, *Shabbat* 138b, *Eruvin* 102a, *Ta'anit* 20b, *Ḥagigah* 14a; *Zohar* 1:49b, 87a, 96b, 197b; 2:31a; 3:62a, 209b, 231a; *ZḤ* 22a (*MhN*).

The phrase “the holy threshing chamber” renders קדושה (iddera qaddisha) and refers here to study sessions with

Rabbi Shim'on. See above, [pp. 319–20](#), [n. 4](#).

75. He believed in YHVH... In the preceding verse, God promises Abraham countless descendants: *He took him outside and He said, "Look up to the heavens and count the stars, if you can count them." And He said to him, "So shall be your seed."* The biblical narrative continues: *He trusted [or: believed] in YHVH, and He reckoned it as righteousness [or: merit] on his part [or: for him]*. This verse is normally interpreted to mean that God deemed Abraham's act of trust as *righteousness*. However, it could mean instead that Abraham deemed God's promise as *righteousness*.

See Rashi, David Kimḥi, Naḥmanides, Bekhor Shor, Gersonides, and Abravanel on Genesis 15:6; Kasher, *Torah Shelema*, Genesis 15:6, n. 83; *Zohar* 1:90b.

76. So we have established, yet it is not so... Rabbi Abba affirms that the established interpretation of *and He reckoned it as righteousness for him* is that God deemed Abraham's act of trust as *righteousness*. However, this does not convey the deeper meaning.

He focuses first on the word ויחשבה (*va-yahsheveha*), which he construes hyperliterally as *and he reckoned her*. Before explaining this, he quotes a Talmudic interpretation of the preceding verse. See BT *Shabbat* 156a, in the name of Rav: "ויצא (*Va-yotse*), *He took (him) outside* (Genesis 15:5)...He [Abraham] said before Him [God], 'I have gazed at my horoscope, and I am not fated to engender a son.' He replied, 'צא (*ṭse*), Leave, your astrological speculations! Israel is immune from planetary influence.'"

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 44:10, in the name of Rabbi Shemu'el son of Yitshak: "[Abraham said,] 'My constellation oppresses me, declaring: "Abram does not engender.'" The blessed Holy One replied, 'Just as you say: Abram and Sarai do not engender; Abraham and Sarah do engender!'" By changing the names of Abram and Sarai (Genesis 17:5, 15), God freed them from their astrological fate and enabled them to engender Isaac.

Here, according to Rabbi Abba, when God tells Abraham, כֹּה (*Koh*), *So, shall your seed be* (Genesis 15:5), He is alluding to *Shekhinah*, who is known as *Koh*. She, rather than astrological speculation, is the way to know the Divine Name, and through Her fertile power Abraham will be blessed with offspring.

See *Zohar* 1:90a-b, 96a-b; *Gikatilla, Sha'arei Orah*, 12a. On *Shekhinah* as *Koh*, see above, [notes 16, 18-19](#). On the passage in BT *Shabbat*, see BT *Nedarim* 32a; *Tanḥuma, Shofetim* 11; *Zohar* 1:78a, 90a-b; 2:32a; *ZH* 72b (*ShS*).

77. *Koh, So, shall your seed be—your actual seed...* Referring to Isaac. Abraham engendered Isaac when he was linked with *Shekhinah* (known as *Koh*). Furthermore, Isaac symbolizes *Gevurah*, the source of *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 1:90b, 96a.

The wording ויחשבה לו לצדקה (*va-yahsheveha lo tsedaqah*, and he reckoned it as righteousness on his part, now implies that although *Shekhinah* is associated with Judgment, Abraham reckoned Her as *tsedaqah*, righteousness, which signifies Compassion, because She had informed him that he would engender Isaac, deriving from Her. See *Zohar* 1:90b.

78. *Koh is the tenth crown...* *Shekhinah* (known as *Koh*) is often called צדק (*Tsedeq*), Righteousness, which signifies Judgment; but the cognate צדקה (*Tsedaqah*), which also means Righteousness, signifies Compassion.

79. בכל (*ba-kol*), with all... The word כל (*kol*), *all*, signifies *Yesod*, who conveys “all” of the emanation to *Shekhinah*. So the verse in Genesis 24 implies that God blessed Abraham with the *sefirah* of *Yesod*.

In the verse in Chronicles, *heaven* signifies *Tif'eret*, and *earth* signifies *Shekhinah*, who are linked by *Yesod*, known as *khol*, *all*. On this verse, see above, [p. 66, n. 36](#).

80. *Koh, Thus, shall you bless the Children of Israel...* This verse now implies that the priest should bless

Shekhinah (known as *Koh*), who then conveys blessing to *the Children of Israel*. See above, [note 16](#).

In the time to come, *Shekhinah* (called here *YHVH*) will be fully blessed by *Yesod* (symbolized by *Zion*). The phrase *dwelling in Jerusalem* may serve to include the people of Israel who will dwell in the Holy City and benefit from the blessing; or it may refer to *Yesod dwelling in Shekhinah* (who is symbolized by *Jerusalem*). See *Zohar* 3:9b; cf. 1:158b.

[81](#). It happened on the day כלה משה (*kallot Mosheh*), Moses consummated... The verse in Numbers reads: *It happened on the day כלות משה (*kallot Mosheh*), Moses finished [or: consummated], setting up the Dwelling, that he anointed it and consecrated it and all its furnishings and the altar and all its furnishings...* Although in the Masoretic text the word כלות (*kallot*), *consummated*, is spelled with a ם (*vav*), it is interpreted midrashically as if it were spelled without the *vav*, so that it can be read כלה (*kallat*), *the bride of*, implying that Israel is the bride of God. Here, Rabbi Yose adopts this reading but identifies *the bride* as *Shekhinah*. Since Moses escorts Her to the canopy—or bridal chamber—(*the Dwelling*) to unite with *Tif'eret*, in a sense he turns Her into a bride, so She is called *kallat Mosheh*, *the bride of Moses*.

On the reading *kallat Mosheh, the bride of Moses*, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 1:1; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 5, 18a; *Tanḥuma, Naso* 20, 26; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayishlah* 28, *Naso* 28; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:8; Rashi on Numbers 7:1; Meir Abulafia, *Masoret Seyag la-Torah*, s.v. *klh*; *Zohar* 1:236b; 2:5b (*MhN*), 140b, 145a, 235a; 3:4b, 226b (*RM*), 254a (*RM*); *Minḥat Shai* on Numbers 7:1. 5, p. 223, n. 94. Cf. Exodus 31:18; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 16, 18; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tissa* 11; *Shemot Rabbah* 41:5; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:8; Rashi on Exodus 31:18; Moses de León, *Orḥot Ḥayyim*, par. 25. On the phenomenon of Zoharic biblical quotations differing from the Masoretic text, see Vol. 7, p. 8, n. 24.

82. Was She delayed until now... The presence of *Shekhinah* in the Dwelling is alluded to near the end of Exodus, so why only now in the book of Numbers does Scripture refer to the entrance of the Bride?

The full verse in Exodus reads: *Moses could not come into the Tent of Meeting, for the cloud had settled upon it and the glory of YHVH filled the Dwelling.*

83. There is no 'earlier' and 'later' in the Torah That is, the written sequence of the Torah is not necessarily chronological. In this case, the verse near the end of Exodus pertains to the situation immediately following the verse in Numbers.

The principle "There is no 'earlier' and 'later' in the Torah" appears frequently in rabbinic literature. See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 7; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:9; *Sifrei*, Numbers 64; *JT Sheqalim* 6:1, 49d; *Rosh ha-Shanah* 1:1, 56b; *Megillah* 1:4, 70d; *Sotah* 8:1, 22d; *BT Pesahim* 6b, *Sanhedrin* 89b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:2; *Rut Rabbah* 4:5; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 1:12; *Tanḥuma, Terumah* 8; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 22, 111a; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 9:18, 36.

On the textual and chronological distance between the descriptions in Exodus 40 and Numbers 7, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 44; Vital; Levine, *Numbers*, 1:253.

84. כלה משה (*kallot Mosheh*), *Moses consummated*—*כלה (kallah), the Bride, of Moses...* Rabbi Yitshak insists that *Shekhinah* was actually (and not just figuratively) כלה משה (*kallat Mosheh*), *the bride of Moses*.

According to its literal sense, the obscure verse in Psalms refers to God: *You ascended the heights, You seized captives [or: a captive], You took [or: received] gifts from [or: among, for] humans.* In rabbinic literature, this verse is frequently applied to Moses, who *ascended the heights* of Mount Sinai and "captured" the Torah or received it as a gift. Here, Rabbi Yitshak borrows and alters this interpretation, as soon becomes clear.

The full verse in Exodus records God's command to Moses at the Burning Bush: *He said, "Do not come any closer! Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you stand is holy ground."* Rabbi Shim'on interprets *Remove your sandals from your feet* as a euphemism for sexual abstinence. This accords with a rabbinic tradition that as a consequence of Moses' direct encounter with God he abstained from sexual relations with his wife, Zipporah. Moses became the husband of *Shekhinah*.

Here God's command to Moses to abstain from sexual relations with his (earthly) wife causes Mount Sinai (located by the Burning Bush) to tremble. The archangel Michael objects that such a command threatens to destroy the complete human being, who is intended to be male and female.

On the reading *kallat Mosheh, the bride of Moses*, see above, [note 81](#). On the verse in Psalms, see above, [p. 159](#), [n. 299](#).

On God's command *Remove your sandals from your feet* as implying sexual abstinence, see *Zohar* 2:222a; 3:180a; *ZH* 59b (*MhN*), 72d (*ShS*); Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, Exodus 3:5, n. 94. Cf. 2 Samuel 11:8, 11; *Zohar* 1:8b, 112b. On Moses' celibacy, see Vol. 6, p. 271, n. 27. On Moses as the husband of *Shekhinah*, see Vol. 6, pp. 103-4, n. 128.

The full verse in Genesis 5 reads: *Male and female He created them, and He blessed them and named them אדם (adam), humankind [or: human], on the day they were created.* On the significance of this verse, see above, [pp. 12-13](#), [n. 36](#).

85. Moses has already fulfilled the command... God explains to Michael that since Moses has already fathered two children (Gershom and Eliezer) with his wife Zipporah, he can now marry (or "capture") *Shekhinah*.

See M *Yevamot* 6:6; *Tosefta Yevamot* 8:4; JT *Yevamot* 6:6, 7c; BT *Yevamot* 61b-62a; *Nitsotsei Orot*, n. 2. The

verse in Genesis reads in full: *God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and rule over fish of the sea and birds of the heavens and every living creature that crawls upon the earth.”*

86. You took gifts בְּאָדָם (*ba-adam*), **from the human...** If the verse read *You took gifts* בְּאָדָם (*be-adam*), *from* [or: *for*] *a human*, this would imply that Moses took *gifts for* Israel (or humanity). But the precise wording בְּאָדָם (*ba-adam*), *from the human*—with the definite article—alludes to the Divine Adam, *Ze’eir Anpin*, who was united with *Shekhinah*. Moses, as it were, took *Shekhinah from the Divine Adam*, and She descended to dwell with him as *the bride of Moses*.

87. Remove your sandal... Whereas God’s command to Moses reads *Remove your sandals*, the angel’s command to Joshua reads *Remove your sandal*, in the singular. This more limited command implies that Joshua was to separate from his wife only at certain times, when *Shekhinah* would reveal Herself to him intimately. The fact that *Joshua fell on his face to the ground* indicates that he could not withstand even the power of an angel, much less *Shekhinah* Herself.

The context in Joshua (5:13-15) reads: *It happened when Joshua was at Jericho that he raised his eyes and saw, and look, a man was standing before him, his sword unsheathed in his hand. Joshua went toward him and said to him, “Are you ours or our enemies’? He replied, “No, for I am the commander of YHVH’s army. Now have I come!” Joshua fell on his face to the ground and prostrated himself, and he said to him, “What does my master say to his servant?” The commander of YHVH’s army said to Joshua, “Remove your sandal from your foot, for the place on which you stand is holy.” And Joshua did so.*

88. spelled מתנות (*mattenat*)... In the Masoretic text of Psalms, this word is actually spelled מתנות (*mattanot*), *gifts*—with a ם (*vav*)—but here Rabbi Shim’on indicates (or pretends) that it is spelled מתנת, which can be read *mattenat*,

a *gift* (technically, a *gift of*), in the singular. This singular sense alludes to *Shekhinah*, who was a *gift* for Moses. He alone was worthy of taking Her from the Divine *Adam* and marrying Her completely.

Having earlier adopted the reading כלת משה (*kallat Mosheh*), without a *vav*, the *Zohar* now deals similarly with the word in Psalms. See above, [note 81](#).

89. One chieftain ליום (*la-yom*), a *day*... The word ליום (*la-yom*) literally means *for* [or: *to*] a *day*.

90. Days above... Twelve spiritual potencies surrounding *Tif'eret*, which are known as “twelve boundaries.” See above, [p. 121](#), [n. 199](#).

91. the altar above... *Shekhinah*, who receives the flow of blessing from all twelve boundaries. The phrase “even the one below” apparently refers to the earthly altar in the Temple.

On the positive effect of the Dwelling (or the Temple) on the nations of the world, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 1:11; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:3; *Tanḥuma, Terumah* 9, *Bemidbar* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Terumah* 8, *Bemidbar* 3; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 1:3. On the benefits of ritual worship on the nations of the world, see Vol. 7, p. 156, n. 481.

92. twelve chieftains of Ishmael... Representing hostile powers, who are displaced by the twelve chieftains of Israel. The context in Genesis lists twelve sons of Ishmael who represent ancestors of twelve tribes.

On the fleeting power of Ishmael’s twelve chieftains, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 47:5; *Tanḥuma, Vayḥi* 15; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayḥi* 16.

93. Whatever they offered... The offerings brought by the twelve chieftains of Israel corresponded to heavenly powers. For example, the *sixty rams* and *sixty he-goats* matched the sixty angelic powers surrounding *Shekhinah*. The term גבורים (*gibborim*), *warriors*, alludes to the *sefirah* of *Gevurah* (Power), closely linked with *Shekhinah*.

The full verse in Numbers reads: *All the cattle for the sacrifice of well-being: twenty-four bulls, sixty rams, sixty he-goats, sixty yearling lambs. This is the dedication of the altar after it was anointed.*

The context in Song of Songs (3:7-8) reads: *Here is the bed of Solomon! Sixty warriors surrounding it [or: her], of the warriors of Israel—all of them skilled with a sword, expert in war, each with his sword on his thigh because of fear in the night.* This royal bed symbolizes *Shekhinah*. See above, [p. 238](#), [n. 42](#).

94. One golden ladle of ten shekels... The verse concludes: *filled with incense.* The golden ladle was used as a censer. The term *shekel* denotes a weight equal to about 12 grams. Here the *golden ladle* probably alludes to *Shekhinah*, who derives from *Gevurah* (symbolized by gold) and represents the consummation of all *ten sefirot*.

The Torah portion *Ki Tissa* (When You Count) opens with God's instructions about conducting a census of the Israelites. Each male Israelite above the age of twenty was to give a half-shekel (of silver, not gold), and the sum of silver collected was used for casting sockets of the Dwelling and manufacturing other related items. (See Exodus 30:11-16; 38:25-28.) In addition to this sum of silver from the census, the Israelites were instructed to donate *gold, silver, and bronze* for the construction of the Dwelling, as described in Exodus 25:1-3. (See also *ibid.* 35:24.)

The total sum of silver (from the census) and donated gold is recorded in Exodus 38:24-25: *All the gold that was used for the work, in all the work of the sanctuary—the gold of the elevation offering—was twenty-nine talents and seven hundred thirty shekels by the sanctuary shekel. And the silver reckoned from the community was a hundred talents and one thousand seven hundred seventy-five shekels by the sanctuary shekel.* A talent is equal to three thousand shekels.

Here the *Zohar* associates “the total of all the shekels of gold” with the Torah portion *Ki Tissa*. However, the total sum of gold (and silver) appears not in *Ki Tissa* but in the final portion of Exodus, *Pequdei* (as quoted in the preceding paragraph). Furthermore, as mentioned above, the portion *Ki Tissa* opens with the instruction that each Israelite male should give a half-shekel of silver (not gold). The phrase “as is written in *Ki Tissa*” may refer to the *Zohar* on that Torah portion, not to the Torah portion itself, although the verse *One golden ladle...* does not appear in the extant *Zohar* on *Ki Tissa*. However, the phrase פַּרְשֵׁתָא דָּא (*parsheta da*), “this portion,” most likely refers to an actual passage in the Torah, not a *Zohar* passage.

Apparently because of these inconsistencies, an editor deleted the passage “as is written in *Ki Tissa*... the shekels of the elevation offering” (which appears in various manuscripts and *Or Yaqar*) and replaced it with different wording (following the opening quotation): “*One golden ladle of ten shekels*—as has already been said. Happy is the share of the righteous, for the blessed Holy One pours blessings upon them and listens to their prayers! Of them is written *He has turned to the prayer of the destitute and has not spurned their prayer* (Psalms 102:18).” This revised wording appears in all printed editions beginning with Cremona and Mantua.

1. He is like a groom... The full verse, describing the sun in the heavens, reads: *He is like a groom coming forth* מִחַפְּתוֹ (*me-huppato*), *from his nuptial chamber, rejoicing like a champion [or: mighty one; warrior; hero] running his course.* In this verse חַפְּהָ (*huppah*) means “nuptial chamber,” but it is often understood according to its later meaning: “canopy.”

Torah is often identified as the Tree of Life, based on the description of Wisdom in Proverbs 3:18: *A tree of life is she to those who grasp her, and those who hold her are deemed happy.* See *Avot* 6:7; *BT Berakhot* 32b; *Zohar* 1:152b, 168a, 174b, 193a; 3:53b, 260a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 330.

The verse in Proverbs 4 (describing a father’s words of wisdom) reads in full: *For they are life to those who find them, and healing to all their flesh.* Proverbs 3:8 reads in full: *There will be [or: It will be; Let it be] healing for your navel [or: your flesh] and moistening for your bones.* On the verse in Psalms, see *Zohar* 1:9a; 2:137a; *ZH* 45b.

2. The Tree of Life embraces... The divine Tree of Life (*Ze’eir Anpin*) extends from the higher *sefirot* to *Shekhinah*. Its trunk symbolizes *Tif’eret*, while its two sides represent *Hesed* on the right (symbolized by the south) and *Gevurah* on the left (symbolized by the north).

3. When the sun shines... When *Ze’eir Anpin* shines, through the trunk (*Tif’eret*) it strengthens the right arm (*Hesed*), by whose power the left arm (*Gevurah*) shines.

4. Who is his canopy?... The canopy of *Ze’eir Anpin* is *the crown* bestowed upon Him by the Divine Mother, *Binah*, *on the day of his wedding*, to *Shekhinah*.

The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *O daughters of Zion, go out and gaze upon King Solomon, upon the crown with which his mother crowned him on the day of his wedding on the day of his heart’s delight.* On this verse, see above, [pp. 108-9](#), [n. 164](#).

5. Coming forth from his canopy—head of all light... *Ze'eir Anpin* emerges (*coming forth*) from *Binah*, the shining source of all the lower *sefirot*. *Ze'eir Anpin* is symbolized by *the heavens*, whose upper end is *Binah*. He is like a groom, coming forth to meet His bride, *Shekhinah*.

On *Binah* as *the end of the heavens* (based on the verse in Psalms), see *Zohar* 1:9a; 2:137a. Cf. *Zohar* 1:1b; Vol. 5, p. 265, n. 214. The full verse reads: *From the end of the heavens his going forth, and his circuit to their end, and nothing is hidden from his heat.*

6. the sun spreads forth... The divine groom approaches *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the west). His left arm, *Gevurah* (symbolized by the north), is aroused toward Her first, followed by the right arm, *Hesed* (symbolized by the south). Then the divine sun illumines *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the moon).

7. When you light up the lamps... These *lamps* may symbolize the seven lower *sefirot*, six of which are illumined by the seventh, *Tif'eret* (the core of *Ze'eir Anpin*), symbolized by the sun. Alternatively, the lamps are the lights of *Shekhinah*, illumined by *Ze'eir Anpin* (symbolized by the sun).

See *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Beha'alotekha* 7; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 15:7; Scholem. The full verse in Numbers reads: *Speak to Aaron and say to him, "בהעלתך (Be-ha'alotekha), When you light up [or: when you kindle; when you set up], the lamps, toward the front of the lampstand shall the seven lamps give light."*

8. Happy the people who know the horn's blast... The verse reads: *Happy the people who know תרועה (teru'ah), the shout of joy [or: the (horn's) blast].* On this verse, see above, [p. 135](#), [n. 236](#).

9. My son, My firstborn, Israel... Corresponding to *Tif'eret*, the Divine Son of *Hokhmah* and *Binah*, whose full name is *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel).

God slayed the firstborn of the Egyptians ("below") and also their demonic "firstborn" power(s) ("above"). See

Zohar 2:35a, 37b–38a, 40a, 53b, 56b, 85b. Cf. the wording of Exodus 12:12: *I will pass through the land of Egypt on this night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt from human to beast, and upon all the gods of Egypt I will render judgment—I, YHVH.* See *Zohar* 2:18a–b (*MhN*); above, [p. 111](#), [n. 172](#); [p. 476](#), [n. 52](#).

According to the *Zohar*, the Egyptian sorcerers drew on demonic powers in order to magically enslave captives forever. God untied these sorcerous bonds “above” and the normal bonds of slavery “below,” thereby freeing both the Israelites’ souls and bodies. See *Zohar* 2:25a, 37b–38a, 52b, 69a; above, [p. 457](#), [n. 477](#).

10. the blessed Holy One did not seek an angel... See *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 26:8; *Mekhilta*, *Pisha* 7, 13; and the midrashic reading of Exodus 12:12 in the Passover Haggadah: “*I will pass through the land of Egypt—I and not an angel. And I will strike down every firstborn—I and not a seraph. And upon all the gods of Egypt I will render judgment, I, YHVH—I am He, and no other.*”

According to a rabbinic tradition, God recognized the firstborn Egyptians by discerning their hereditary origin. See BT *Bava Metsi'a* 61b, in the name of Rava: “The blessed Holy One said, ‘It is I who distinguished in Egypt between the [seminal] drop of a firstborn and of a later born.’” See *Zohar* 1:101b.

11. On the night when the blessed Holy One... As God was about to kill the Egyptian firstborn, angels came to sing before Him. However, God ordered them not to chant because Israel was singing a song of praise—apparently *Hallel* (consisting of Psalms 113–18)—when they offered the paschal lamb.

Here Rabbi Abba borrows a midrashic motif related to the splitting of the Red Sea and transfers it to what happened on the actual night of the Exodus. See BT *Megillah* 10b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: “What is the meaning of the verse *One did not draw near the other all*

night (Exodus 14:20)? The ministering angels [referred to as *one* and *the other* in Isaiah 6:3] wanted to sing, but the blessed Holy One said, ‘My handiwork is drowning in the sea, and you are singing?’”

According to this rabbinic tradition, God prevents the angels from singing at the Red Sea because of the drowning of the Egyptians. Elsewhere, their drowning is invoked as the reason why the complete *Hallel* is recited only at the seder and on the first day of *Pesaḥ* (or in the Diaspora at both seders and on the first two days), whereas on the intermediate and last days of *Pesaḥ* the *Hallel* is recited in an abbreviated form (omitting the first parts of Psalm 115 and Psalm 116), based on the principle *When your enemy falls, do not rejoice* (Proverbs 24:17). Here in the *Zohar*, God stops the angels from singing not because of the death of the Egyptians, but so as not to interfere with Israel’s chant of praise over their deliverance.

On chanting *Hallel* as the paschal lamb is being offered (and while it is being eaten), see M *Pesaḥim* 5:7; 9:3; JT *Pesaḥim* 9:3, 36d; BT *Pesaḥim* 64a (and Rashi and *Tosafot*, ad loc., s.v. *qare’u el ha-hallel*), 95b, 117a. On Israel’s singing praise to God on the first Passover eve in Egypt, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 1, 2; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:1; *Bereshit Rabbah* 6:2; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:1; *Tanḥuma, Beshallah* 10; *Midrash Tehillim* 1:20, 18:1; 113:1, 2; *Aggadat Bereshit* 60:1.

On the passage in *Megillah*, and on the link between not reciting the complete *Hallel* and the drowning of the Egyptians, see above, [p. 115](#), [n. 182](#); Vol. 5, p. 493, n. 858.

“Dusked” renders רמַשׁ (*remash*), an apparently Zoharic verb based on רמַשׂא (*ramsha*), “evening.” See *Zohar* 1:34b; 2:36b, 171a, 173a, 198a, 208a; 3:21a, 52b, 113b, 149b, 166b; *ZH* 7d (*MhN*), 25d (*MhN*), 28b (*MhN*).

12. When the night split... At midnight a north wind stirred, symbolizing *Din* (Judgment), and God slayed the

Egyptian firstborn. The Israelites immediately praised God by chanting *Hallel*.

On the north wind stirring at midnight, see BT *Berakhot* 3b, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on the Ḥasid: "There was a harp suspended above [King] David's bed. As soon as midnight arrived, a north wind came and blew upon it, and it played by itself. He immediately arose and engaged in Torah until the break of dawn." On Israel's singing praise to God as He slayed the firstborn, see *Midrash Tehillim* 113:1.

13. After they circumcised themselves... According to a rabbinic tradition, the Israelites circumcised themselves before leaving Egypt. Several sources specify that they marked their doors with both the blood of the paschal lamb and the blood of circumcision.

The reference to the triple "holy mark" may allude to three *yods*, which sometimes represent the name *YHVH*. See *Or Yaqar*; above, [p. 111](#), [n. 172](#); [p. 478](#), [n. 62](#).

On the Israelites' circumcising themselves before leaving Egypt, see above, [p. 82](#), [n. 81](#). On their marking the doors with both the blood of the paschal lamb and the blood of circumcision, see above, [p. 111](#), [n. 172](#).

The full verse in Exodus (describing the killing of the firstborn) reads: *YHVH will pass through to strike Egypt, and when He sees the blood [of the paschal lamb] on the lintel and on the two doorposts, YHVH will pass over the entrance and He will not allow the Destroyer to enter your houses to strike.*

14. If the blessed Holy One Himself stayed... As indicated above at [note 10](#).

15. But so it is... *YHVH* was directly involved, but He was accompanied by *Shekhinah* (the divine court), who executes Judgment and can convey destruction.

On the significance of the wording *And YHVH*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 51:2, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "Wherever it is said *And YHVH*, this implies: He and His

court.” In Kabbalah this court symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who derives from *Din* (Judgment) and pronounces the divine decree, so the phrase *And YHVH* encompasses “He [the Divine Male, known as *YHVH*] and His court [*Shekhinah*].”

See JT *Berakhot* 9:5, 14b; *Sanhedrin* 1:1, 18a; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 24:2; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:9; *Tanḥuma, Va’era* 16; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va’era* 21; *Shemot Rabbah* 12:4; Naḥmanides on Genesis 19:24; Exodus 13:21; *Zohar* 1:15b, 64b, 105a, 107b, 159b, 192b, 198a, 240a; 2:37b, 46a–b, 56a, 86a, 149a, 227b; 3:9b. The hermeneutical significance of the word *and* was championed by Rabbi Akiva. See BT *Yevamot* 68b, *Sanhedrin* 51b.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *It happened in the middle of the night וַיְהִי (Va-YHVH), that YHVH [literally: and YHVH], struck every firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and every firstborn of the beasts.*

16. one should always display action... Just as the Israelites marked their doors with blood.

The expression “similarly upon the altar” refers to ritual sacrifice, elements of which assuage the demonic forces. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:453–54, 3:890–95; Vol. 7, p. 191, n. 77.

On the need to manifest action—and the principle “By an action below is aroused an action above”—see above, [pp. 41–42, n. 122](#).

17. When that is not required... At certain times, words of prayer are more effective than action, for example, on Rosh Hashanah, when demonic forces threaten to malign Israel, recounting their sins. In addition to offering sincere prayer, Israel must contemplate (“by spirit and soul”) the inner meaning of the sounding of the shofar.

The earthly shofar symbolizes *Binah*, the divine shofar. She generates *Tif’eret*, who blends Compassion and Judgment. By meditating on the sound of the shofar, Israel

can arouse Compassion and overcome Judgment. Then all the *sefirot* (“those supernal lamps”) issuing from *Binah* radiate blessing.

On the transformative power of the shofar, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:3, in the name of Shim’on son of Lakish: “*Elohim has gone up with a blast, YHVH with a sound of the shofar* (Psalms 47:6). When the blessed Holy One ascends to sit upon the Throne of Judgment on Rosh Hashanah, He ascends for Judgment, as is written: *Elohim has gone up with a blast*. But as soon as the people of Israel take their shofars and blow them, immediately, *YHVH with a sound of the shofar*. What does the blessed Holy One do? He rises from the Throne of Judgment and sits upon the Throne of Compassion, and He is filled with Compassion for them, turning for them the Attribute of Judgment into the Attribute of Compassion.” See above, [pp. 132–33](#), [n. 229](#).

Blowing the shofar is certainly an action, but according to the Talmud (in the name of the School of Rabbi Yishma’el) it is “חכמה (*hokhmah*), a skill [or: an art; literally “wisdom”], and not work,” which explains why the shofar may be blown on the Sabbath. See BT *Shabbat* 117b, 131b; *Rosh ha-Shanah* 29b.

On the significance of the shofar, see above, [pp. 90–91](#), [n. 107](#), [pp. 132–37](#), [nn. 229–42](#). On *Tif’eret* as the blended sound issuing from the shofar, see Vol. 7, p. 24, n. 77; p. 233, n. 82. On the verse in Proverbs, see above, [p. 348](#) at [n. 91](#); [p. 368](#), [n. 171](#).

18. When the priest intended to kindle... His pure intention and action below kindle the sefirotic lamps above (from *Hesed* to *Shekhinah*).

Oil symbolizes the flow of emanation from *Hokhmah*, and קטרת (*qetoret*), *incense*, is often associated with the Aramaic root קטר (*qtr*), “to tie, bind,” indicating that the offering of incense unites the *sefirot*. The reference to *the heart* may allude here to *Shekhinah*, who is sometimes pictured as that

vital organ. See above, [pp. 183–84](#), [n. 373](#). For the full verse in Numbers, see above, [note 7](#).

19. Rabbi El'azar, Rabbi Yose, and Rabbi Yitshak...

These three Companions come upon טורי קרדו (*turei qardu*), “the mountains of Kurdistan.” The *Zohar* borrows this phrase from *Targum Onqelos*, Genesis 8:4, describing where Noah’s ark came to rest when the waters of the Flood subsided. The biblical phrase על הרי אררט (*al harei ararat*), *upon the mountains of Ararat*, is rendered by *Targum Onqelos* as על טורי קרדו (*al turei qardu*), “upon the mountains of Kurdistan.” Here, the phrase *turei qardu* alludes to this verse, which Rabbi El’azar soon discusses. The reference to the mountains as “dark” suggests that the *Zohar* is playing on קרדו (*qardu*), “Kurdistan,” and קדרו (*qadru*), “darkness.”

Rabbi El’azar says that if his father, Rabbi Shim’on, were present, there would be no cause for fear. But even in his absence, harsh forces of Judgment pose no threat, since according to BT *Berakhot* 43b, “To one person, [a demon] shows himself and causes harm; to two, he shows himself but does not cause harm; to three, he does not show himself at all.” See *Zohar* 1:230a; ZH 14d (*MhN*).

On the phrase *turei qardu*, see also *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 8:4; *Bereshit Rabbah* 33:5; *Zohar* 1:63a; ZH 11b (*MhN*), 49a. Cf. the reference to Kurdistan in Vol. 5, p. 560, n. 35; Liebes, *Pulḥan ha-Shaḥar*, 45–46.

The reading “Rabbi El’azar, Rabbi Yose, and Rabbi Yitshak” appears in V18, *Or Yaqar*, and the printed editions. Various other manuscripts (including M8, P5, Pr13, V1, V3) omit the third name, while Es3 reads “Rabbi El’azar and other Companions.” This last reading helps to explain the appearance of several other Companions later in the passage; however, the total of three Companions is mentioned explicitly here: “since we are three.”

20. Torah is called the supernal כלל (*kelal*), principle... Including all realms of existence. The Hebrew term כלל (*kelal*)—and its Aramaic equivalent, כללא (*kelala*)—

mean several things: “principle, totality, generalization, generality, general category.”

Rabbinic hermeneutics includes a system of “thirteen rules” by which the Torah is interpreted. The eighth of these is: “Whatever was included in a generalization and was then excluded from the generalization [or: explicitly specified] to teach something, was excluded [or: specified] not to teach (only) about itself but to teach about the entire generalization.” In other words, if a particular instance of a general law is singled out for special treatment, whatever is postulated of this instance is to be applied to all the instances embraced by the general law.

For example, according to the description of *Pesaḥ* in Exodus 12:15: *Seven days shall you eat unleavened bread*. However, Deuteronomy 16:8 states: *Six days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day an assembly to YHVH your God*. The rabbis concluded that on the seventh day, eating *matsah* is voluntary, not obligatory. However, based on the eighth hermeneutical rule, the Talmud states (BT *Pesaḥim* 120a): “Just as on the seventh day it is voluntary, so on the six days it is voluntary,” since eating *matsah* on the seventh day “was included in a generalization [namely, *Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread*] and was then excluded from the generalization [as implied by the verse *Six days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day an assembly to YHVH your God*].” This exclusion of the seventh day was intended “not to teach (only) about itself but to teach about the entire generalization [that is, that eating *matsah* is voluntary on all seven days].” (However, it is obligatory to eat *matsah* at the seder on the first night.)

Here Rabbi El’azar indicates that Torah is כּלּלָא (*kelala*), “the generality,” filled with divine *mitsvot* and deep meaning. When a mundane story or description appears in the Torah, it would seem to be a digression from profound teaching and an exception to the general category of Scripture.

However, upon further reflection such “mundane” elements reveal something far deeper, enriching the entire fabric of Torah.

On the thirteen hermeneutical rules, see *Sifra, Baraita* 1:1, 1a; *Zohar* 1:124a; 3:62a; *ZH* 55d. On the passage in *Pesahim*, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 8; *Sifra, Emor* 11:3, 100b; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 16:8.

On the significance of every element of Torah, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 336; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 32:47; BT *Eruvin* 13a, *Menahot* 29b, *Hullin* 60b; Maimonides, Commentary on the Mishnah, *Sanhedrin* 10, intro, principle 8; idem, *Guide of the Perplexed* 3:50; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 548; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 37–38; *Zohar* 1:54a, 135a, 145b, 163a, 187a, 201a, 234b; 2:12a, 55b–56a, 59b, 65b, 93b, 95a, 98b–99b, 124a, 217b, 236a; 3:6b, 71b–72b, 79b, 152a, 174b, 202a, 213b, 221a, 265a, 269a; *ZH* 6d (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 341–42; Matt, “The Aura of Secrecy,” 194–207; and the following note.

21. came to rest... upon the mountains of Ararat...

This mundane detail seems to be an exception to the general profound nature of Torah.

For examples of challenges posed to the wording of Torah, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 112 (quoted below, [note 23](#)); *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 49; *Bereshit Rabbah* 58:2; 93:12; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:4; BT *Sanhedrin* 99b; *Bahir* 107 (161); *Zohar* 2:61a, 217b, 236a; 3:187a, 198b; Matt, “The Aura of Secrecy,” 198–200.

See BT *Hullin* 60b, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Lakish, “Many verses seem fit to be burned, yet precisely these are essential components of Torah.” Cf. Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 37–38; *Zohar* 1:201a; 2:217b, 236a.

On *kelal* and *kelala*, see the beginning of the preceding note. The full verse in Genesis reads: *The ark came to rest*

in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat. See above, [note 19](#).

22. may his spirit expire!... תִּפְּחַ רוּחֵיהָ (Tippah ruḥeih). This curse, which appears often in rabbinic literature, is equivalent to “May he breathe his last!” “May he drop dead!” See above, [p. 185](#), [n. 377](#); below at [note 92](#). On the polemical tone, see below, [note 95](#).

23. Now, would you ever imagine... Why would God include so many apparently mundane or profane narratives in the Torah, including those about Hagar (Abraham’s slave-girl), Balaam’s donkey, and the tribal chieftain Zimri, who had sexual relations with a Midianite woman?

On the rhetorical question, “Now, would you ever imagine that the supernal King... had no holy words to write...?” cf. *Sifrei*, Numbers 112: “*The person who acts high-handedly* (Numbers 15:30)—one who puts the Torah to shame, such as [King] Manasseh son of Hezekiah. *He reviles YHVH* (ibid.)—for he used to sit and expound blasphemously before the Omnipresent, saying, ‘Did He have nothing to write in the Torah other than *Reuben went out during the wheat harvest [and found mandrakes in the field...]* (Genesis 30:14)? And did He have nothing to write in the Torah other than *and Lotan’s sister was Timna* [the concubine of Esau’s son] (ibid. 36:22)?” See BT *Sanhedrin* 99b; above, [note 21](#).

On the phrase *a Torah of truth*, see Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 342. The context in Psalms (19:8–11) reads: *Torah of YHVH is perfect, restoring the soul. The decree of YHVH is trustworthy, making the simple wise. The precepts of YHVH are just, delighting the heart. The command of YHVH is lucid, enlightening the eyes. The awe of YHVH is pure, enduring forever. The judgments of YHVH are true, all of them just. More desirable than gold, than abundant pure gold; sweeter than honey and drippings of the comb.*

24. something about the totality... Of Torah, which is filled with secret meaning. The term כּלּלָא (*kelala*) means “the principle, totality, general category.” See above, beginning of [note 20](#).

25. *The ark came to rest in the seventh month...* The seemingly mundane details about when and where *the ark came to rest* allude to a deeper meaning, which is characteristic of the profound nature of the entire Torah; “all the more so with” other verses.

The phrase *the seventh month* alludes to Tishrei, the seventh month of the year (according to the biblical calendar), whose first day is Rosh Hashanah, the Day of Judgment. *The ark* likely represents *Shekhinah*, who constitutes the Throne of Judgment *in the seventh month*. On Noah’s ark as symbolizing *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:59b-61a, 62b, 65b, 66b-67a, 68b, 70b-71a, 72b-73a.

On the image of the “open books,” see BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 16b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: “Three books are opened on Rosh Hashanah: one of the completely wicked, one of the completely righteous, and one of those in-between. The completely righteous are immediately inscribed and sealed for life. The completely wicked are immediately inscribed and sealed for death. Those in-between remain pending from Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur. If they prove worthy, they are inscribed for life; if not, for death.” See above, [p. 137](#), [n. 243](#).

“Notes” renders פּתקין (*pitqin*), “notes, slips,” which derives from Greek *pittakion*, “tablet, written message, note.” “The archival ledger” renders אַחמטא (*aḥmeta*). On both these terms, see above, [p. 173](#), [n. 336](#). The full verse in Genesis reads: *The ark came to rest in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.*

26. *the mountains of אררט (ararat), Ararat...* These symbolize forces of Judgment. Rabbi El’azar is probably

associating אָרַרְט (*ararat*), *Ararat*, with the verbal root אָרַר ('*rr*), "to curse." See *Zohar* 3:258b-259a.

27. blowing the shofar... Which has the power to transform Judgment into Compassion. See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:3 (quoted above, [note 17](#)).

The full verse in Psalms reads: *Happy is the people who know תְּרוּעָה (teru'ah), the shout of joy [or: the (horn's) blast]. O יְהוָה, they walk in the light of Your presence.* See above, [p. 135](#), [n. 236](#).

28. the one who blows... In synagogue for the whole congregation. He must focus his awareness on the significance and potency of sounding the shofar. The wording of the verse in Psalms emphasizes how important it is to *know the blast*.

On the significance of the wording *who know the blast*, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:4; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 23:4; *Midrash Tehillim* 81:4; *Zohar* 2:250b-251a (*Heikh*); 3:18b, 99b, 231b.

On the association of the shofar with wisdom, cf. the Talmudic statement (in the name of the School of Rabbi Yishma'el) that blowing the shofar is "חִכְמָה (*hokhmah*), a skill [or: an art; literally "wisdom"], and not work," which explains why the shofar may be blown on the Sabbath. See BT *Shabbat* 117b, 131b; *Rosh ha-Shanah* 29b.

29. As night dusked... On this expression, see above at the end of [note 11](#).

30. When you light up the lamps... The *seven lamps* symbolize the seven lower *sefirot*, who are illumined by *Binah*, the Divine Mother. The last of these seven (or the entire lampstand) is *Shekhinah*, known as Assembly of Israel. Within *Shekhinah*, two embers generate flashes that ascend toward *Binah* ("the one above").

The phrase "potent embers" is a conjectural rendering of טוֹפְסָרִין (*tufserin*). The rare biblical noun טִפְסָר (*tifsar*) means "a military or administrative official; marshal." Here, perhaps, *tufserin* combines something of this sense with טִפְסָא

(*tifsa*), which can mean “glowing ember, burning coal” in the *Zohar*. See *Derekh Emet; Haggahot Maharḥu; Nitsotsei Orot*; Vol. 4, p. 125, n. 206; above, [p. 218](#), [n. 28](#). On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, [p. 11](#), [n. 32](#).

[31](#). **he came to Rabbi El’azar...** And told him what he had just heard from within the inner cave.

[32](#). **Humans find shelter...** As do these two people in the cave.

[33](#). **These stood up...** The two people who had been sitting and studying within the inner cave stood up, while Rabbi El’azar and his two Companions sat down.

The concluding phrase “lighting up lamps” implies that the study session within the inner cave revealed the secret meaning of the verse in Numbers (*When you light up the lamps...*), perhaps also thereby stimulating the illumination of the sefirotic lamps.

[34](#). **בהעלותך (Be-ha’alotekha), When you light up...** This Hebrew word can be mean *when you set up* or *when you kindle*. Rabbi Yose quotes the rendering of *Targum Onqelos*: באדלקותך (*be-adlaqutakh*), *when you kindle*.

The incense offered upon the altar and the kindling of the oil-soaked wicks in the lamps stimulate the unification and flow of the *sefirot*. See above, [note 18](#). Rabbi Yose may be highlighting the singular form of the verb in Proverbs—ישמח (*yesammah*), literally *rejoices*—which demonstrates that *oil and incense* are “a single bond.”

The context in Exodus (30:7-8) reads: *Aaron shall burn upon it [that is, upon the incense altar] aromatic incense morning after morning; בהיטיבו (be-heitivo), when he tends, the lamps he shall burn it. ובהעלת אהרן (Uv-ha’alot Aharon), And when Aaron lights up, the lamps at twilight he shall burn it, a perpetual incense before YHVH throughout your generations.*

The simple meaning of *be-heitivo*—literally *when he improves*—is *when he tends*, that is, when Aaron cleans the lamps of refuse and replaces the wicks and oil each

morning after they had burned out. However, according to Maimonides, *be-heitivo* is equivalent to *be-ha'alot*, *when he lights up*, implying that each morning Aaron relit any lamps that were extinguished. The *Zohar* adopts this view, so here Rabbi Yose wonders why the two consecutive verses in Exodus use these two different words, when both refer to kindling.

See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Temidin u-Musafin* 3:12 (and *Leḥem Mishneh* and *Kesef Mishneh*, ad loc.); *Zohar* 1:229b-230a; 3:11a, 33b, 88b (*Piq*), 183a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 86; Solomon ben Abraham Adret, *Teshuvot ha-Rashba* 1:309 (disputing with Maimonides); *Ateret Tsevi*; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Kasher, *Torah Sheleimah*, 23:161-62.

Targum Onqelos and *Targum Yerushalmi* both render בְּהֵיטִיבוֹ (*be-heitivo*) as בְּאִתְקַנּוּתֶיהָ (*be-atqanuteih*), *when he improves* [or: *prepares*], conveying the simple sense of the word. However, various early kabbalistic sources quote another Targumic rendering: בְּאִדְלָקוּתֶיהָ (*be-adlaquteih*), *when he kindles*, matching Maimonides' interpretation. See Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush Shir ha-Shirim*, 485; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 88, n. 2; 89; Jacob ben Sheshet, *Meshiv Devarim Nekhoḥim*, 166, 194; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 196 (and Wolfson's note); Recanati on Genesis 1:4, 4c; Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 292; Vajda, *Recherches sur la philosophie et la kabbale*, 303, n. 2; Vol. 1, p. 125, n. 132.

35. Rabbi Yehudah said... He soon explains the meaning of both descriptions—*be-heitivo* and *be-ha'alot*.

Until now, the only Companions mentioned have been Rabbi El'azar, Rabbi Yose, and Rabbi Yitshak. Now Rabbi Yehudah (and soon Rabbi Aḥa) appear on the scene. One could conjecture that these two are the two people discovered by the other Companions in the inner cave. Later, Rabbi Abba also participates in the discussion (below at [note 45](#)), though it is unclear whether the author (or

editor) intended the present narrative to extend to there. Perhaps it concludes below at [note 39](#). Or, the author may simply not be concerned about maintaining a consistent number of Companions. See above at the end of [note 19](#).

[36.](#) **בהטיבו (Be-hetivo), When he enhances...** Rabbi Yose associates the literal meaning of בהטיבו (*Be-hetivo*), *When he enhances*, with the verse from Song of Songs, whose simple sense is *For your caresses מיין טובים (tovim mi-yayin), are better than wine*, but which is now construed as *For your caresses tovim mi-yayin, are fine, deriving from wine*. This wine represents the rich flow of emanation from *Binah* to the sefirotic lamps, stimulated by the priest's ritual kindling. Furthermore, *tovim, fine*, implies being satiated, as in the verse from Jeremiah.

On the verse in Song of Songs and the wine of emanation, see above, [pp. 98-99](#), [n. 132](#). On the verse in Jeremiah, see *Zohar* 2:153b.

[37.](#) **הטבה (Hatavah), Enhancement, really...** The priest helps to convey fine cheer and abundance from above to all the lower *sefirot*.

The full verse in Proverbs reads: *All the days of a poor person are miserable, וטוב לב (ve-tov lev), but a cheerful [literally: good-hearted] person, has a continual feast*. See *Zohar* 2:128b, 197b, 259b (*Heikh*).

[38.](#) **ובהעלות (Uv-ha'alot), When he lights up...** The literal sense of this word is *when he elevates*, implying that when the priest kindles the lamps, stimulating the saturation of the lower *sefirot*, there is ascension for all.

[39.](#) **Rabbi Aḥa said...** On his appearance here, see above, [note 35](#).

When the Depth of *Ḥokhmah* (also known as Thought) feeds the Stream of *Binah*, She saturates all the lower *sefirot*. The description *be-ha'alot, when he elevates*, pertains paradoxically to the deep origin of all the streams of emanation, because *Ḥokhmah* is not only the Deepest but simultaneously "the highest aspect." By this process,

Shekhinah (known as Assembly of Israel) is blessed, and through Her, blessing spreads to all.

40. *I indeed have built You...* The verse is spoken by King Solomon after completing the Temple. Here, בית זבול (*beit zevul*), a lofty house, signifies *Shekhinah*, who contains (or “houses”) *Yesod*, symbolized by זבול (*zevul*), “Loft,” one of the seven heavens. *Yesod* receives the entire flow of emanation from above, and conveys this to *Shekhinah*. She is thereby entrusted with all the divine treasures.

On the various heavens, see BT *Hagigah* 12b: “Rabbi Yehudah said, ‘There are two רקיעים (*requ'im*), firmaments [or: expanses, heavens]....’ Resh Lakish said, ‘Seven, namely, וילון (*Vilon*), Curtain; רקיע (*Raqi'a*), Expanse; שחקים (*Sheḥaqim*), Heaven; זבול (*Zevul*), Loft; מעון (*Ma'on*), Dwelling; מכון (*Makhon*), Site [or: Foundation]; ערבות (*Aravot*), Clouds.’”

On the seven heavens, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:11; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 23:10; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 37; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 18; *Zohar* 1:32b, 85b-86a; 2:10b, 30b, 56b, 165a, 201b-202b; 3:9b, 287a.

41. ולזבולן (*Ve-li-zvulun*), *For Zebulun...* Both Zebulun and Issachar are included in this verse, which is part of the blessing uttered by Moses to all the tribes (according to Deuteronomy 33:1).

On the relationship between Zebulun and Issachar, see *Targum Onqelos* and *Targum Yerushalmi*, Deuteronomy 33:18; *Bereshit Rabbah* 72:5; 97 (p. 1220); 98:12; 99:9; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 25:2; *Tanḥuma, Vayḥi* 11; *Zohar* 1:241b-242a; 2:27a; Vol. 5, pp. 73-74, n. 214. See also 1 Chronicles 12:33-34. On Issachar's wisdom and study of Torah, see also *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 354.

42. *In the allotted territory of Zebulun...* Rabbi Yitshak indicates that the tribal territory of Zebulun included the Sea of Galilee (called here the Sea of Kinneret), from which supposedly derived the dye תכלת (*tekhelet*), “blue.” This is fitting because both the Sea of Kinneret and *tekhelet* symbolize “one place,” namely *Shekhinah*.

According to Jacob's blessing of Zebulun, *Zebulun will dwell by the shore of seas, and he by a haven of ships, his flank upon Sidon* (Genesis 49:13), conveying the tribe's territorial location along the Mediterranean coast. A midrashic tradition (*Bemidbar Rabbah* 13:17) understands *by the shore of seas* as referring to two seas, apparently the Mediterranean Sea and the Sea of Galilee, suggesting that Zebulun's territory included a strip of land extending eastward to the latter body of water. Josephus similarly states (*Antiquities of the Jews* 5:1:22) that Zebulun's territory "included the land that lay as far as the Lake of Ginnosar [another name for this lake] and that which belonged to Carmel and the [Mediterranean] Sea."

However, according to various sources, the Sea of Galilee was in the territory of the tribe of Naphtali. According to Joshua 19:10-16, the territory of Zebulun was landlocked, bordering on neither the Mediterranean nor the Sea of Galilee. See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 355; *Bereshit Rabbah* 98(99):17; BT *Bava Qamma* 81b; *Pirgei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 18; David Luria, ad loc., n. 45; *Zohar* 1:241b; 2:48b, 104b, 149b, 151a; Emden, *Mitpaḥat Sefarim*, 22-23; Sarna, *Genesis*, on 49:13.

The essential ingredient of the dye *tekhelet*, "blue" (or bluish purple; violet), is extracted from the glands of the חלזון (*hillazon*), the *Murex trunculus* snail, found off the Mediterranean coast. Here, Rabbi Yitshak transfers this small water creature to the Sea of Galilee (or Kinneret), which he locates in the tribal territory of Zebulun. On the snail *hillazon*, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 354; BT *Shabbat* 26a, *Megillah* 6a, *Menaḥot* 44a; *Zohar* 2:48b, 149b; 3:175b; Baḥya ben Asher, Numbers 10:2.

As indicated in Numbers 15:38, the dye *tekhelet* was traditionally used to color one thread of the tzitzit (as in some circles it is now again). On *Shekhinah* and *tekhelet*, see *Zohar* 1:51a-b (describing the blue light); 2:27b, 135a, 138b-139a, 149b, 152a-b, 226b; 3:175a (*Piq*). See *Sifrei*,

Numbers 115, in the name of Rabbi Me'ir: "Whoever fulfills the commandment of [wearing] the tzitzit [Numbers 15:38-40] is as though he greeted the face of *Shekhinah*, for the *tekhelet* [the colored thread on the tassel of the garment] resembles the sea, and the sea resembles the sky, and the sky resembles the Throne of Glory." See BT *Sotah* 17a.

Shekhinah is symbolized by the Sea of Kinneret, based on the association of כְּנֶרֶת (*kinneret*) and כִּנּוֹר (*kinnor*), "harp," an instrument played by David, who is intimately linked with *Shekhinah*. See 1 Samuel 16:23; *Leqah Tov*, Deuteronomy 33:22, p. 65b; *Zohar* 1:260b (*Hash*); 3:175b; Baḥya ben Asher, Numbers 10:2. In fact, the name יַם כְּנֶרֶת (*yam kinneret*), "Sea of Kinneret," may derive from shape of the lake, which resembles a harp. On the central theme "as above, so below," see above, [pp. 175-76](#), [n. 344](#).

43. Zebulun inherited the role... Since Zebulun's territory (supposedly) included the Sea of Kinneret (symbolizing *Shekhinah*), his tribe fittingly waged war, since *Shekhinah* conducts the divine battles (here on behalf of Zebulun). She is known as *Tsedeq* (Justice, Triumph), and the verse in Deuteronomy now alludes to Her triumphant slaughtering of Israel's enemies. The reference to *seas* also signifies *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by the sea and from whose *plenty* the Zebulunites suckle.

On *Shekhinah* wielding the divine weapons, see above, [p. 168](#), [n. 323](#). The full verse in Deuteronomy (referring to Zebulun, or Zebulun and Issachar) reads: *Peoples they call to the mountain, where they slaughter sacrifices of triumph. For the abundance of seas they suckle and the hidden treasures of sand.* For the preceding verse, see above at [note 41](#).

44. Issachar gives a share of Torah... As indicated above (at [note 41](#)), Issachar is pictured as sitting engaged in Torah while Zebulun goes out to wage war. Torah symbolizes *Tif'eret*, so it is fitting that Issachar conveys Torah to Zebulun, who is linked with *Shekhinah*.

45. Rabbi Abba said... He agrees that Torah represents *Tif'eret*, but explains that the rich flow of emanation is conveyed to *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel) by *Yesod*, the sixth sefirotic rung.

The color white signifies *Hesed*, the first of the lower seven *sefirot* that stream through *Yesod* to *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by *tekhelet*, blue. These two colors are mentioned near the very beginning of the Mishnah (*Berakhot* 1:2): “From when in the morning may the *Shema* be recited? As soon as one can distinguish between blue and white.” Morning is the time of *Hesed* (symbolized by white), when white light appears and the dark blue of night (signifying the quality of Judgment within *Shekhinah*) vanishes. Because of *Shekhinah*'s aspect of Judgment, She fittingly conducts the divine wars.

On the passage in *Berakhot*, see *Zohar* 2:139a. On *tekhelet* and its association with *Shekhinah*, see above, [note 42](#). On *Shekhinah* wielding the divine weapons, see above, [note 43](#). On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, [p. 11, n. 32](#). On the appearance here of Rabbi Abba, see above, [note 35](#).

46. The well dug by princes... The well symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who has been *dug by princes* (that is, by Father *Hokhmah* and Mother *Binah*) and *delved by nobles of the nation* (that is, by *Hesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, who are symbolized by the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob). The triad of *Hesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* conveys the flow of emanation to the well of *Shekhinah* through *Yesod*, who is known as Righteous One.

When *Shekhinah* journeys—as the Well of Miriam miraculously journeyed through the desert along with the Israelites—She journeys with the help of the patriarchal triad: *Hesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*.

The verse in Psalms associates *nobles of the nations* with *Abraham* (and through him with Isaac and Jacob as well). On Abraham as *a noble*, based loosely on the verse in

Psalms, see BT *Sukkah* 49b, *Hagigah* 3a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 7:2. On all three patriarchs as *nobles* (based on either the verses in Numbers or Psalms), see *Zohar* 1:235a; 2:197b; 3:19b, 26a, 62a, 286a; *ZH* 50c. The verse in Numbers, celebrating God's providing Israel with water, reads: *The well dug by princes, delved by nobles of the nation—with a scepter, with their staffs.*

On *Yesod* as Righteous One, see above, [pp. 68–69](#), [n. 43](#). On Miriam's well, see above, [pp. 157–58](#), [n. 294](#); Vol. 5, pp. 134–35, n. 380; Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, 3:50–54 and corresponding notes.

47. She is called Well... This name applies to *Shekhinah* when *Gevurah* (symbolized by Isaac) emerges from Mother *Binah*, “armed” with powerful emanation, with which He fills *Shekhinah*. On the Well of Miriam, see the preceding note.

48. Sea—when She is illumined... This name applies to Her when She is illumined by Father *Hokhmah*. The full verse in Ecclesiastes reads: *All the streams flow into the sea, yet the sea is not full. To the place that the streams flow, there they flow [or: flow back] again.*

49. Ever since the day... Ever since *Shekhinah* went into exile along with Her people, the verses in Job and Isaiah pertain: *Waters of emanation vanish from the sea of Shekhinah, and the river of Yesod becomes parched and dry, since He loses the flow from above.* Previously, *Yesod* (known as Righteous One) conveyed all the streams from *Binah*, “the holy river whose waters never cease,” which issues from *Hokhmah* (known as Eden).

The simple sense of the verse in Isaiah is: *The righteous one אבד (avad), perishes [or: is lost],* but here Rabbi Abba construes *avad* as *loses*. See *Zohar* 1:55b, 182a, 196b; 2:9b, 11a, 57a–b; 3:17a, 69a, 266b; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 73. On the verse in Job, see *Zohar* 1:6b, 67a; 2:42b (*Piq*), 166b–167a. On *Yesod* as Righteous One, see above, [note 46](#).

50. When Assembly of Israel is blessed... When *Shekhinah* is blessed. She is also known as *the angel of Elohim*, who at the Red Sea *moved* to protect Israel from the pursuing Egyptians. She moved with the help of *Hesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, who are symbolized by the three patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. When these three *sefirot* appear with *Shekhinah*, so do the other lower *sefirot* (*Netsah*, *Hod*, and *Yesod*).

The phrase “these verses” refers to the description of the splitting of the Red Sea in Exodus 14:19–21: *The angel of Elohim who was going before the camp of Israel moved and went behind them, and the column of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them. And it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel, and there was the cloud and the dark, and it lit up the night, and one did not draw near the other all night. And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and YHVH drove the sea with a mighty east wind all night, and He turned the sea into dry ground, and the waters were split.*

Remarkably, each of these three consecutive verses contains the same of number of Hebrew letters: 72. From these verses, a complex divine name is composed, known as the Name of Seventy-two, the implication being that the Sea was split by the power of this name. The name contains seventy-two triads (totaling 216 letters), formed according to the following pattern: the first letter of the first verse, the last letter of the second verse, the first letter of the third verse (forming the first triad); the second letter of the first verse, the penultimate letter of the second verse, the second letter of the third verse (the second triad); etc. The three individual Hebrew verses and the resulting name appear below.

The first verse (whose letters are inscribed in their normal order) symbolizes *Hesed*, which flows straight and is represented by Abraham. The letters of the second verse are inscribed in reverse order, symbolizing the contrary

quality of *Din* (harsh Judgment), also known as *Gevurah*, represented by Isaac. The third verse (whose letters are inscribed in order) is linked with *Tif'eret* (represented by Jacob), who harmonizes the polar opposites *Hesed* and *Gevurah*.

On the Name of Seventy-two, see *Zohar* 2:51b-52a (Vol. 4, pp. 257-64 and nn. 216, 221-26). On *Shekhinah* as *the angel of Elohim*, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 3; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:19; Nahmanides on Exodus 14:19; *Zohar* 1:61a; 2:47a, 50b (*Mat*), 51a-52a; 3:25a, 78a, 269b. On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, [p. 11](#), [n. 32](#).

51. ויסע מלאך (Va-yissa mal'akh), **The angel moved...** The letters of this verse appear in their normal order in the following diagram (in horizontal rows), corresponding to the straight flow of *Hesed*. The full verse reads: *The angel of Elohim who was going before the camp of Israel moved and went behind them, and the column of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them.*

52. Here Abraham was adorned... This verse, corresponding to *Hesed*, alludes to Abraham, the patriarch who attained and thus symbolizes this *sefirah*. *Hesed* conveys the flow of emanation to *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel).

The normal progression of the Hebrew letters of this verse (“in a straight path”) matches the straight flow from *Hesed*. This *sefirah* is also symbolized by day, as demonstrated in the verse from Psalms, which links *day* and חסדו (*hasdo*), *His love*. All of the potencies of *the angel of Elohim* move “when the sun shines”—that is, when *Ze'eir Anpin* (the masculine aspect of divinity, symbolized by the sun) is manifested.

53. The second, of Isaac... The letters of the second of the three verses are written in reverse order, symbolizing the contrary quality of *Din* (harsh Judgment), also known as *Gevurah*, represented by Isaac. This *sefirah*

conveys Judgment toward *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel).

The full verse reads: *And it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel, and there was the cloud and the dark, and it lit up the night, and one did not draw near the other all night.*

54. And there was the cloud and the dark... The *sefirah* of *Din* (Judgment), represented by Isaac, is symbolized by clouds and darkness. Its threatening quality is represented by the reverse order of the letters of this verse in the following diagram. This arrangement is in horizontal rows, with the verse spelled from left to right, beginning at the bottom left (or spelled backward, beginning at the top right and reading right to left). For the full verse, see the preceding note.

55. So all those letters are backward... The reverse order of the letters and the mention of *the cloud and the dark* indicate the threatening and contrary nature of Judgment. See the preceding note.

According to the simple sense of the verse, *one did not draw near the other all night* refers to *the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel*. Here, however, the clause implies that the forces from the side of *Hesed* (symbolized by Abraham) *did not draw near* the forces from the side of *Din* (symbolized by Isaac). If they had drawn near, they could have assuaged the harsh quality of Judgment; however, they could not approach because the Well (*Shekhinah*) clung to Isaac. The description *it lit up the night* now implies that *Din* illumined *Shekhinah* (who is symbolized by *night*). Finally, when Jacob (symbolizing *Tiferet*) joined with Abraham (symbolizing *Hesed*), Jacob (or Jacob along with Abraham) “took Isaac and placed him in the middle,” tempering the harshness of *Din*. Thereby the various sefirotic elements (comprising the realm of Faith) were linked with one another, and the Red Sea was split, redeeming Israel.

On *Shekhinah* as the Well of Isaac, see above, [note 47](#). For the full verse in Exodus, see above, [note 53](#).

56. Where the Patriarchs appear... Where the patriarchal triad of *Hesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* appear, the *sefirot* below them also appear—namely, *Netsah*, *Hod*, *Yesod*, and *Shekhinah* (symbolized by other righteous heroes Moses, Aaron, Joseph, and David). So the Name of Seventy-two is also reflected in these other *sefirot*. For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Haggahot Maharḥu*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

57. When this Well shines... When *Shekhinah* is illumined by *Din* (Judgment, symbolized by Isaac), it becomes a raging sea. Abraham (symbolizing *Hesed*) cannot assuage the harsh quality of *Din* within *Shekhinah*. Thus, “they [*Din* (within *Shekhinah*) and *Hesed*] do not draw near one another.” Finally, Jacob (symbolizing *Tif'eret*) succeeds in subduing, or assuaging, the harsh quality of *Din* within *Shekhinah*.

In the verse from Exodus, *Moses* symbolizes *Tif'eret*, who is also symbolized by the direction *east*. The full verse reads: *And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and YHVH drove the sea with a mighty east wind all night, and He turned the sea into dry ground, and the waters were split.*

“The rolling waves” renders גלגלי (*galgallei*), literally “the wheels,” but in medieval Spanish Hebrew poetry and in the *Zohar* גלגל (*galgal*), “wheel,” is equivalent to גל (*gal*), “wave.” See *Zohar* 1:245a; 2:27b, 48b–49a, 50b, 56a, 225b; 3:19a, 30a; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 296.

58. and the waters were split... The raging waters of Judgment within *Shekhinah* were *split* “to the side of Abraham and to the side of Jacob,” that is, they were assuaged by the combined force of *Hesed* and *Tif'eret*. Fittingly, the letters of this verse proceed in the normal, straight sequence (in the following diagram), signifying the steady and calming effect. For the full verse, see the preceding note.

59. on the side of Jacob... Symbolizing *Tif'eret*, along with all the angelic forces deriving from Him.

60. Thus the act of arranging the Holy Name... The Name of Seventy-two is formed by combining the three verses from Exodus 14, each of which contains 72 letters and corresponds to one of the patriarchs and one of their *sefirot* ("the Patriarchs"). All 216 letters combine into seventy-two triads, according to the formula described above, [note 50](#). In the following diagram, these triads proceed from right to left, beginning at the top right.

Through the power of this complex Divine Name, the Red Sea was split. The mystical Companions know how to wield this Name effectively for various practical and spiritual purposes. The ten elements mentioned ("judgment, compassion, assistance," etc.) correspond numerically to the ten *sefirot*.

On the patriarchs forming the Divine Chariot, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 47:6 (in the name of Resh Lakish): "The patriarchs themselves constitute the Chariot." See above, [p. 49](#), [n. 139](#).

61. Here, the Patriarchs on their journeys... The Name of Seventy-two (depicted in the preceding diagram and explained in the preceding note) represents the interaction of the three patriarchal *sefirot* (*Hesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*), as they move to carry out actions in the world.

62. There are seven clusters... The seventy-two triads of this Name can be divided into seven clusters, into which are woven the seven lower *sefirot*: *Hesed* through *Shekhinah*. These seven *sefirot* are symbolized respectively by Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph, and David. See above, [note 56](#).

"Head" refers to the first of the seventy-two triads: םוּו (vav, he, vav), corresponding to *Hesed*, first of the seven lower *sefirot*. *Hesed* is often closely associated with the Name of Seventy-two because the numerical value of םוּו (*hesed*) is seventy-two.

“Center” refers to the thirty-seventh triad: אַנִּי (*alef, nun, yod*), the beginning of the second half of the triads. This central triad corresponds to *Shekhinah*, who is often called אַנִּי (*ani*), “I.” See above, [p. 243](#), [n. 60](#).

In the concluding sentence, “these” probably refers to all seven clusters. “The well of water” symbolizes *Shekhinah*. On Her being dug, cf. above, [note 46](#).

On the triads אַנִּי (*alef, nun, yod*) and וַהּוּ (*vav, he, vav*), see M *Sukkah* 4:5; JT *Sukkah* 4:5, 54c; Rashi and *Tosafot* on BT *Sukkah* 45a, s.v. *ani va-ho*; Eleazar ben Judah of Worms, *Peirushei Siddur ha-Tefillah*, 1:132; Ḥizzequni on Exodus 14:21; *Or Yaqar*; *Zohar* 1:23a (TZ); 2:52a; 3:222b (RM), 227a (RM), 276b (RM); ZH 113b (TZ); Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 15:3.

For various interpretations of how the seventy-two triads divide up into seven clusters, see *Or Yaqar*; *Haggahot Maharḥu*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; *Yahel Or*; *Ateret Tsevi*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

63. Second: זֶה אֵל זֶה (*zeh el zeh*), **one to the other...** The full verse reads: *And it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel, and there was the cloud and the dark, and it lit up the night, וְלֹא קָרַב זֶה אֵל זֶה (ve-lo qarav zeh el zeh), and one did not draw near the other, all night.* As explained above ([note 50](#)), this entire verse appears in reverse order in the Name of Seventy-two, its individual letters found in the middle of each triad. The six letters of the phrase זֶה אֵל זֶה (*zeh el zeh*), *one to the other*, appear backward within the six triads from כַּהֵת (*kaf, he, tav*) through יֹלֵל (*yod, zayin, lamed*), which are the eighth through thirteenth triads. (See the diagram above.)

Apparently, this second cluster begins with כַּהֵת (*kaf, he, tav*) and continues at least through יֹלֵל (*yod, zayin, lamed*). The description “they form one cluster with three *yods*” implies that this cluster extends to ״״ (*yod, yod, yod*), the twenty-second triad, or perhaps that it joins with the following cluster, which extends to ״״ (*yod, yod, yod*). Since this cluster

begins at כהת (*kaf, he, tav*), the preceding six triads—י' (yod, lamed, yod) through אכא (*alef, kaf, alef*)—should apparently be considered as part of the first cluster, beginning with ווו (*vav, he, vav*). On the three yods, see above, [p. 478, n. 62](#).

The second cluster—associated with the reverse sequence of letters in the phrase *zeh el zeh*—corresponds to *Gevurah*, whose “contrary” quality matches the reverse sequence of the verse in Exodus. See above, [notes 50, 53](#).

64. Third: consummation of all Faith Alluding to *Tif'eret*, who balances the polar opposites *Hesed* and *Gevurah*, thereby perfecting the sefirotic realm of Faith.

It is unclear exactly which triads constitute the third through seventh clusters. For various interpretations, see the sources listed at the end of [note 62](#).

65. Fourth: two supports... Namely, *Netsah* and *Hod*, pictured as the two divine legs supporting *Tif'eret*, which is the trunk of the divine body.

66. Fifth: good and evil... Alluding to *Yesod*, who streams all the opposite qualities to *Shekhinah*, the Tree of Life and Death.

67. Sixth: Judgment with Compassion Apparently alluding to *Shekhinah*, who inherits Judgment from *Din*, and Compassion from *Tif'eret*. For another interpretation, see *Sullam*.

68. Seventh: mentioned at first... Referring to the triad א'נ (alef, nun, yod), the beginning of the second half of the triads. This central triad corresponds to *Shekhinah*, who is often called א'נ (*ani*), “I.” See above, [note 62](#). On *Shekhinah* as the center, cf. Vol. 1, p. 35, n. 240.

69. These seven rungs... Each of the seven clusters of triads constitutes one Chariot, which includes “all those [triads] joined to it.” Each cluster follows the sefirotic rung appointed over it. (Or, each individual triad follows the initial triad of its cluster.)

70. When these rungs appear... When the clusters of triads of the Name of Seventy-two appear, the whole

sefirotic realm of Faith appears. The seven clusters correspond to the seven clouds that shielded Israel as they wandered through the desert. On these clouds, see above, [pp. 158-59](#), [nn. 294](#), [296](#).

When *Shekhinah* journeys, She journeys with the patriarchal triad of *Hesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, who are themselves accompanied by the lower sefirotic rungs (*Netsah*, *Hod*, and *Yesod*). Then, *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel) is adorned.

[71. Zebulun, whom we mentioned...](#) Previously, Rabbi Yitshak had indicated that the tribal territory of Zebulun included the Sea of Galilee (called here the Sea of Kinneret). The phrase “the Sea of Kinneret, unspecified” means that this Sea is not merely (or specifically) the physical body of water but alludes to *Shekhinah*—also known as *Malkhut*, Aramaic *Malkhuta*, “Kingdom.” But if so, Rabbi Abba wonders how Zebulun could have inherited the Sea of Kinneret, when it is actually Judah who is intimately associated with *Malkhut*—since he was the progenitor of the Davidic “Kingdom.” He indicates that whereas Zebulun may have inherited certain elements of *Shekhinah* (especially Her military powers), Judah “obtained *Malkhuta* (Kingdom) entirely.”

On Zebulun supposedly inheriting the Sea of Galilee, see above, [note 42](#). On his military exploits and the military powers of *Shekhinah*, see above, [note 43](#).

[72. Regarding this portion...](#) The portion *Be-Ha'alotekha* begins with a description of the lampstand and its lighting (Numbers 8:1-4). Rabbi El'azar wonders why Scripture includes this here since it was already stated in the book of Exodus (25:31-40; 27:20-21).

[73. Well, since the chieftains brought...](#) The preceding chapter in Numbers describes the dedication of the Dwelling, including that of the altar, during which the twelve tribal chieftains brought elaborate offerings. Aaron, however, did not bring anything. Scripture now proceeds to

describe the lamp-stand, emphasizing Aaron's role in lighting it, since by doing so he kindles the sefirotic lamps above. On the sefirotic symbolism of the lampstand, see above, [note 30](#).

[74. There are twelve chieftains...](#) One for each of the twelve tribes, which were encamped on the four sides of the Dwelling, arranged in four groups of three tribes each. The twelve tribes correspond to twelve angelic forces surrounding *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by the altar (and/or to twelve potencies surrounding *Tif'eret*). See above, [p. 121, n. 199](#); [p. 260, n. 34](#); [p. 488, n. 90](#).

[75. the lampstand stood and was fashioned miraculously...](#) According to midrashic tradition, the lampstand took shape by itself miraculously.

See *Tanḥuma, Shemini* 8; *Beha'alotekha* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemini* 11, *Beha'alotekha* 4; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 15:4; *Zohar* 1:74a; 2:158a (RM).

[76. The inner altar and the lampstand...](#) In the Dwelling (and later in the Temple), incense was offered on the inner altar, whereas sacrifices were offered on the outer altar. In the *Zohar*, the inner altar symbolizes *Binah*, and the outer altar symbolizes *Shekhinah*. Here the lampstand, which stood close to the inner altar, also symbolizes *Shekhinah*.

Joy flows from *Binah* to *Shekhinah*, and through *Shekhinah* to the worlds below. In the verse from Proverbs, the *oil* symbolizes the flow of emanation to *Shekhinah* (the lampstand), while the *incense* alludes to *Binah* (the inner altar on which incense was offered). Both elements together bring joy to *Shekhinah*, who is sometimes pictured as *the heart*. See above, [note 18](#); [pp. 183-84, n. 373](#).

On the two altars, see Exodus 27:1-8; 30:1-10; *Zohar* 1:80a; 2:138b, 219a; 3:30a-b; ZH 61b (*MhN, ShS*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 66 (83).

[77. there were two altars...](#) As explained in the preceding note, incense was offered on the inner altar,

whereas sacrifices were offered on the outer altar. The former symbolizes *Binah*, the source of joy. From Her, a flow issues to *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the outer altar).

The double divine name אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה (*Adonai YHVH*) is pronounced *Adonai Elohim*. Here, the name *Adonai* refers to *Shekhinah*, while *Elohim* refers to *Binah*; so this name alludes to the union of these two *sefirot*.

The incense was offered each morning and evening. The oil was lit in the lampstand each evening, and according to the *Zohar* also each morning. (See above, [note 34](#).) According to Rabbi El'azar, the joint appearance of incense and oil symbolizes the union of *Binah* and *Shekhinah*.

[78. the Book of King Solomon...](#) This ancient source declares that incense yields joy and also eliminates a plague. The reason for this second virtue is as follows: Judgment stems from *Shekhinah* (the outer altar), whereas *Binah* (the inner altar, on which incense is offered) has the power to eliminate any manifestation of Judgment, including a plague.

The *Zohar* often associates קטרת (*qetoret*), “incense,” with the Aramaic root קטר (*qtr*), “to tie, bind,” indicating that the offering of incense unites the *sefirot*. See *Zohar* 1:230a; 2:219a; 3:11a-b, 30a-b, 37b, 58b, 177b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 86-87.

On the power of incense to eliminate a plague, see Numbers 17:11-13; *Zohar* 1:100b-101b (*MhN*), 230a; 2:218b-219a; *ZH* 43d; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 87. According to BT *Shabbat* 89a (in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi), the Angel of Death himself transmitted the secret of incense to Moses.

The Book of King Solomon is one of the many volumes housed in the real or imaginary library of the authors of the *Zohar*. See above, [p. 170](#), [n. 328](#).

[79. Take the Levites...](#) Moses is instructed by God to take and purify the Levites, linking them “to their place,” that is the *sefirah* of *Gevurah*, also known as *Din* (Judgment), the

divine left arm. Since hair symbolizes Judgment, the Levites are to shave off their bodily hair before they can be “elevated” by the priest, who symbolizes *Hesed*, the divine right arm. Similarly, in order not to stimulate Judgment, a woman should not expose her hair.

The clause “until the priest elevates them” refers to the dedication of the Levites described in Numbers 8:11: *Aaron shall make of the Levites an elevation offering before YHVH from the Children of Israel, and they shall serve to do the work of YHVH.*

On hair symbolizing Judgment, see above, [p. 302](#), [n. 46](#). On the Levites removing their hair, see above, [p. 313](#), [n. 74](#). On a woman being forbidden to expose her hair, see above, [pp. 302-3](#), [nn. 45-46](#).

The context in Numbers (8:6-7) reads: *Take the Levites from the midst of the Children of Israel and purify them. Thus you shall do to them to purify them: sprinkle on them expiation water and have them pass a razor over all their flesh and wash their clothes and purify themselves.*

80. by two bulls... As part of their dedication, the Levites offered one bull as an ascent offering and another as a purification offering. According to Rabbi Shim'on, this was fitting because the Levites “are like bulls,” that is, they derive from the left side, which is associated with a bull in Ezekiel’s vision of the angelic *hayyot* (living beings): *The image of their face was a human face, and on the right the four of them had a lion’s face, and on the left the four of them had a bull’s face, and the four of them had an eagle’s face.*

Being like פרִים (*parim*), “bulls,” on the left, they are prepared to receive *Shekhinah*, who is pictured as פרה אדומה (*parah adummah*), a red cow. See *Zohar* 3:14a, 76b, 180b-181a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1166.

81. Upon the priest... Linked with *Hesed*, the divine right arm, the priest is empowered to restore above and below. Nevertheless, just as the right arm must be

coordinated with both the left arm and the trunk of the body, so the priest must cooperate with the Levites (symbolizing the left arm), who sing to God, and with the people of Israel (symbolizing *Tif'eret Yisra'el* [Beauty of Israel]), who participate in worship. *Tif'eret* (the trunk of the divine body) harmonizes right and left, so He is "the essence of all."

82. A Levite would serve for twenty-five years... According to Numbers 8:24-25, Levites were to serve from age twenty-five to age fifty. Rabbi Shim'on indicates that a Levite attained the rung of *Gevurah*, also known as *Din* (Judgment), at age twenty-five. By the age of fifty, a person's passionate fire begins to diminish; if a Levite were to continue serving past that age, he would impair the sefirotic rung that he occupies.

See *ZH* 82a-b (*MhN, Rut*). According to Numbers 4:47, the Levites served from age thirty to age fifty. On this discrepancy, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 62; *Tosefta Sheqalim* 3:26; *BT Hullin* 24a; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 4:12; 6:3; *Miqdash Melekh*.

83. the singing voice... The central role of the Levites in the Temple was to sing psalms, and since a person's voice weakens with age, a Levite should retire at age fifty. Otherwise, his weakness would impair his sefirotic rung.

On the weakening of the voice as the reason for the Levites' age of retirement, see *Bemidbar Rabbah* 6:9; *Zohar* 1:249b; *ZH* 82a-b (*MhN, Rut*). Cf. *Sifrei*, Numbers 63; *Tosefta Hullin* 1:16; *BT Hullin* 24a-b; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 6:8; Rashi and Nahmanides, Numbers 8:25; Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 3:45; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhhot Kelei ha-Miqdash* 3:8.

84. For the ways of YHVH are straight... The verse reads: *For the ways of YHVH are ישרים (yesharim), right [or: just, straight]; the righteous walk in them, while transgressors stumble in them.*

85. *YHVH spoke to Moses...* The following verse instructs the Israelites to perform the Passover offering. Rabbi Abba asks why this is necessary, since that command was already given in Egypt (Exodus 12).

The context in Numbers (9:1-2) reads: *YHVH spoke to Moses in the Desert of Sinai in the second year of their going out from the land of Egypt, in the first month [or: on the first new moon], saying, "Let the Children of Israel perform the Passover offering at its set time."*

86. *Well, it was in the second year...* And Israel thought that the original command pertained only in Egypt.

Actually, the original formulation in Exodus states explicitly: *This day shall be a remembrance for you, and you shall celebrate it as a festival to YHVH through your generations, as an everlasting statute you shall celebrate it.... You shall observe this as a statute for you and your children forever. And so when you come to the land that YHVH will give you as He has spoken, you shall keep this service (Exodus 12:14, 24-25). See Miqdash Melekh; Nitsotsei Orot.*

87. *Although He had already admonished them...* Now Rabbi Abba offers another explanation of why the command was repeated: God wanted to include the Passover offering along with all the other commandments given at Mount Sinai. On the chronology of this biblical chapter within the context of Israel's departure from Mount Sinai, see Milgrom, *Numbers*, 67.

88. *Why in the second year, in the first month?...* Rabbi Abba concludes with yet another explanation, this one revealing the sefirotic significance of *year* and *month*. *Month* symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is often pictured as the moon, while *year* alludes to *Tif'eret*, identified with the sun. The combination of the two in this verse signifies the union of the divine couple at Mount Sinai, which generated all the commandments of Torah, including (or especially) the

Passover offering, the first commandment for the whole people, initially given to them back in Egypt.

The verse reads: *YHVH spoke to Moses in the Desert of Sinai in the second year of their going out from the land of Egypt, in the first month.*

89. Woe to the person who says... If the Torah were simply a book of stories in ordinary language, we could write one “more laudable than all of them,” that is, than all of Torah’s words and stories. If the Torah’s purpose is simply to describe the world and offer edifying tales, there are finer books of fables possessed by earthly rulers. But the seemingly mundane words and stories of Torah conceal deeper meaning.

On this entire passage, see above, [pp. 496-500](#); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 342. Notice that in the immediately preceding paragraph, the factual detail *in the second year... in the first month* yields new meaning.

The word “potentates” renders קפסירי (*qafsirei*), a Zoharic neologism that apparently means “rulers.” See *Zohar* 1:37a, 177a. Scholem suggests that *qafsirei* may be a play on Caesar. Cf. the rare biblical noun טפסר (*tifsar*), “a military or administrative official; marshal.” Tishby (*Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1126) prefers a different translation of *qafsirei*, based on the context: “books” or “booklets.”

According to *Bei’ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 191, s.v. *qafsirei*, “Rulers have many stories and chronicles from which they learn wisdom and morality, such as *Meshal ha-Qadmoni* and the like.” *Meshal ha-Qadmoni* (The Fable of the Ancient) is a collection of fables and homilies written in the early 1280s in Castile by the poet, physician, and kabbalist Isaac ibn Sahula, who was an acquaintance of Moses de León. This book was influenced by *Kalila wa-Dimna* (Kalila and Dimna), an Indian collection of fables in the genre of “Mirrors for Princes,” books designed to instruct new kings. *Kalila wa-Dimna* was translated into Persian, Arabic, Hebrew, and then into Castilian under the auspices of

Prince Alfonso in 1251 (a year before he became King Alfonso X). In *Meshal ha-Qadmoni*, ibn Sahula quotes or paraphrases several passages from *Midrash ha-Ne'lam* (one of the oldest components of the *Zohar*). Here, the author of the *Zohar* is apparently referring to collections such as *Kalila wa-Dimna* and *Meshal ha-Qadmoni*.

See *Derekh Emet*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; Scholem, "Ha-Tsitat ha-Rishon min ha-Midrash ha-Ne'lam," 181-83; Baer, *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, 1:436-37, n. 17; idem, *Toledot ha-Yehudim bi-Sfarad ha-Notsrit*, 508-9, n. 61a.

90. The upper world and the lower world... The angels in heaven and Israel on earth correspond to one another, sharing holiness. Above, the angels are purely spiritual, but when they manifest on earth to fulfill a mission they assume physical form—for example, when they appeared to Abraham (Genesis 18). Otherwise they could not endure the material nature of the world, nor could the world survive their intense spiritual power.

The verse in Psalms reads: מלאכיו רוחות משרתיו אש לוהט עושה (Oseh mal'akhav ruhot, mesharetav esh lohet), whose simple meaning is: *He makes winds His messengers, flaming fire His ministers*. Here, drawing on a midrashic tradition, Rabbi Shim'on reads the words according to their precise order: *He makes His angels spirits [or: winds]*. See above, [pp. 309-10](#), [n. 64](#).

On the relation between the upper and lower worlds, see *Tosefta Kareitot* 4:15, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on: "[Heaven and earth] are evenly balanced." See *Mekhilta, Pisha* 1; JT *Hagigah* 2:1, 77d; *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:15; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 36:1; *Midrash Shemu'el* 5:1; *Tanḥuma, Bo* 5; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 14, 19. On the similar theme of "as above, so below," see above, [pp. 175-76](#), [n. 344](#).

91. If this is so with the angels... If they must assume physical form when they manifest below, then

certainly when Torah is revealed in the world she must appear in an earthly guise.

The statement that Torah “created [the angels] and created all worlds” reflects the midrashic view that Torah served as the instrument by which God created the universe. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:1, in the name of Rabbi Osha’ya: “I was by Him as אָמוֹן (*amon*), a nursling...אָמוֹן (*amon*)—אֹמָן (*umman*), an artisan. Torah says, ‘I was the artistic tool of the blessed Holy One.’ According to the custom of the world, when a mortal king builds a palace he does not build it by his own skill but rather by the skill of an architect. And the architect does not build it out of his own knowledge, but rather has parchments and tablets [with plans and diagrams] to know how to make the rooms and doors. Similarly, the blessed Holy One gazed into Torah and created the world.” See Vol. 7, p. 208, n. 1.

On the notion that the world exists for the sake of Torah, see BT *Pesaḥim* 68b, in the name of Rabbi El’azar: “Were it not for Torah, heaven and earth would not endure.” See above, [p. 253, n. 7](#). On the garments of Torah, see *Zohar* 1:155b.

92. may his spirit expire!... תִּפְּחַ רוּחֵיהָ (*Tippaḥ ruḥeih*). This curse, which appears often in rabbinic literature, is equivalent to “May he breathe his last!” “May he drop dead!” See above, [note 22](#).

The search for the *wonders* of Torah has an erotic quality. See *Zohar* 2:99a-b. On the verse in Psalms, see *Zohar* 1:131b-132a, 135a, 145b.

93. Torah has a body... Whereas the stories of Torah constitute her garment, the words and commandments of Torah form her body. Sometimes the commandments are clothed in stories; for example, the account of Jacob’s wrestling with the angel conveys the tradition of not eating the sciatic nerve (or generally the hindquarter) of an animal. See Genesis 32:25-32. Cf. Numbers 9:6-13; 15:32-36; 27:1-11. Furthermore, the narratives of the Torah often

transmit moral teaching, as noted by Cordovero (*Or Yaqar*): “The entire Torah consists of ethical teachings, laws, and pious deeds conveyed through stories.”

Fools appreciate only the stories of Torah, neglecting her words of teaching. Those who know more do not linger on the garment, but concentrate on the Torah’s message and *mitsvot* beneath (“the body beneath that garment”). The truly wise penetrate through both the narrative garment and bodily teaching to a deeper, secret level—the soul of Torah—which they contemplate. (This soul is identified further below.) In the time to come they will gaze upon an even deeper level.

The phrase “bodies of Torah” renders גופי תורה (*gufei torah*), which in rabbinic literature denotes the essential components of Torah. See M *Hagigah* 1:8: “Laws of property and rules of sacrifices, what is pure and impure, and forbidden sexual relations—these have scriptural support; it is they that are *gufei torah*.”

On the phrase *gufei torah*, see BT *Hullin* 60b, in the name of Rabbi Shim’on son of Lakish, “Many verses seem fit to be burned, yet precisely these are *gufei torah*.” See above, [note 21](#). Cf. BT *Berakhot* 63a, in the name of Bar Kappara: “What is a short passage upon which depend all *gufei torah*? *In all your ways know Him, and He will smooth [or: level, straighten] your paths* (Proverbs 3:6).” See also *Tosefta Shabbat* 2:10; *Sifra, Qedoshim* 1:1, 86c; BT *Berakhot* 11b; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 24:5; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 13:16; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 37.

The “wise” are described as “those who stood at Mount Sinai.” According to rabbinic tradition, the souls of all future generations were present at Sinai. Here, Rabbi Shim’on implies that only the souls of the wise (who penetrate to the secret soul of Torah) were present there. See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 41; *Tanḥuma, Yitro* 11, *Pequdei* 3, *Nitsavim* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Nitsavim* 8; *Zohar* 1:91a;

2:83b. Cf. BT *Shabbat* 146a; *Shemot Rabbah* 28:6; *Nitsotsei Orot*. See also, p. 453, n. 463.

On the multiple meanings of Torah, see *Zohar* 2:99a-b; Vol. 5, p. 34, n. 99. On the body and soul of Scripture, see Philo's description of the Therapeutae (*De vita contemplativa* 10:78): "The whole of the law seems to these people to resemble a living being, with the literal commandments for its body, and for its soul the invisible meaning stored away in its words."

Cf. Origen, *De principiis* 4:2:4: "Just as a human being is said to be made up of body, soul, and spirit, so also is sacred Scripture." See also Rumi, *Mathnawi* 3:4247-48: "The outward sense of the Qur'an is like the body of a person, whose features are apparent and whose soul is hidden."

94. So, too, above... The heavens form a garment clothing *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel). She constitutes a body, receiving the soul: *Tif'eret*.

The clause "so She is the body for the soul" sounds redundant, but it probably alludes to a Talmudic description of a heavenly "body" containing all souls, which the *Zohar* sometimes identifies with *Shekhinah*. See BT *Yevamot* 62a; Vol. 5, pp. 6-7, n. 19. *Shekhinah* receives the soul of *Tif'eret* and thereby carries all human souls, which are engendered by the union of the divine couple.

The clause "the soul that we have mentioned" refers not only to the immediately preceding lines, but also to the preceding paragraph: "The wise... look only at the soul, root of all, real Torah." Now it becomes clear that the soul of Torah is none other than *Tif'eret*, who is symbolized by the Written Torah. The essence of Torah is divine; so intense study culminates in revelation.

The title "the Holy Ancient One" refers to *Keter*, the primal manifestation of *Ein Sof*. The phrase "soul of soul" derives from Solomon ibn Gabirol, *Keter Malkhut* 4:47: "You are alive but not through... soul, for You are soul of

soul.” See *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*), 79a–b (*ST*), 103b, 245a; 2:118b (*RM*), 156b; 3:109b (*RM*); *ZH* 45d, 75a (*MhN, Rut*), 82c (*MhN, Rut*); Scholem, *Major Trends*, 110, 375, n. 97. On body, soul, and soul of soul, see *ZH* 45d.

On the divine aspect of Torah, see above, [p. 7](#), [n. 23](#). On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, [p. 11](#), [n. 32](#).

95. Woe to the wicked... Who dismiss the Torah as nothing but a bunch of tales, lacking any deeper meaning. Rabbi Shim'on urges his listeners not to be content with the superficial narrative garment of Torah, but to penetrate deeper and deeper. Yet the garment has a vital function: to preserve the valuable contents.

The *Zohar* seems to be polemicizing here against contemporary skeptics and radical rationalists who read the Torah critically. See *Zohar* 1:163a; 2:264b; 3:149a–b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 391–92; idem, *She'elot u-Tshuvot*, 55–56; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 203; idem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 403–14; Baer, *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, 1:236–305; Tishby, *Mishnat ha-Zohar*, 2:403; idem, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1082, 1127.

On the image of the wine and its bottle, cf. *M Avot* 4:20, in the name of Rabbi Me'ir (per Kaufmann MS): “Do not look at the bottle, but rather at what it contains.”

96. What is meant by *ve-ya'asu*, *let them make*?... The verse could have read *let them slaughter*, or *let them eat*.

In this verse the simple sense of *ve-ya'asu* is *let them perform (the Passover offering)*, but Rabbi Yose focuses on the hyperliteral meaning: *let them make*. Invoking a kabbalistic principle, he explains that a person engaged in a *mitsvah* with *kavvanah* “makes,” or stimulates, the sefirotic root of that *mitsvah* above.

Rabbi Yose's hyperliteral reading of *ve-ya'asu* derives from midrashic sources. See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 35:7, where Rabbi Hama son of Hanina interprets the verse *If by My*

statutes you walk, and My commands you keep ועשיתם אתם אֹתָם (*va-asitem otam*), *and you do them* (Leviticus 26:3): “[God] said to them, ‘If you keep the Torah, I consider it as though you made [the commandments], as is written: ועשיתם אֹתָם (*va-asitem attem*), *and you yourselves make [them].*”

See above, [p. 215](#), [n. 20](#). Cf. above, [p. 230](#), [n. 23](#). On the principle “By an action below is aroused an action above,” see above, [pp. 41–42](#), [n. 122](#).

97. אִישׁ אִישׁ (*Ish ish*), *Any person...* The context in Numbers discusses the case of a person who is in a state of ritual impurity and thereby disqualified from participating in the Passover offering.

The expression *ish ish*—literally, *a man, a man* (or: *a person, a person*)—means *any person*, but Rabbi Yose focuses on the hyperliteral sense. The expression now denotes *a person* who is really *a person*—deserving a divine soul—but he impairs himself by wrong action and thereby loses the opportunity of holiness.

The simple sense of the verse is: *Any person who becomes* טמא לנפש (*tame la-nefesh*), *defiled by a corpse...*, but Rabbi Yose construes *tame la-nefesh* as *impure for the soul*, too defiled to obtain a holy soul.

On the hyperliteral sense of *ish ish*, see above, [p. 293](#), [n. 22](#). The context in Numbers (9:10–11) reads: אִישׁ אִישׁ (*Ish ish*), *Any person* [or: *any man*], *who becomes* טמא לנפש (*tame la-nefesh*), *defiled by a corpse* [or: *impure for the soul*], *or is on a distant journey, of you or of your future generations, and wishes to perform the Passover offering to YHVH—in the second month on the fourteenth day at twilight they shall perform it, with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it.*

98. those ten that are dotted... Certain letters in the Torah are dotted, inviting various midrashic interpretations. In this verse the last letter of the word רְחוֹקָה (*reḥoqah*)—ה (he)—has a dot above it.

Here the dotted ך (he) expands the meaning of *reḥoqah*, *distant*. One who defiles himself through wrong action draws down further impurity from above, and then finds himself *on a distant way*, far from the way of *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by ך (he). Rejecting the holiness of *Shekhinah*, he joins the demonic *distant way*, and no longer maintains a link with the rest of Israel, who are linked with *Shekhinah*.

The references to “you” correspond to the wording: *of you or of your future generations*. For the full verse, see the preceding note.

On being defiled from above, see BT *Yoma* 38b–39a: “Resh Lakish said: ‘... If one comes to defile himself, they open the door for him; if one comes to purify himself, they assist him.’... Our rabbis taught: ‘Do not become impure with them, becoming impure through them (Leviticus 11:43). If one defiles himself slightly, he is defiled greatly; [if one defiles himself] below, he is defiled from above; in this world, he is defiled in the world that is coming.’ Our rabbis taught: ‘You shall hallow yourselves and become holy (ibid., 44). If one sanctifies himself slightly, he is sanctified greatly; below, he is sanctified from above; in this world, he is sanctified in the world that is coming.’” See above, [p. 3](#), [n. 8](#).

See BT *Shabbat* 104a, *Avodah Zarah* 55a, *Menaḥot* 29b. Cf. BT *Makkot* 10b: “Rabbah son of Bar Ḥana said in the name of Rabbi Huna (some say, Rabbi Huna said in the name of Rabbi El’azar), ‘From the Torah, the Prophets, and the Writings it can be demonstrated that one is led on the path one wishes to take.’”

On the ten instances of dotted letters in the Torah, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 69; *Bereshit Rabbah* 78:9; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 7:5; BT *Bava Metsi’a* 87a; *Soferim* 6:3; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 34; B, 37; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* (ed. Friedlander), 37; *Tanḥuma*, *Va-yishlah* 4; *Midrash Mishlei* 26:24; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 3:13; *Sekhel Tov*, Genesis 33:4; *Zohar* 1:171b; 2:124b; 3:157a. On the dotted *he* of *reḥoqah*,

see also M *Pesahim* 9:2; *Tosefta Pesahim* 8:3; JT *Pesahim* 9:2, 36d. On the significance of dotted letters, see Lieberman, *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine*, 43–46.

99. But look at what is written... Rabbi Yose had linked these two elements of the verse—*impure for the soul* and *on a distant journey*—explaining that a person’s defilement distances him. Rabbi Yitshak reminds his companion that by the word *or* the verse is presenting these elements as two separate things. On the expression *impure for the soul*, see above, [note 97](#).

100. Here, before they defile him... When a person defiles himself he becomes *impure for the soul*; but if his conduct persists he is defiled from above and finds himself *on a distant journey*. Either condition renders him unfit for holiness to approach him, so he is disqualified from performing the Passover offering.

101. Does he actually perform it... Can the disqualified person bring the Passover offering a month later even if he hasn’t engaged in *teshuvah*, “turning back [to God]”? No, only after he has mended his ways.

On the paragraph’s concluding sentence, see above, [note 98](#).

102. If you say that he occupies a higher rung... One might suppose that if a person performs the offering in the second month, he attains a higher rung, that is, the “second” *sefirah* from below, *Yesod*—whereas the normal performance of the ritual, in the first month, would enable one to attain only the first rung, *Shekhinah*.

Actually, however, those who bring the Passover offering at its normal time attain both the male and female members of the divine couple, symbolized respectively by the sun and moon. By drawing near *Shekhinah*, last of the ten *sefirot*, they obtained the foundation of the whole divine structure. Whereas usually (and obviously) the term “foundation” designates *Yesod* (Foundation), also known as Righteous One, here it refers to *Shekhinah*, who is pictured as

a precious stone, prepared for Her masculine partner. On *Yesod* as Righteous One, see above, [pp. 68-69](#), [n. 43](#).

Rabbinic tradition applies the verse in Psalm 118 to David, youngest of Jesse's sons, *rejected* by his brothers and relegated to tending the flock. In the *Zohar*, the "rejection" of a *stone* may allude to the diminishment of the light of *Shekhinah* (symbolized by David). At times, due to human misconduct, She receives less illumination from the *sefirot* above Her (*the builders*). The image of *the cornerstone* represents *Shekhinah's* vital role in the sefirotic structure and process. See above, [p. 436](#), [n. 409](#).

[103.](#) He is surely not like one... One who brings the Passover offering in the first month proceeds fittingly, receiving blessing from *Shekhinah* (below) and then from a higher realm. However, one who brings the offering in the second month first associates himself with the second rung, *Yesod*, and then proceeds backward to *Shekhinah*, thus moving "from above to below."

According to a rabbinic principle, "one raises [or: progresses, increases, promotes] in holiness, and does not lower." In its original context, this principle means that one should progress from a lesser to a greater degree of holiness and not the reverse, or that a person may be promoted to a higher or more dignified level but not demoted. See M *Sheqalim* 6:4; BT *Berakhot* 28a, *Shabbat* 21b, *Yoma* 20b, 73a, *Megillah* 21b, *Horayot* 12b; *Zohar* 2:132b, 182b; 3:162b, 285a.

[104.](#) attains the Holy Name... Because the entire Torah represents one continuous Name of God. See above, [p. 7](#), [n. 23](#).

[105.](#) On the day the Dwelling was erected The full verse reads: *On the day the Dwelling was erected, the cloud covered the Dwelling of the Tent of the Covenant, and in the evening it remained over the Dwelling like a semblance of fire until morning.*

106. He disperses, gives to the needy... If a person *disperses* money or food to the needy, he will be rewarded with more; but not if he disperses money for his own benefit or pleasure.

The full verse in Proverbs reads: *There is one who מפזר (mefazzer), scatters [or: disperses], yet has more [literally: yet more is added], and another who saves honestly yet ends up needy.* The passive form ונוסף (ve-nosaf), *yet more is added*, suggests that the person's wealth is not necessarily due to his own efforts. Somehow wealth just comes to him. See Fox, *Proverbs* 2:543.

107. This verse should read... The active form ויוסף (ve-yosif), *yet he adds more*, seems to fit the context better. Why does the verse employ the passive form ונוסף (ve-nosaf), *yet more is added*? Rabbi Ḥiyya explains that by this person's generosity he stimulates a vibrant flow from above to *Shekhinah*, who is pictured as the Tree of Death when She is separated from *Tif'eret*. *Shekhinah* then conveys the flow to the generous person, thereby "adding to him." The passive form *ve-nosaf, yet more is added*, alludes to the reception of the flow (by both *Shekhinah* and the person).

On the effect of generosity to the poor, see above, [p. 29, n. 84](#). On *Shekhinah* as the Tree of Death, see above, [p. 204, n. 437](#).

108. Scripture attests... The verse in Psalms demonstrates that one who is generous to the poor stimulates *Tif'eret* (pictured as the Tree of Life) to animate *Shekhinah* (the Tree of Death), and he himself benefits.

The verse continues: צדקתו (tsidqato), *his righteousness, stands forever*. Rabbi Ḥiyya's reading now implies that *his tsedaqah, charity, stands forever*—nurturing and protecting him. For the full verse in Psalms, see above at [note 106](#).

109. His horn shall be raised in glory... *Shekhinah* is symbolized by the *horn*, and She is elevated *by glory*, namely by *Tif'eret*. Through giving generously, this person unites the divine couple, who then stream blessings below.

The verse in Psalms reads: *His horn shall be raised* בכבוד (be-khavod), in [or: by] *glory*. For the full verse, see above at [note 106](#). On *Shekhinah* as “horn,” see above, [pp. 277–78](#), [n. 88](#). On *Tif'eret* as *glory*, see *Zohar* 1:237a.

110. Whenever the Dwelling is erected... Whenever *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the Dwelling) is enhanced and fulfilled by virtuous human conduct, She unites with Her partner, *Tif'eret*, and the rich flow of emanation pours into the sefirotic lamps (comprising *Hesed* to *Shekhinah*).

In numerous rabbinic sources, the verset in Proverbs 10:2 and 11:4—וצדקה (u-*tsdaqah*), *and righteousness, saves from death*—is interpreted as *and charity saves from death*. See above, [p. 29](#), [n. 84](#).

111. Make yourself two trumpets of silver... The full verse reads: *Make yourself two trumpets of silver, of hammered work you shall make them, and they shall serve you for calling the community and for the journeying of the camps*.

112. When the living beings moved... The passage in Ezekiel describes the חיות (*hayyot*), *living beings*, and the אופנים (*ofanim*), *wheels*, which move the heavenly Chariot-Throne. Here, the journey of the celestial throne is interwoven with the journey of the Israelite tribes in the desert. The *Zohar's* extended description of the *living beings*, beginning here, resembles that of Joseph Gikatilla in his *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 57–58.

The context in Ezekiel (1:19–21) reads: *When the living beings moved, the wheels moved beside them; and when the living beings rose off the ground, the wheels rose too. Wherever the spirit would go they went—wherever the spirit would go—and the wheels rose alongside them, for the spirit of the living being was in the wheels. When these moved, those moved, and when these halted, those halted, and when these rose off the ground, the wheels rose alongside them—for the spirit of the living being was in the wheels*. In verses 20–21, the noun חיה (*hayyah*), *living being*,

appears in the singular, apparently to emphasize the unity of the ensemble of four living beings. See Greenberg, *Ezekiel*, 48. On the passage in Ezekiel, see *Zohar* 2:241b-242a.

Rabbi Shim'on explains that the *ḥayyot* (*living beings*) were stimulated and animated by a higher power. "For if you say" that here *living beings* refers to *Ḥesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* (who are sometimes called this)—no, it refers rather to the angelic beings who carry the Throne. Whereas the triad of *sefirot* is illumined directly by *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*, the angelic *living beings* receive the rays of emanation from behind.

"Sanction" renders the neologism קוזפירא (*quzpira*), whose meaning is uncertain but seems to refer to "authority" or "power." Cf. the Zoharic neologism גזפירא (*gazpira*), which may mean "coronet"; and the Talmudic term גזירפטא (*gezirpata*), "court-appointed officials who carry out judgment." See *Zohar* 2:175a (Vol. 5, p. 520, n. 939); *Derekh Emet*; *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 189, s.v. *quzpira*; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David*, s.v. *qazpira*. For various interpretations of this paragraph, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

113. A sparkling wind... The four *living beings* embody four divine winds (or sparks), and they are illumined by the faces of the *sefirot*. In describing such overwhelming beings, Ezekiel must resort again and again to words such as כעין (*ke-ein*), *like*; כאשר (*ka'asher*), *as*; החיות כמרעה (*ke-mar'eh ha-ḥayyot*), *like the appearance of the living beings*. See Ezekiel 1:13-14, 16, 22.

The four *living beings* are stationed on the four corners of the Chariot-Throne, corresponding to the encampment of the Israelites around the Dwelling. The tribes were arranged in four groups (of three tribes each), and they journeyed behind the banner of the lead tribe. Similarly, the *living beings* each have two accompanying angels, totaling twelve.

In Ezekiel's vision each of the four *ḥayyot* (*living beings*) carrying the Throne had four faces: a human face at the front, the face of a lion on the right, the face of a bull on the left, and the face of an eagle at the back. See Ezekiel 1:10. On the all-inclusive nature of the human image, see above, [p. 261](#), [n. 36](#).

"A sparkling wind" renders זיקא (*ziqa*), which means "wind," but in the *Zohar* also "spark." "Effulgence" renders קולמיטון (*qulmiton*), a Zoharic neologism whose meaning is unclear. See *Derekh Emet; Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 189, s.v. *qalmiton*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David*, s.v. *qalmitin*.

[114. First Banner...](#) Corresponding to the Banner of the Camp of Judah, the first banner (or unit) mentioned in the description of the Israelites' encampment (in Numbers 2:3). Along with Judah were the tribes of Issachar and Zebulun, all three encamped to the east of the Dwelling.

Here the first banner designates the first of the four *living beings*, who is identified with the archangel Michael and the Lion. The banner is inscribed with the archangel's name. (As mentioned in the preceding note, according to Ezekiel the Lion's face is one of the four faces of each *living being*.) Usually the direction east symbolizes *Tif'eret*, but here it may represent *Hesed*, "to the right," from which the sun (symbolizing *Tif'eret*) begins to shine. On the association of the Lion with Judah, see Genesis 49:9: *A lion's whelp is Judah*.

Of the two angels accompanying Michael, Yofiel (Beauty of God) is appointed over the study of Torah, and Tsadqiel (Justice of God) is appointed over engaging in business—perhaps based on the expression מאזני צדק (*moznei tsedeq*), *scales of equity* [or: *honest scales; just scales*], *weights of equity* [or: *honest weights; just weights*] (Leviticus 19:36). In midrashic literature, Torah and business (or warfare) are associated respectively with Issachar and Zebulun. See above, [note 41](#).

On the military image (“an armed camp”), see Numbers 1:3: *From twenty years old and up, everyone who goes out in the army in Israel, you shall reckon them by their battalions, you and Aaron.* “Banner” renders דגל (digla)—Hebrew דגל (*degel*), “banner, (military) unit.”

On Yofiel, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Deuteronomy 34:6; Schäfer, *Konkordanz zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, s.v. *Yofi’el*; *Zohar* 1:108a (ST); 2:206b, 247b (*Heikh*); 3:2b, 197b; ZH 36b, 61c (*MhN, ShS*), 64a, 90c (*MhN, Rut*); Margaliot, *Mal’akhei Elyon*, 65–67. On Tsadqiel, see Schäfer, *Konkordanz zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, s.v. *Tsadqi’el*; *Zohar* 1:108a (ST), 149b (ST); 2:247a (*Heikh*); 3:2b; ZH 64a (*ShS*), 68c (*ShS*); Margaliot, *Mal’akhei Elyon*, 169–70.

115. When these move... Michael’s forces include numerous angelic camps. The sun, again, symbolizes *Tif’eret*, illumining them all.

116. The Lion extends his right hand... The first *living being*—identified as the Lion and the archangel Michael—gathers all his forces.

On the numerical element of 370, see above, [p. 330](#), [n. 27](#). On the River of Fire, see Daniel 7:10; BT *Hagigah* 14a; Vol. 7, p. 165, n. 511.

117. He extends his left hand... And subdues the forces of Judgment, associated with the left side.

The full verse in Genesis (from Jacob’s blessing to his sons) reads: *Judah, you, will your brothers acclaim—your hand on your enemies’ nape—your father’s sons will bow to you.* Here in the *Zohar*, Judah represents the archangel Michael. See above, [note 114](#).

118. Four wings for every single one... Of the numerous angels. Cf. the description of the *living beings* in Ezekiel 10:21: *Each had four wings.*

The phrase “calyx and blossom” derives from the biblical description of the lamp-stand in the Dwelling. See Exodus 25:33, and *Targum Onqelos*, ad loc. According to *Bereshit Rabbah* 91:9 (in the name of Abba Nehorai), when

Rabbi Tarfon heard someone deliver a fine teaching, he would say, 'Calyx and blossom!'—meaning "Beautiful!" (or "Beautifully spoken!"). Here, Rabbi Shim'on apparently applies this sense to the beaming faces of the angels.

119. Four faces for every single one... Each of the *ḥayyot* (*living beings*) has four faces, each one facing in a different direction: human, lion, bull, and eagle. See above, [note 113](#).

The direction east may allude here to *Ḥesed*, from which the sun (symbolizing *Tif'eret*) begins to shine. (See above, [note 114](#).) West alludes to *Shekhinah*, identified with the moon, whose light waxes and wanes ("is gathered in"). North signifies *Din* (Judgment) on the left, which is like a shadow compared with the sun (symbolizing *Ḥesed* on the right).

On the direction associated with *Shekhinah*, see BT *Bava Batra* 25b, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi: "*Shekhinah* is in the west." On *Shekhinah* never moving from the Western Wall of the Temple, see above, [pp. 272-73](#), [n. 75](#).

120. The count of those moving... The archangel Michael, one of the four *living beings*, is accompanied by the two angels Yofiel and Tsadqiel (see above, [note 114](#)). Together they constitute three heads, corresponding to the three Israelite tribes who encamped to the east of the Dwelling: Judah along with Issachar and Zebulun.

The first head includes Michael himself and all the angels under his direct control, totaling 74,600 angels, which matches exactly the census total of the tribe of Judah (Numbers 1:27). The "innumerable" lower angelic beings correspond to the unnumbered Israelites (males under the age of twenty and all females).

121. Second head... The angel Yofiel along with all the angels under his command, totaling 54,400, which matches the census total of the tribe of Issachar (Numbers 1:29). The innumerable chieftains below correspond to the unnumbered of Issachar.

122. Third head... The angel Tsadqiel along with all the angels under his command, totaling 57,400, which matches the census total of the tribe of Zebulun (Numbers 1:31).

When this first *living being* (Michael and both other heads) moved in heaven, the tribe of Judah (accompanied by Issachar and Zebulun) initiated the journeying of the Israelites, and the Dwelling was disassembled.

The “masters of praise” are the angels pictured as *wheels*; they are stationed at the side of the *living being* Michael, who animates them.

The full verse in Numbers reads: *The Dwelling was taken down, and the Gershonites and Merarites, bearers of the Dwelling, journeyed on.* For the context in Ezekiel, see above, [note 112](#).

123. Second Banner... Corresponding to the Banner of the Camp of Reuben, the second banner (or unit) mentioned in the description of the Israelites’ encampment (in Numbers 2:10). Along with Reuben were the tribes of Simeon and Gad, all three encamped to the south of the Dwelling.

Here the second banner designates the second of the four *living beings*, who is identified with the archangel Uriel and the Eagle. (As mentioned in [note 113](#), according to Ezekiel the Eagle’s face is one of the four faces of each *living being*). Usually the direction south symbolizes *Ḥesed*, but here it may represent *Tif’eret*. Cf. above, [notes 114](#), [119](#).

On the angel Shamshi (or Shamshiel), see Schäfer, *Konkordanz zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, s.v. *Shamshi’el*; *Zohar* 2:202a, 248a (*Heikh*); Margaliot, *Mal’akhei Elyon*, 196–97. On Ḥasdi (or Ḥasdiel), see Schäfer, *Konkordanz zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, s.v. *Ḥasdi’el*; *Zohar* 1:149b (*ST*); *ZH* 68c (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 402; Margaliot, *Mal’akhei Elyon*, 59–60.

124. Corresponding to the pattern... Apparently, the three synonymous expressions (“Corresponding to...”;

“according to...”; “like...”) emphasize that the archangel Uriel’s face resembles—but is not identical with—an eagle’s face, or perhaps the divine face. See above, [note 113](#).

The hawk and the dove apparently represent the angels Shamshi and Ḥasdi, who accompany Uriel. On the image of the hawk and the dove, cf. *Mekhilta, Beshallah* 2, 6; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:14; *Tanḥuma, Shofetim* 13; *Zohar* 2:47a.

Through the column, the angels ascend and descend between earth and heaven. The full verse in Deuteronomy reads: *Like an eagle rousing his nest, hovering over his fledglings, He spread His wings, He took him, bearing him on His pinion.*

[125. When he moves...](#) When the Eagle (Uriel) moves, he joins forces with the Lion (Michael).

[126. Three heads are as one...](#) Corresponding to the three Israelite tribes who encamped to the south of the Dwelling: Reuben along with the tribes of Simeon and Gad. The three totals of angels listed here match the census totals of these three tribes (Numbers 1:21, 23, 25).

[127. From these two sides...](#) Of the Eagle (Uriel) and the Lion (Michael). All the angelic forces accompany *Shekhinah*, symbolized by (or inhabiting) the Dwelling.

[128. When one of them...](#) The herald coming from the side of the Lion (Michael) on the east sounds his trumpet smoothly, with a *teqi’ah* (a single long “blast”). The other herald, from the side of the Eagle (Uriel) on the south, blows his trumpet with a *teru’ah* (“alarm,” a tremolo of staccato notes)—or with *shevarim* (three “broken sounds”), followed immediately by *teru’ah*. The angelic soundings of the trumpets correspond to those that signaled the journeying of the Israelites. See above, [note 111](#).

On the various sounds of the horn, see above, [pp. 134–35, n. 234](#). On the exact sounding of the trumpets as the Israelites journeyed, see *Haggahot Maharḥu; Miqdash Melekh; Zohorei Ya’bets; Nitsotsei Zohar*.

[129.](#) **When the living beings moved...** When the three head angels on each side moved, all the various camps of angels (*the wheels*) followed them.

[130.](#) **Third Banner...** Corresponding to the Banner of the Camp of Dan, which is actually the fourth banner (or unit) mentioned in the description of the Israelites' encampment (in Numbers 2:25). Along with Dan were the tribes of Asher and Naphtali; all three encamped to the north of the Dwelling.

Here the third banner designates the third of the four *living beings*, who is identified with the archangel Gabriel and the Bull. (As mentioned in [note 113](#), according to Ezekiel the Bull's face is one of the four faces of each *living being*). The direction north symbolizes *Din* (Judgment), also known as *Gevurah*, on the left side (associated with Gabriel).

On Kaftsi (or Kaftsiel), see Schäfer, *Konkordanz zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, s.v. *Qaftsi'el*; *Zohar* 2:248b (*Heikh*); Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 175–76. On Hizki (or Hizkiel), see Schäfer, *Konkordanz zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, s.v. *Hizqi'el*; *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); *ZH* 68c (*ShS*); Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 58.

[131.](#) **When this Bull bellows...** Then harsh forces, associated with Judgment, demand punishment for sins.

“Ravaging bands” renders חבילין (*havilin*), which derives from חבל (*hevel*), “band, group,” and/or the verbal root חבל (*hvl*), “to injure, destroy.” On the term אחמתא (*ahmeta*), “archival ledger,” see above, [note 25](#); [p. 173](#), [n. 336](#).

[132.](#) **Seven rivers of fire...** On the image of the River of Fire, see above, [note 116](#).

The image of sucking up the river in one gulp derives from the description of the legendary animal Behemoth. See Vol. 3, p. 341, n. 219.

The image of “fire consuming fire” derives from BT *Yoma* 21b, where the fire of *Shekhinah* is described as consuming the fiery angels. See above, [p. 403](#), [n. 289](#).

133. Darkness of the sun... The shadow of the sun. See above, [note 119](#).

Midrashic sources mention four colors of fire: red, green, black, and white. Here, the phrase “two-colored fire” likely refers to green fire, since green symbolizes *Tif’eret*, which blends *Hesed* (symbolized by white) and *Gevurah* (symbolized by red). The color black symbolizes *Shekhinah*. The concluding sentence means that from their sefirotic source the various fires flow down to the angelic forces.

On the four colors of fire, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 1:3; *Tanḥuma, Shemini* 8; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemini* 11; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:8. “Wardens” renders גרדיני (*gardinei*), which is based on the Castilian *guardián* (guardian). See Corominas, *Diccionario*, 3:246–48.

134. In what manner does Torah exist?... According to a rabbinic tradition (attributed to Rabbi Shim’on son of Lakish), the Torah was inscribed (or engraved) in black fire upon white fire. See above, [p. 354](#), [n. 113](#).

135. It is one fire... Fire, water, and spirit symbolize respectively *Gevurah*, *Hesed*, and *Tif’eret*. Each of these divides into four forces, and similarly below, each of the *living beings* includes four faces. See above, [note 113](#).

136. The counts of three heads... The three groups of angels beneath the three head angels (Gabriel, Kaftsi, and Hizki) correspond to the three Israelite tribes who encamped to the north of the Dwelling: Dan along with the tribes of Asher and Naphtali. The three totals of angels listed here match the census totals of these three tribes (Numbers 1:39, 41, 43).

137. Fourth Banner... Corresponding to the Banner of the Camp of Ephraim, which is actually the third banner (or unit) mentioned in the description of the Israelites’ encampment (in Numbers 2:18). Along with Ephraim were the tribes of Manasseh and Benjamin; all three encamped to the west of the Dwelling.

Here the fourth banner designates the fourth of the four *living beings*, who is identified with the archangel Raphael (whose name means “God healed”) and *Adam*. (As mentioned in [note 113](#), according to Ezekiel the Human’s face is one of the four faces of each *living being*.)

The direction west symbolizes *Shekhinah* (associated here with both Raphael and *Adam*). She includes the quality of *Din* (Judgment), which is now assuaged (or “healed”). Raphael (or *Adam* or *Shekhinah*) grasps the power of Judgment (symbolized by the Bull) and subdues it. On the association of west with *Shekhinah*, see above, [note 119](#).

[138.](#) a sound of sheer silence... Befitting the unification of *Shekhinah* with Her partner, which is described in the following paragraph.

The biblical context (1 Kings 19:11-12) describes the theophany experienced by the prophet Elijah at Mount Horeb: *He said, “Go out and stand on the mountain before YHVH.” And behold, YHVH was passing by, and a great, mighty wind splitting mountains and shattering rocks before YHVH; YHVH was not in the wind. After the wind—an earthquake; YHVH was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake—fire; YHVH was not in the fire. After the fire—קול (qol), a sound [or: voice] of, sheer silence.*

[139.](#) On this side dwells... In the west dwells *Shekhinah*, rising toward *Tif’eret* (symbolized by the sun), who unites with Her.

As mentioned above, a תרועה (*teru’ah*), *alarm* (a tremolo of staccato notes), was sounded on the south side, in order to subdue the forces of Judgment, associated with the opposite side: north. (See above, [note 128](#).) But here, on the west side, there is neither *teru’ah* nor *teqi’ah* (a single long “blast”); rather, silence befitting the divine union. The concluding sentence alludes to the fact that the tribe of Dan, on the north side of the Dwelling, marched at the rear of all the Israelites. See Numbers 2:31; 10:25.

The full verse in Numbers reads: *When you blow תרועה (teru'ah), an alarm [or: a blast], the camps that are encamped to the east shall journey on.*

140. Two trumpets... Associated here with east and south (symbolizing *Hesed* and *Tif'eret*, or vice versa), both of which subdue the forces of Judgment (associated with north). The element of silver symbolizes *Hesed*.

For the full text of Numbers 10:2, see above, [note 111](#). The context in Numbers 10:9-10 reads: *When you come in battle in your land against the foe who assails you, you shall sound a blast with the trumpets and be remembered before YHVH your God and be delivered from your enemies. And on the day of your rejoicing and at your fixed festivals and on your new moons, you shall blow the trumpets over your ascent offerings and over your communion sacrifices, and they shall become for you a remembrance before your God. I am YHVH your God.*

141. As the ark journeyed... The context in Numbers (10:35-36) reads: *As the ark journeyed, Moses would say, "Arise, O YHVH! May Your enemies be scattered, and Your foes flee before You!" And when it came to rest, he would say, "Return, O YHVH, to the myriads of thousands of Israel!"*

142. ׀ (Nun) that is inverted... According to Masoretic tradition, an irregularly shaped ׀ (*nun*) is placed both before and after Numbers 10:35-36. Various traditions exist about the exact form of this *nun*, but here the *Zohar* intends a rightside-up *nun*, facing backward (as depicted in numerous *Zohar* manuscripts): ׀. These bracketing signs are based on a Hellenistic scribal device, and their original purpose here was either to designate this poetic couplet as a separate unit or to indicate that it is out of place. If the latter, then the couplet's proper place may have been immediately following the description of the journeying of the Tent of Meeting in Numbers 2:17.

See *Sifrei*, Numbers 84; *Sifrei Zuta* 10:33; *M Yadayim* 3:5; *Tosefta Yadayim* 2:10; *Bereshit Rabbah* 64:8; *Vayiqra*

Rabbah 11:3; BT *Shabbat* 115b-116a; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 34; *Soferim* 6:1; *Midrash Haserot vi-Yterot*, 98 (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:274); *Midrash Mishlei* 26:24; *Leqah Tov*, Numbers 10:35-36; Rashi, Nahmanides, Bahya ben Asher, and Hizze-quni on Numbers 10:35; Recanati on Numbers 10:35, 74b; Solomon ben Abraham Adret on BT *Shabbat* 103a; *Ba'al ha-Turim*, Numbers 10:34; Zemah ben Solomon Duran, in Zemah ben Solomon Duran and Simeon ben Solomon Duran, *Yakhin u-Vo'az*, 1:81; Solomon ben Yehiel Luria, *She'elot u-Tshuvot*, 73; Meir ben Gedaliah Lublin, *Manhir Einei Hakhamim*, 75; *Minhat Shai*, Numbers 10:35; Ezekiel ben Judah Landau, *Noda Bi-Yhudah, Mahadura Qamma, Yoreh De'ah*, 74; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Lieberman, *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine*, 38-43; Kasher, *Torah Shelema*, 19:366-69; Milgrom, *Numbers*, 375-76.

For various interpretations of this whole *Zohar* passage, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Ateret Tsevi*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

143. If you say, 'A bent ׀ (nun)'... One might also wonder why this sign consists of a bent ׀ (*nun*), rather than a straight (or final) ׀ (*nun*). Rabbi El'azar explains that the former symbolizes *Shekhinah*, whereas the latter symbolizes the union of *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*. The journeying of the ark represents the exile of *Shekhinah*, when She is separated from *Tif'eret*, so the bent *nun* appears here appropriately. But why is the *nun* inverted (facing backward) before and after these two verses?

On the two forms of the letter *nun*, see BT *Shabbat* 104a; *Bahir* 56 (83). On the bent ׀ (*nun*) as a symbol of *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:147a-b (*Tos*); 2:91a, 139a, 215a, 235b; 3:66b; *ZH* 41c. On the straight ׀ (*nun*) as symbolizing the union of male and female, see *Bahir* 56 (83); *Zohar* 1:18b-19a, 147a (*Tos*); 3:156b, 285b; *ZH* 70a (*ShS*).

144. No ׀ (nun) is mentioned in אשׁרי (Ashrei), Happy are... The prayer known as אשׁרי (*Ashrei*), *Happy are*, consists of Psalm 145, prefixed by two verses that begin with the

word *ashrei*, *happy are* (Psalms 84:5; 144:15) and ending with Psalms 115:18. Psalm 145 is an alphabetical acrostic, each verse beginning with a successive letter of the alphabet, except that the verse beginning with the letter *nun* is missing. Such a verse does appear in the Septuagint, the Syriac translation, and the Dead Sea Scrolls.

See BT *Berakhot* 4b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: “Why is נון (*nun*) not mentioned in אֲשֶׁרֵי (*Ashrei*), *Happy are*? Because [*nun*] alludes to the fall of Israel’s enemies [a euphemism for Israel herself], as is written: נִפְלָה (*Nafelah*), *Fallen, not to rise again, is Virgin Israel* (Amos 5:2).”

For Rabbi El’azar, the *nun* symbolizes *Shekhinah* (pictured as *Virgin Israel*), who shares in Israel’s exile. Cf. above, [p. 62](#), [n. 26](#).

[145.](#) *The Ark of YHVH’s Covenant...* As soon as the ark began to journey, *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the *nun*), journeyed above it.

The full verse in Numbers reads: *They journeyed on from the mountain of YHVH a three days’ distance, and the Ark of YHVH’s Covenant journeyed before them a three days’ distance to scout out a resting place for them.* The second occurrence of the phrase *a three days’ distance* is likely a dittography (an inadvertent scribal repetition) of the first.

[146.](#) *The love of the blessed Holy One...* See *Sifrei*, Numbers 1: “Beloved are Israel, for even though they are impure, *Shekhinah* is in their midst.”

[147.](#) *nun remained inseparable from it...* This letter, symbolizing *Shekhinah*, accompanied the ark; yet, out of love for Israel, the *nun* turned its face toward them, away from the ark. The backward position of the *nun* preceding the biblical couplet (Numbers 10:35–36) represents *Shekhinah* turning back toward the tribes of Israel, who are following the ark.

On the gazelle (or deer) turning back (or fleeing and returning), see *Zohar* 2:14a (*MhN*), 138b. See Song of Songs 2:9: *My beloved is like a gazelle, or a young deer.*

Based on this verse, rabbinic sources compare God to a gazelle, and describe the gazelle (and the Messiah) as appearing and disappearing. See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:8; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:9; *Rut Rabbah* 5:6; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15, 72a–73b; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:2.

148. Therefore, when it journeyed... As explained in the preceding note, the backward *nun* preceding the biblical couplet symbolizes *Shekhinah* turning away from the ark and toward Israel. The identical backward *nun* following the couplet symbolizes *Shekhinah* turning back toward the ark and away from Israel. For the context in Numbers, see above, [note 141](#).

149. El'azar, my son... Rabbi Shim'on agrees that when the ark began to rest, the *nun* (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) turned back toward the ark. However, he insists that it did not turn away from Israel. Otherwise, the *nun* following the biblical couplet would have to be normal ("straight"), not inverted, to indicate that *Shekhinah* was now facing the ark with Her back toward Israel. Rather, when the ark rested, *Shekhinah* moved to the other side of ark (instead of being positioned between the ark and Israel, as during the journey). The second inverted *nun* indicates that from that other side of the ark She now faced both the ark and Israel.

Yet this idyllic situation did not last long. The immediately following verse reads in full: *The people were כמתאוננים (ke-mit'onenim), complaining, bitterly in the ears of YHVH, and YHVH heard and His wrath flared—and the fire of YHVH blazed against them, consuming the edge of the camp.* The incriminating word כמתאוננים (*ke-mit'onenim*), *complaining*, contains two consecutive *nuns*, shaped normally. Whereas the inverted *nuns* (preceding and following the biblical couplet) allude to *Shekhinah's* turning toward Israel, the forward orientation of the *nuns* in כמתאוננים (*ke-mit'onenim*) indicate that as a result of Israel's complaints *Shekhinah*, as it were, stared off into the distance, away from

them. On the relation between the inverted *nuns* and the verse following the biblical couplet, see BT *Shabbat* 116a.

150. the Book of Rav Yeisa Sava... This source explains the inverted *nuns* “on both this side and that side” of the biblical couplet.

The Book of Rav Yeisa Sava is one of the many volumes housed in the real or imaginary library of the authors of the *Zohar*. See Matt, *Zohar: The Book of Enlightenment*, 25; and the comment by Shim'on Lavi, *Ketem Paz*, on *Zohar* 1:7a: “All such books mentioned in the *Zohar*... have been lost in the wanderings of exile... Nothing is left of them except what is mentioned in the *Zohar*.” For a catalogue of these books, see Neuhausen, *Sifriyyah shel Ma'lah*.

151. the Book of Rav Hamnuna Sava... On Rav Hamnuna Sava (the Elder) and his book, see above, [p. 105](#), [n. 154](#).

152. The manna... The full verse reads: *The manna was like coriander seed and its color like the color of bdellium.*

153. To sustain seed and cohorts... The manna would nourish the Israelites, enabling them to engender children (“seed”), who would grow to become soldiers in Israel.

Rabbi Yose associates גַּד (*gad*), *coriander*, with the alliterative blessing of the tribe Gad in Genesis: גַּד גְּדוּד יְגוּדֵנוּ (*Gad gedud yegu-dennu*), *Gad will be raided by raiders, yet he will raid their heel.*

154. Just as the seed of Gad... Just as the tribe of Gad inherited land in the Transjordan, outside the Holy Land, so the manna settled upon Israel in the Sinai Desert, outside the Holy Land.

155. כֹּזֶרֶא דְגִידָא (*ke-zar'a de-gida*), like seed of the phallus... Deriving from *Yesod*, the divine phallus. Rabbi Yose now associates גַּד (*gad*), *coriander*, with גִּידָא (*gida*), “tendon,” which also appears as a euphemism for “penis.” See *Targum Yerushalmi*, Deuteronomy 23:2.

On the manna “materializing in the body,” cf. the midrashic image of the manna being “absorbed by the 248 limbs” of the human body, so that none of it was eliminated. See BT *Yoma* 75b; *Midrash Tehillim* 78:3.

156. like the color of הבדולה (ha-bedolah), bdellium... The term *bedolah* appears in only one other place in the Bible, in the geographical setting of the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:12). Originally, *bedolah* apparently designated an aromatic yellowish semitransparent resin of trees (namely bdellium, similar to myrrh), but a number of ancient and medieval sources identify it as a precious stone. Rashi on this verse in Numbers describes it as “crystal,” and in medieval Hebrew *bedolah* means “pearl” and “crystal.” See above, [p. 330](#), [n. 26](#).

Here Rabbi Yose associates the white color of בדולהא (*bedolḥa*), “crystal,” with the white of *Ḥesed*, situated on the right side of the *sefirot*.

157. Why did Moses... Why did he address God as אַתָּה (*at*), *You*, employing what seems to be the feminine form of this pronoun, rather than the normal masculine form אַתָּה (*attah*)?

Cf. Rashi on Numbers 11:15; Deuteronomy 5:24; Naḥmanides on Numbers 11:15. See also BT *Berakhot* 32a. Actually, according to linguists, the spelling אַתָּה (*at*) represents the original form of the masculine pronoun. It appears also in Deuteronomy 5:24 and Ezekiel 28:14.

The context in Numbers (11:14–15) reads: *I cannot by myself carry this entire people, for it is too heavy for me. If this is how אַתָּה (at), You, treat me, kill me, please, instantly, if I have found favor in Your eyes—so that I won’t have to see my wretchedness.*

158. he was speaking to the place inhabited by death... Moses was addressing the Divine Female, *Shekhinah*, who is pictured as the Tree of Death when She is separated from *Tif’eret*, the Tree of Life.

See Nahmanides on Numbers 11:15; below, [note 175](#). On *Shekhinah* as the Tree of Death, see above, [p. 204](#), [n. 437](#).

[159](#). ***Gather for Me seventy men...*** God accepted Moses' death wish—and told him to select seventy men worthy of divine inspiration, who could replace him!

The statement “You're always asking for death” alludes to Moses' earlier declaration to God after the Israelites worshiped the Golden Calf: *Now, if You would bear their sin! And if not, please wipe me out from Your book that You have written* (Exodus 32:32).

On this remarkable interpretation of God's response to Moses' exclamation *Kill me, please*, see *Midrash Sheloshah ve-Arba'ah* (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:62); *Midrash ha-Gadol*, Genesis 46:30; *Midrash Tehillim* 23:3; *Nitsotsei Orot*. According to Numbers 20:7–13, the reason that Moses died in the desert before he could lead the Israelites into the Promised Land was that he disobeyed God's instruction to command the rock to bring forth water and instead struck it twice.

The context in Numbers (11:16–17) reads: *YHVH said to Moses, “Gather for Me seventy men of the elders of Israel of whom you know that they are the elders of the people and its officers, and you shall take them to the Tent of Meeting, and they shall station themselves there with you. I will descend and speak with you there, and I will withdraw some of the spirit that is upon you and place it upon them, and they will bear with you the burden of the people, and you yourself will not bear it alone.”*

[160](#). ***Eldad and Medad were declaring this*** Eldad and Medad were two of the seventy elders selected by Moses. For some reason, they did not follow Moses out to the Tent of Meeting, but rather remained inside the camp. When the spirit of *YHVH* came upon the other elders who were assembled at the Tent, it also came upon Eldad and Medad. After the prophetic spirit departed from the other

elders, it remained with Eldad and Medad. See Numbers 11:26.

According to one rabbinic tradition, Eldad and Medad prophesied that Moses would die and that Joshua would lead the Israelites into the Holy Land. See *Sifrei, Numbers* 95; *Targum Yerushalmi, Numbers* 11:26; BT *Sanhedrin* 17a; *Tanḥuma, Beha'alotekha* 12; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Beha'alotekha* 22; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 15:19.

161. when a person is possessed by anger... If he curses himself, malevolent forces will seize his words and ensure that his curse is fulfilled.

Previously, after the Israelites worshiped the Golden Calf, Moses asked for death, by saying *Now, if You would bear their sin! And if not, please wipe me out from Your book that You have written* (Exodus 32:32). Then, however, his words remained unfulfilled because he was offering his life for the sake of Israel.

On the danger of cursing oneself, see *Zohar* 1:14b; 2:266a (*Heikh*). Cf. M *Shevu'ot* 4:13; BT *Berakhot* 19a, *Shevu'ot* 36a.

162. Eldad and Medad remained... In the camp when the other elders followed Moses out to the Tent of Meeting. They prophesied that Moses would die and be replaced by Joshua. See above, [note 160](#).

The full verse in Exodus reads: *Moses commanded, and they sent word through the camp, saying, 'Let each man and woman make no further effort toward the donation for the sanctuary,' ויכלא העם (va-yikkale ha-am), and the people were restrained [or: prevented], from bringing.*

163. the humility of Moses... He wasn't troubled by the fact that Eldad and Medad were prophesying. The full verse in Numbers reads: *Moses said to him, "Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all YHVH's people were prophets, that YHVH would place His spirit upon them!"*

On the superiority of Moses' prophecy, see BT *Yevamot* 49b: "All the prophets gazed through an opaque glass

[literally: a speculum (or: glass, mirror, lens) that does not shine], whereas Moses our teacher gazed through a translucent glass [literally: a speculum that shines]." In Kabbalah, these two specula symbolize respectively *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*. See Vol. 6, p. 100, n. 119.

164. like the beauty of the moon to the sun See *Sifrei*, Numbers 140: "The face of Moses was like the face of the sun; the face of Joshua was like the face of the moon." In Kabbalah, the sun and the moon symbolize respectively *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*. See BT *Bava Batra* 75a; above, [p. 239](#), [n. 45](#). Cf. *Zohar* 2:82b.

165. that world The world-to-come, whose reward is reserved for those who live virtuously.

166. Evil of the heart... The evil impulse.

167. There is an evil... The context (Ecclesiastes 6:1-2) reads: *There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, and it is heavy on humankind: a man whom God gives wealth, possessions, and honor, and he lacks nothing for himself of all he desires; yet God does not enable him to consume it—instead, a stranger consumes it. This is futility and evil suffering.* See *Zohar* 2:65a-b.

168. Why is it evil?... The following verse describes the evil that befalls a person who is obsessed by *all he desires: God does not enable him to consume it.* Yet there seems to be a contradiction here. If this person truly *lacks nothing for himself of all he desires*, then how can it be that *God does not enable him to consume it*? Obviously he does *consume* and enjoy it!

169. all the words of King Solomon... The book of Ecclesiastes is traditionally ascribed to the wise King Solomon. (Cf. Ecclesiastes 1:1, 12.) Just as the spiritual message of the Torah is often conveyed through seemingly mundane narratives, so the wisdom of Solomon is conveyed through common or metaphorical language or through parables.

On the narrative garments of Torah, see above at [notes 89-95](#), and [notes 91, 93, 95](#). Cf. above at [notes 20-24](#).

170. Although we should look at the garment... The outer, narrative layer and the simple sense of Scripture should not be ignored, yet one should penetrate to a deeper meaning.

If God grants a person material wealth, he should use it virtuously—for example, by helping the needy and performing deeds of loving-kindness. Thereby, the “principal” (or enduring value) of his virtue assures him a blissful reward in the afterlife.

On the financial image of principal, see M *Pe’ah* 1:1: “These are things whose interest [literally: fruit] one enjoys in this world while the principal endures for him in the world that is coming: honoring one’s father and mother, acts of loving-kindness, making peace between one person and another; and the study of Torah is equivalent to them all.”

On the value of Torah’s garment, see above, [note 95](#). Cf. BT *Shabbat* 11b: “A verse never loses its simple sense.” See BT *Yevamot* 11b, 24a; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 41; Matt, “New-Ancient Words,” 204-5.

171. What is the principal?... The enduring value of one’s virtuous conduct is identified with the Tree of the world that is coming, in whose branches his soul will be bundled. Any material blessing he receives in this world represents the fruit of that Tree. See the passage from M *Pe’ah* in the preceding note. On the image of the soul being bundled, see above, [p. 73](#), [n. 57](#).

172. If one defiles himself... Indulging in sensual desire and neglecting the heavenly Tree by acting selfishly.

Now the meaning of the verse becomes clear, and its apparent contradiction disappears: If a person becomes so obsessed with his own pleasure that *he lacks nothing for himself of all he desires* and ignores the needs of others and his own spiritual well-being, then God deprives him of

his wealth in this world and punishes him in the world that is coming: *God does not enable him to consume it—another man consumes it.*

The verse in Ecclesiastes reads: *God does not enable him to consume it—instead, a stranger consumes it.* Here, the *Zohar* substitutes *another man* for *a stranger*. For the full verse, see above, [note 167](#). On the verse in Job, see above, [p. 144](#), [n. 261](#).

[173.](#) ***If this is how You treat me...*** The Israelites had complained about not having any meat to eat, just the manna (Numbers 11:4-6). Moses then turns helplessly to God and concludes by saying, *I cannot by myself carry this entire people, for it is too heavy for me. If this is how You treat me, kill me, please, instantly, if I have found favor in Your eyes—so that I won't have to see my wretchedness* (ibid., 14-15).

On Moses' extreme humility, see Numbers 12:3: *The man Moses was very humble, more than any person on the face of the earth.*

[174.](#) **Moses attained...** He attained the rung of *Tif'eret*, symbolized by *heaven* and known also as צדקה (*tsedaqah*), "righteousness." When God told Israel that He was going to give them manna—*bread from heaven*—Moses rejoiced, realizing that he had attained that sefirotic rung and that Israel would be nourished from it for his sake. But when they complained about the manna and asked for meat—associated with the lower rung of *Shekhinah*—Moses realized that his rung had thereby been insulted and impaired.

Nahshon son of Amminadab from the tribe of Judah is famous for his role at the Red Sea. According to rabbinic tradition, no one wanted to be the first to enter and cross, until finally Nahshon jumped in. See *Mekhilta, Beshallah* 5; *BT Sotah* 37a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 42; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 13:7. Here, Aaron, Nahshon, and Moses symbolize the sefirotic triad of *Hesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*. See *Zohar* 3:181b, 260b.

On the superiority of Moses' prophecy, see above, [note 163](#). On the sefirotic significance of *bread from heaven*, see above, [pp. 111-12](#), [n. 173](#). On manna being given to Israel through the merit of Moses, see above, [pp. 157-58](#), [n. 294](#).

Numbers 21:5 (recording a later Israelite complaint) reads in full: *The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why did you bring us up from Egypt to die in the desert? For there is no bread and there is no water, and our throat [or: very self; innards] loathes the wretched bread."*

[175.](#) **ואם ככה את עושה לי (Ve-im kakhah at osah li), If so, I am made to be You...** The simple sense of the clause is *If this is how את (at), You, treat me*. The context (Numbers 11:14-15) reads: *I cannot by myself carry this entire people, for it is too heavy for me. If this is how You treat me, kill me, please, instantly, if I have found favor in Your eyes—so that I won't have to see my wretchedness.*

As explained above ([notes 157-58](#)), in this verse the normally feminine pronoun את (at), "you," actually represents the original form of the masculine pronoun "you," but the *Zohar* reads it hyperliterally as the feminine pronoun, alluding to *Shekhinah*. Here, Rabbi Abba interprets the clause as follows: *If so*—if Israel is demanding meat instead of manna—then *I am made to be at, You*: demoted from the rung of *Tif'eret* (symbolized by heaven, the source of manna) to the rung of *Shekhinah* (referred to by the feminine pronoun at, You), who is symbolized by earth and associated with meat.

See Rashi on Numbers 11:15; Deuteronomy 5:24; Nahmanides on Numbers 11:15. Cf. BT *Berakhot* 32a. See also *Zohar* 2:82b: "Compared to [Moses] all the prophets are like females compared to a male." On descending to a lower rung as "dying," see above, [p. 382](#), [n. 222](#).

[176.](#) **Gather for Me seventy men...** The seventy elders are linked with *Shekhinah*, and they can provide the Israelites with meat, so that Moses (linked with *Tif'eret* and the manna) will not be impaired or tainted. Still, the elders

receive their illumination from that of Moses, just as his *sefirah*, *Tif'eret* (symbolized by the sun) illumines *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the moon).

The association of the seventy elders with *Shekhinah* may derive from the fact that She is pictured as the Divine Court—comprising the Sanhedrin, which was composed of seventy members (plus its presiding officer). On the connection between the seventy elders (in Numbers) and the Sanhedrin, see, e.g., *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 41.

177. *Your father and your mother will rejoice...* The first half of the verse now alludes to Moses' divine parents: the blessed Holy One (*Tif'eret*) and Assembly of Israel (*Shekhinah*). The conclusion of the verse refers to Moses' biological mother, Jochebed: *she who bore you*.

This interpretation of *father* and *mother* is based on a passage in BT *Berakhot* 35b, in the name of Rabbi Ḥanina son of Papa: "Whoever enjoys this world without reciting a blessing—it is as if he robs the blessed Holy One and Assembly of Israel, as is said: *He who robs his father and mother and says, 'It is no crime,' is partner to a destroyer* (Proverbs 28:24)—*father* is none other than the blessed Holy One... and *mother* is none other than Assembly of Israel." See above, [pp. 265-66](#), [n. 57](#).

On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, [p. 11](#), [n. 32](#). The verse in Numbers (spoken by God about Moses) reads: *Mouth to mouth I speak with him; וּמִרְאָה (u-mar'eh), and a vision [or: in clear view; clearly; in plain sight], not in riddles; and the image of YHVH he beholds*. See *Sifrei Zuta* 7:89; 12:8; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 83; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 13:2; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 6, p. 115; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 45; *Midrash Aggadah*, Leviticus 25:6; *Zohar* 2:82b; 3:174a.

178. *Moses cried out to YHVH...* Pleading with Him to heal his sister, Miriam, who had been stricken with a skin disease for speaking out against Moses along with Aaron.

Moses' brief prayer—אל נא רפא נא לה (*El na refa na lah*), *God, please, heal her, please*—consists of merely eleven Hebrew letters, which are considered here as a Divine Name. He kept his prayer brief because he did not want to trouble God concerning his own family.

On the brevity of Moses' prayer, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 105; *Mekhilta*, *Beshallah* 3; *Vayassa* 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:15; 15:25; BT *Berakhot* 34a; *Zohar* 2:244b–245a (*Heikh*), 259b (*Heikh*).

On God caring more about the honor of the righteous than His own honor, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 2:6; *Tanḥuma*, *Toledot* 12; *Zohar* 2:64a (Vol. 4, p. 346–47, n. 523); 3:288a (*IZ*).