



Oholei Yoel

Learning a Maamor

לע"נ

הרב יואל בן יצחק מאיר הכהן ליפשיץ ז"ל ♦ הגאון החסיד ר' יואל בן ר' רפאל הכהן כהן ז"ל

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15 Songs of Ascent

Understanding the song of war

(d"h Shir Hamaalos, 5740)



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☆ LETTER FROM THE EDITOR ☆

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By the Grace of G-d

We are approaching the Rebbe's 120th birthday, a day in which we each search to reciprocate in some way the selfless caring and dedication the Rebbe so tirelessly tends* to us. The greatest gift that a chossid can give the Rebbe is *hiskashrus*, connection and dedication to the Rebbe, which the Rebbe himself defines as, "You ask how can you be bound (*m'kushar*) to me when I do not know you personally... The true bond is created by studying Torah. When you study my *maamarim*, read the *sichot*."

A *maamor*, among all the teachings of a Rebbe, has a unique place. The way it is delivered, in which all the chassidim rise up and stand, our Rebbe would close his eyes, bind his hand with a handkerchief, and said in a very specific sing-song fashion. The *maamor*, in a way, defines the Rebbe being a Rebbe, as we find in the Rebbe's comment concerning the *Rebbe RaSHaB*, Rabbi Sholom DovBer, who for ten years refused to sit in his father's place, nor to publicly display behaviors of being the Rebbe, and nevertheless, the Rebbe states that being that the *Rebbe RaSHaB* did deliver a *maamor*, that with this he became the Rebbe. The *Alter Rebbe*, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, referred to *maamorim* teachings as the central gem in the crown of G-d. The *Mittler Rebbe*, Rabbi Dovber of Lubavitch, referred to his *maamorim* as his *essence* (as the *semen essence* of a man). Chassidim, when seeing a Rebbe deliver a *maamor* would say, "I saw the kettle (boiling over and) *whistling*," and hence, it is in the *maamorim* of a Rebbe that it was most said that, "The righteous are similar to their Creator," and just as concerning G-d's relationship to the His Torah, it is said, "ANoiCHY: *Ana Nafshis CHisovis Yehovis - I, in my writings have placed Myself*," and, "Take Me a *Trumah* (תרומה; *Torah-M'* - תורה-מ')," that, "When you take the Torah, it is Me that you are taking!" So too, it is with a Rebbe and his *maamorim*.



However, with the Rebbe's *maamorim*, there is the unique challenge in which the Rebbe's *maamorim* often serve as the, "the collector for all the other camps," tying up all the *loose ends*, so to speak, of the *maamorim* of all his predecessors, and together with this, bringing them all to unprecedented heights and depths. Often, this entails ever so brief *one-liner*, which reference to an entire in-depth explanation of his predecessors. Hence, there is the need to give background to these concepts, in order to understand what the Rebbe is telling us in the *maamor*. My hope is that in this arena I have served you well. Additionally, I have added after each chapter a *Test Yourself*, followed by meditations based upon the teachings of that chapter.

May our present studying of the Rebbe's *maamorim* usher in the era in which we will hear, "New Torah [teachings] from Me will come forth," from the Rebbe's mouth.

Avrohom Hakohain Lipszyc
Oholei Yoel, A project of *The Jewish Mind, Inc.*

*Present tense. See Talmud (-Sota 13b), "Just as there, (where it says: 'And he was there with the -L-rd,' it means that) he was standing and serving; so too, here, (when it says: "And Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there," it means that) he was standing and serving."

Editor's Note: Parenthesis in an original text or quote remains the regular font size, while the translator's notes inserted in a quote are in a smaller size font.

☆ SUMMARY ☆

◆ Core Issue Discussed

The war with exile, its purpose, how we overcome it, and why we wage it with a song.

◆ Synapsis

Chapter One:

The Rebbe introduces the teaching that there are two opinions concerning what Jacob, while he was in the house of Laban, prayed in order to protect himself: (a) The 15 chapters of 120-134 in the book of Psalms, known as the *15 Songs of Ascent*, and (b) the entire book of Psalms. Asking the question, according to the first opinion, what is the specific connection between the *15 Songs of Ascent* and Jacob's being in exile in the house of Laban?

Chapter Two:

We learn about the battle technique of bringing together all our forces against one force of our enemy. Spiritually speaking, this is bringing together our *Holy Emotions* of *Love* (Abraham), *Fear* (Isaac) and *Compassion* (Jacob) against each individual emotion of the *Other Side*. This is what the *15 Songs of Ascent* represent, the years in which Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were physically alive together.

Chapter Three:

In this chapters we explore a mystical insight to the number 15, in which the *Higher Intellects* bring about a unity among the *Lower Emotions*.

Chapter Four:

In this chapter we are given the mystical insight as to why the *15 Songs of Ascent* begin at chapter 120 of the Book of Psalms.

Chapter Five:

In this chapter we are explained why Jacob, the man of *Truth of Truths*, went through the war of exile with song and revealed joy.

Chapter Six:

In this chapter we are explained the final verse in our chapter of the *15 Songs of Ascent*, "I am at peace, but when I speak, they [come] to [wage] war," that while praying and searching to serve G-d through peace, nevertheless, for the sake of elevation from *Righteous* to *Returnee*, G-d brings upon us the service of war.

☆ INTRODUCTION ☆

There is a custom dating at least as far back to the Baal Shem Tov¹ that each day one should recite the chapter of Psalms that corresponds to one's age. For example, a 13-year-old, who is in his or her fourteenth year of life, would recite Psalm 14 for the duration of that year.²

Wishing to be spiritually connected to their Rebbe, many chassidim have the custom to recite the psalm corresponding to the age of their Rebbe.³ As the Rebbe explained regarding reciting the psalm of the Previous Rebbe, doing so is a vehicle through which we receive many material and spiritual blessings. Reciting the Rebbe's psalm connects one to the Rebbe, and is beneficial both to the Rebbe and oneself.

The custom is to continue reciting the Rebbe's chapter even after his passing, for the lives of the righteous are spiritual, and as long as their disciples continue following in their path, the righteous are spiritually alive as well.

The Previous Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch, provides an insight into the relevance of these psalms. In a diary entry dated 20 Marcheshvan 5705 (1944), the birthday of his own father and Rebbe, who passed away 24 years prior, the Previous Rebbe records:

"In my dream I saw my holy father dressed in Shabbat attire, and his face was full of great joy. He said, 'On this day, when I completed 84 years since my soul came down into the lower world, I will have holy guests, and according to the order, each one will expound upon a verse in chapter 84 of Psalms...'"

Accordingly, chassidim of the Rebbe, who was born in 1902, are now (11 Nisan, 5781-2 (2021-22)), saying Psalm 120, since it has been 119 years since his birth. In honor of the upcoming 11th of Nisan (April 12, 2022), on which we conclude saying chapter 120, and begin saying chapter 121, we have chosen the Rebbe's maamor upon chapter 120, which the Rebbe delivered in 5740 (1980), for the 119th birthday, (entering into his 120th year) of the *Rebbe RaSHaB*, Rabbi Sholom DovBer of Lubavitch (1860-1920).

1. See Sichot Kodesh 5733, vol. 2, p. 9, that the Baal Shem Tov was taught this custom by his teacher, Achiyah Hashiloni ([-Link](#)).

2. Sefer Haminhagim—Chabad, p. 17.

3. *ibid*

☆ CHAPTERS ONE ☆

The Rebbe introduces the teaching that there are two opinions concerning what Jacob, while he was in the house of Laban, prayed in order to protect himself: (a) The 15 chapters of 120-134 in the book of Psalms, known as the *15 Songs of Ascent*, and (b) the entire book of Psalms. Asking the question, according to the first opinion, what is the specific connection between the *15 Songs of Ascent* and Jacob's being in exile in the house of Laban?

"A song of scents... I am at peace, but when I speak, they [come] to [wage] war." (-Psalms 120:1&7)

This verse is the beginning of *15 Songs of Ascent* in the *Book of Psalms* (-chapters 120-134), coinciding with there being fifteen steps (-[Link](#)) [in the Holy Temple (-[Link](#))] descending from the *Israelite's Courtyard* (-[Link](#)) to the *Women's Courtyard* (-[Link](#)) upon which the Levites stood with their musical instruments and said praise (sang songs).

And the midrash (-[Link](#); Bereishit Rabba, Portion 68:11) says that Jacob (-[Link](#)) said these *15 Songs of Ascent* of the *Book of Psalms* when he was living in the house of Laban (-[Link](#)), for it is stated (-Psalms 124:1), "A song of ascents. Of David. Had it not been for G-d Who was with us, let Israel declare now," -Yisroel Sava¹ (*Israel the Old*; a title used specifically for) Jacob our Patriarch.

And another opinion is, that Jacob recited the entire *Book of Psalms*, for it is stated (-ibid 22:4), "And (; but) You (G-d) are holy; You await (; dwell upon) the praises of Israel," -Yisroel Sava¹.

And we need to understand: Granted that according to the opinion that he said the whole *Book of Psalms*, it is understood the relevance of Jacob's saying (praying) them when he left the house of Isaac our Patriarch (-[Link](#)) and arrived at the house of Laban, for he was there (in the house of Laban) in a status and situation of exile.

--Simply speaking, as Jacob states (-Genesis 31:40), "I was [in the field] by day when the heat consumed me, and the frost at night, and my sleep wandered from my eyes," meaning that he had no day, nor night, etc., in ways of great pain, etc..

[To the point that the *Alter Rebbe* (-[Link](#)) states (-Shulchon Aruch, Choshen Mishpat, Laws of Body Damage, Simon 4 in Kuntres Acharon) that, "the heat consumed me, and the frost at night," needs great perusal, according to the opinion² that it is forbidden to cause grief to one's body, even for the necessity of money]

And so too, concerning spiritual matters, in which Jacob's occupation was with the sheep, [-Heb. *tzoin*], of Laban, and *tzoin* is (mystically) of the terminology

שיר המעלות וגו' אני שלום וכי אדבר המה למלחמה.

הנה פסוק זה הוא התחלת ט"ו שיר המעלות שבספר תהלים, שכנגדם היו חמש עשרה מעלות היורדות מעזרת ישראל לעזרת נשים שעליהן ליום עומדין בכלי שיר ואומרים שירה.

ואיתא במדרש, שט"ו שיר המעלות שבספר תהלים אמרם יעקב אבינו בהיותו בבית לבן, שנאמר שיר המעלות לדוד לולי ה' שהי' לנו יאמר נא ישראל, ישראל סבא (יעקב אבינו).

ועוד דעה, שכל ספר תהלים הי' אומר, שנאמר ואתה קדוש יושב תהלות ישראל, ישראל סבא.

וצריך להבין, דבשלמא להדעה שכל ספר תהלים הי' אומר, מובנת השייכות של אמירתם ע"י יעקב לאחרי שיצא מבית יצחק אביו והגיע לבית לבן, ששם הי' במעמד ומצב של גלות –

הן בפשטות הענינים, כפי שאמר, שלא הי' לו לא יום ולא לילה כו', באופן של צער גדול כו'

[ועד שרבינו הזקן אומר שצע"ג מיעקב אבינו שאכלו חורב וקרה, איך זה מתאים עם הדעה הסוברת שאסור לצער את גופו אפילו לצורך ממון],

והן בנוגע לרוחניות הענינים, שהתעסק עם צאן לבן, שצאן הוא מלשון יציאה

yetziah (to exit), which is (mystically) the concept of *Berurrim* (refinement; elevation (*yetziah*)) of the concepts (G-dly Sparks) which are (trapped) outside of the parameters of holiness.

Which therefore, Laban said (to Jacob (-Genesis 31:43)), "The daughters are my daughters, and the sons are my sons, and the animals are my animals, and all that you see is mine," as the *Mittler Rebbe* (-[Link](#)) explains (-Toras Chaim, Vayeitze, d"h Vayaskem Lavan) to mean that these are all *Sparks* that Jacob elevated from the realm of Laban (outside of holiness).

(Jacob's being exiled, working in the unholy realm of Laban was) to the point that his being in the house of Laban effected upon him a descent, so to speak, from his (holy) level, as the words of Rashi (-[Link](#), -ibid 29:12), that Jacob said, "if with trickery he (Laban) comes, I too, am his brother (Laban was Jacob's maternal uncle) *in trickery*," meaning that Jacob had the concept of trickery (a total descent for Jacob), in the likes of the trickery of Laban (showing that Jacob had been negatively effected by being in Laban's house. (Hence, we see that Jacob was in a state of exile being by Laban))--

And upon this does the Midrash ask: What did he (Jacob) say --[not what was Jacob *busy with*, for the verse clearly specifies that he had worked with Laban's sheep with all of his strength, but the meaning (of the Midrash's question) is,]-- what did he say (pray; study) in order that he should be able to successfully overcome the hardships of the exile of being in Laban's house?

And to this the answer is, he said the entire *Book of Psalms*, being that in his present state, simply speaking, he was not able to study Torah with deep reflection --[at least not as he did when he hid in the *House of Eiver*³]-- (Hence,) he said praises (the *Book of Psalms*) to the Holy One, blessed be He, upon which (the words of *Psalms*) one takes the reward as (the study of the laws of) *Lesions and Tents*⁴.

(Saying the entire *Book of Psalms* makes sense,) However, according to the opinion that Jacob said (only and specifically) the *15 Songs of Ascent* of the *Book of Psalms* it is not understood, as to what is the connection between them and the specific situation of Jacob in the house of Laban.

שזהו"ע הברורים בענינים שהם מחוץ לענין הקדושה,

שלכן אמר לבן הבנות בנותי והבנים בני והצאן צאני גו', כפי שמבאר אדמו"ר האמצעי, שהיו אלו הברורים שיעקב אבינו בירר מעולמו של לבן.

ועד שהיותו בבית לבן פעלה בו ירידה כביכול ממדרגתו, כדברי רש"י שיעקב אמר אם לרמאות הוא בא, גם אני אחיו ברמאות, והיינו, שהי' אצלו ענין הרמאות בדוגמת הרמאות של לבן.

ועל זה שואל במדרש: מה הי' אומר, שהפי' בזה [לא במה הי' יעקב עסוק בהיותו בבית לבן, שהרי מפורש בכתוב שעבד בצאן לבן בכל כחו, אלא הפי' הוא], מה הי' אומר (התפלל, למד) כדי שיוכל לעבור ולצלוח את קשיי הגלות בבית לבן.

והמענה על זה, כל ספר תהלים הי' אומר, כי בהיותו במצב שבפשטות לא הי' יכול ללמוד תורה בעיון (עכ"פ כפי שלמד בהיותו טמון בבית עבר¹), הי' אומר תהלות להקב"ה שעליהם נוטלים שכר כנגעים ואהלות.

אבל להדעה שהי' אומר ט"ו שיר המעלות שבספר תהלים, אינו מובן, מהי שייכותם המיוחדת למצבו של יעקב בבית לבן.

Notes:

1. Even though the verse seems to be using the term *Israel* as referring to the Jewish people in general, the Midrash is homiletically referring it specifically to Jacob, whose name was also Israel.
2. The Talmud (-Baba Kama 91b) quotes an argument between the teaching of the Mishna (-[Link](#)) and of the Braita (-[Link](#)) quoting Rabbi Akiba's (-[Link](#)) opinion. The *Yam Shel Shlomo* (-[Link](#)) on the Talmud (-Simon 59) extrapolates from the story concerning Rabbi Akiba, that the opinion (Mishna's version) of not harming self is even for the need of money.
3. Our sages teach us that for 14 years, after Jacob left Isaac's home, running away from Esau, before going to Laban's house, Jacob first hid at the *House* (study hall) of *Eiver* (-[Link](#)) and studied Torah.
4. *Lesions and Tents*, refers to very difficult laws in the categories of which *Lesions* are rendered as impure, and of the categories of impurities that a *Tent* carries from an impure object or person to all the other people and objects in the tent. The sages (-Midrash Tehillim 1) teach us that one who recites the words of psalms receives a reward as if he was studying with deep reflection the laws of *Lesions and Tents*.

◆ 15 Songs of Ascent

This *maamor* (-[Link](#)) was delivered by the Rebbe (-[Link](#)) on Shabbat of the Torah-portion of *Vayeirai*, 1979, which coincided with the 20th of the Jewish calendar month of Chesvan, which was the 119th birthday of Rabbi Sholom DovBer of Lubavitch (-[Link](#)). Therefore, the *maamor* is upon Psalms 120 (-see INTRODUCTION above).

The *maamor* explores this chapter of Psalms as the opening of *15 Shir Hamaalos -Songs of Ascent* (-chapters 120-134). These fifteen chapters are a segment of Psalms upon which the Talmud (-Sukkah 51b) states, "[The musicians would stand] on the fifteen stairs that descend from the [Holy Temple's] Israelites' courtyard to the Women's Courtyard, corresponding to the fifteen [Songs of the] Ascents in Psalms, and upon which the Levites stand with musical instruments and recite their song."

The Rebbe focuses on a teaching of the Midrash (-Bereishit Rabba, Portion 68:11), which has two opinions on what Jacob did at night for the 21 years that he was by his father-in-law, Laban:

"All the twenty years that Jacob (-[Link](#)) stayed in the house of Laban (-[Link](#)) he did not lay down (to sleep). And what did he say (at night while he was up)?"

"Rabbi Yehoshua son of Levi (-[Link](#)) said, 'the 15 Song of Ascent in the Book of Psalms.' What is his reason? (For it says -Psalms 124:1) 'A song of ascents. Of David. Had it not been for the L-rd Who was with us, let Israel declare now,' Israel, refers to 'Israel Sava,' (a nickname for Jacob, who was given by G-d the name Israel).

"Rabbi Shmuel the son of Nachman (-[Link](#)) says, 'He said the entire Book of Psalms.' Why? (Because the verse Psalms 22:4 states), 'But You are holy; You await the praises of Israel: to 'Israel Sava,' (a nickname for Jacob, who was given by G-d the name Israel)."

Now, according to the second opinion, that Jacob recited the entire *Book of Psalms*, it is understood that being that after leaving the house of his father Isaac (-[Link](#)), Jacob was in a state of exile, and therefore, Jacob was reciting psalms in order to protect himself from the difficulties and pains of exile⁵. And true, while Jacob could not study Torah, at least not as he studied while he was in the School of Eber (-[Link](#)), in which Jacob hid when he first ran away from Esau. Hence, Jacob said psalms. However, why --according to Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi-- would Jacob specifically recite the *15 Songs of Ascent*?

5. And with this we understand the Midrash's question, "What did he (Jacob) say (while at the House of Laban)?" The Midrash isn't asking what Jacob was doing while he was at Laban's house, because the verse (-Genesis 31:6) tells us explicitly what Jacob worked with all his strength" tending to the sheep of Laban

*To the point that Jewish Law (-Shulchan Oruch Admu"r HaZaken, Hilchois She'elah V'Schirus, Simon 20), that an employee must work with all his strength!

◆ Jacob's Exile in the House of Laban

Here, Jacob's state of exile at the House of Laban is discussed, both, on a physical and spiritual level.

Physically: The verse (-Genesis 31:40) states, "I was [in the field] by day when the heat consumed me, and the frost at night, and my sleep wandered from my eyes." Meaning, that Jacob had for himself, neither day nor night.

The extent of the level of suffering with which Jacob worked is even questioned (-Shulchan Oruch Admu"r HaZaken, CHoshen Mishpat, Hilchois Nizkei Guf V'Nefesh, Simon 4 in Kuntres Acharoin) by Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi (-[Link](#)): There is an opinion that one is not allowed to harm himself even in order to earn a living, so how was Jacob allowed to work for Laban under these terms?! (-See NOTE 2 above.)

Hence, we see clearly that Jacob was physically in a state of exile while in the house of Laban.

Spiritually: Jacob's work was with the *Sheep* of Laban. The Hebrew word for sheep is *Tzoin*. There is a mystical teaching (-Torah Ohr, Vayeitzei 23c) that the word *Tzoin* is connected with the word *Yetziah*, which means *going out*. This mystically refers to *going out* of the realm of *Holiness*, into the realm of the *Other Side*, for the sake of refining and elevating the *Fallen Sparks*, which have fallen there. Which is the legitimate reason that when Laban chased down Jacob, as Jacob was returning home with his wives, children and possessions, Laban told Jacob (-Genesis 31:43), "*The daughters are my daughters, and the sons are my sons, and the animals are my animals, and all that you see is mine.*" The *Mittler Rebbe*, Rabbi Dov Ber of Lubavitch (-[Link](#)) explains (-Toras Chaim, Vayeitzei, d"h Vayashkeim Lavan) this to mean, that all of these were the *birurim* (refinement and elevation of the *Sparks*) from the world of Laban. Hence, Jacob was in exile, for he had to leave his own realm of holiness, and *go out* into the *Other Side* realm of Laban.

Even more than this, Jacob himself was negatively effected from going out to the house of Laban, as Rashi tells us (-Genesis 29:12), when Jacob first arrived and met Laban's daughter, Rachel, and Jacob introduced himself as being the, "*brother of her father*," that, "*If he (Laban) comes to deceive me, I, too, am his brother in deception.*" Meaning, that Jacob, as soon as he had to enter into Laban's world, Jacob already had within him the capacity of deception, on the same level that Laban had!

◆ *The Question*

Now, we understand Jacob's need for special prayers in order to survive the state of exile he sustained while in the house of Laban, and we understand the redeeming powers of the *Book of Psalms*. However, according to the first opinion, that it was specifically the psalm chapters of the *15 Songs of Ascent*, which Jacob said to overcome the exile, we need to understand: What is the specific connection between these specific fifteen chapters, to Jacob's redemption from his state of exile, while he was in the house of Laban?

Fallen Sparks

Chassidus, in explaining how the greater nourish from the lower, in the physical pyramid of the *Human, Animal, Plant, and Inanimate*, explains the concept of the *Fallen Sparks* (-[Link](#)).

Our sages (-Bereishis Rabba, Portion 3:7), upon the verse (-Genesis 1:5), "*and it was evening and it was morning, one day*," expound, "*Rabbi Judah bar Simon said: it does not say, 'It was evening,' but 'And it was evening.'* Hence, we derive that there was a time-system prior to this. Rabbi Abbahu said: This teaches us that G-d created worlds and destroyed them, saying, '*This one pleases me; those did not please me.*'"

The *Ariza"l*, Rabbi Isaac Luria (-[Link](#)) defines the world which was created and destroyed as the world of *Tohu* (-[Link](#)), and the world of which G-d said, "*This one pleases me*," as *Tikkun* (-[Link](#)). The world of *Tohu* did not please G-d, for it was not sustainable and it shattered. However, this was all necessary, for the shards of the shattered vessels of *Tohu* fall into the pleasing world of *Tikkun*.

The world of *Tohu* contained a superior *Light* than *Tikkun*, therefore, these *Fallen Sparks*, as they become the *lifeforce* of the *physical*, bring a greater *lifeforce* into the physical of our world, than in its *Tikkun* spirituality. Now, the rule is, "*That which is higher, falls lower*," hence, the lower the categories of the above physical pyramid, the higher the *Fallen Spark*, which has fallen in them. Hence, the order of the food-chain, for (-Deuteronomy 8:3), "*man does not live by bread only, but by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of G-d does man live.*" Meaning, not by the physicality of the food alone, but by the *Spark* within.

However, these *Sparks* are *Fallen*, and in exile. Hence, they must be freed and elevated. This is done, by utilizing the physical not for egocentric purposes, but for the service of G-d. Through this, we break the exile of the physical encasement, and reveal the *Light* of the *Spark*.

◆ Test Yourself



- (1) Which are the *15 Songs of Ascent*, and what do they correspond to?
- (2) What did Jacob do at night, for the 21 years that he worked at the house of his father-in-law, Laban? Why?
- (3) What are the *Fallen Sparks*?
- (4) What is the question of this chapter?

◆ Discussion/Meditation



- (1) If we are meant to live a spiritual life, than why does G-d have us so strenuously engaging with the physical, for both, physical survival, and for observing His commandments, instead of living just a spiritual life of abstinence, in an isolation of prayer and Torah-study?

Answers:

1. Psalms, chapters 120-134. They correspond to the fifteen steps in the Holy Temple, ascending from the *Women's Courtyard* to the *Israelite's Courtyard*. On these 15 steps the Levites stood with the instruments playing and singing during the services of the sacrifices upon the outer altar.
 2. He recited psalms. According to Rabbi Yehoshua son of Levi, it was the *Fifteen Songs of Ascents*, while according to Rabbi Shmuel son of Nachman it was the entire *Book of Psalms*. That he be protected from the physical and spiritual state of exile that he sustained there.
 3. The *Fallen Sparks* are the shards of the broken spiritual vessels of the higher world of *Tohu*, which fell into our lower physical world of *Tikkun*.
 4. According to the first opinion, what is the connection between specifically the *15 Songs of Ascent*, and Jacob's overcoming his being in a state of exile while in Laban's house?
- Discussion/Meditations:
 1. Because, it is specifically through engaging with the physical that we can connect with, draw, and reveal the higher *Light of Tohu* into our physical world of *Tikkun*, transforming our world into an abode for G-d.

☆ CHAPTER TWO ☆

We learn about the battle technique of bringing together all our forces against one force of our enemy. Spiritually speaking, this is bringing together our *Holy Emotions of Love* (Abraham), *Fear* (Isaac) and *Compassion* (Jacob) against each individual emotion of the *Other Side*. This is what the *15 Songs of Ascent* represent, the years in which Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were physically alive together.

2) And this will be understood by first exploring what the *Chidahh* (-[Link](#); his commentary (Yosef Tehillos) on Psalms Chapter 120) states (from the allusions of the ancient Ashkenazi rabbis), that the *15 Songs of Ascent*, David, of blessed memory, said in correspondence to the fifteen years that the patriarchs lived together.

[For Abraham lived one hundred and seventy-five years, Isaac was born when Abraham was one hundred years old, and Jacob was born when Isaac was sixty years old, Hence, there were fifteen years that the patriarchs lived together.]

Now, according to this we can say, that (Jacob's) saying the *15 Songs of Ascent* in the *Book of Psalms*, was to arouse (also) the merit of the patriarchs Abraham and Isaac. That is, that in addition to his own merit and power, the powers of Abraham and Isaac should be drawn, as well. And through this specifically, he will be able to overcome and succeed all the difficulties in the house of Laban, as he (Jacob) said (-Genesis 31:42), "*Had not the G-d of my father, the G-d of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, been for me, (you would now have sent me away empty handed).*"

And the concept of this is, upon the verse (-Genesis 29:3), "*And all the flocks would gather there,*" Chassidus explains (-Tzemach Tzedek's (-[Link](#)) *maamor*, d'h V'yar V'hinei Beer Basodeh, etc.) according to the metaphor of a tactic of war (that they learned from a war⁶ that was in the times of the *Alter Rebbe*).

The (original) tactic of war was that the legions of an army were divided in three, one placed in the center, and the other two, to the right and to the left. The opposing army would do this as well, and they then wage war one army against the other.

The format (which they learned from that war) to win the war, is to bring together all three platoons together against one platoon of the enemy. And this is called, "*Attacking*," for all three platoons are circling around one of the enemy's platoon. And through this (tactic) one will definitely win against the enemy's platoon, and then to do this as well

(ב) ויובן בהקדם מ"ש החיד"א (מרמזי רבני אשכנז הקדמונים), ש"ו שיר המעלות אמר דוד ע"ה כנגד ט"ו שנים שחיו האבות ביחד [שהרי אברהם אבינו חי מאה שנה ושבעים שנה וחמש שנים, ויצחק נולד כשאברהם הי' בן מאת שנה, ויעקב נולד כשיצחק הי' בן ששים שנה, ונמצא שהיו ט"ו שנים שחיו האבות ביחד].

ועפ"ז י"ל, שאמירת ט"ו שיר המעלות שבספר תהלים היתה בכדי לעורר (גם) זכות האבות אברהם ויצחק, היינו, שנוסף על הזכות והכחות שלו יומשכו לו גם הכחות של אברהם ויצחק, ודוקא עי"ז יוכל לעבור ולצלוח את הקשיים בבית לבן, כפי שאמר לולי אלקי אבי אלקי אברהם ופחד יצחק הי' לי גו'.

והענין בזה, דהנה מבואר בחסידות מ"ש ונאספו שמה כל העדרים, ע"פ משל ממערכות המלחמה (שלמדו מהמלחמה שהיתה בזמנו של רבינו הזקן).

שהסדר בזה, שמחלקים כל א' החיל שלו לג' חלקים, חלק א' באמצע כו' ושתי ידות מימין ומשמאל, וכן מסדר גם הצד שכנגדו לג' חלקים כאלו, ונלחמים אלו מול אלו. וההצלחה במלחמה נעשית עי"ז שמעמידים כל הג' מחנות שלו נגד מחנה וחלק א' של השונא, וזהו הנקרא אטאקירען, כיון שכל ג' מחנות שלו מסבבים מחנה א' של השונא, ועי"ז יתגבר בודאי עלי', ואח"כ יעשה כן למחנה הב' של השונא, וכן לג', עד כלותם.

upon the second platoon of the enemy, and the third, until (the enemy) is eliminated.

And from this we learn (a lesson) in relationship with our service to G-d

[As the teaching (-Keser Shem Tov, Hosofos, Simon 223) of the Baal Shem Tov (-[Link](#)) that from everything that we see or hear, one needs to learn a lesson in service to G-d]

That in order to win the war against the *Evil Inclination* (-[Link](#)), we need to arouse *all three Holy Emotions* (Love, Fear, and Compassion) against *one* emotion of the *Klipah*⁷, and through this it will definitely fall, and we will win over it. As in the metaphor of the, "Attacking (format of war)" And so too, after this, to arouse all three *Holy Emotions* against the second emotion of the *Klipah*, until they are all eliminated.

And this is the (mystical) meaning of the verse, "And all the flocks would gather there," in which (all the flocks) are Love, Fear and Compassion of Holiness.

And with this it is understood the (Jacob's) need for the *15 Songs of Ascent*, which correspond to the 15 years that the patriarchs lived together. For through this there are the three *Holy Emotions* together. For this is the concept of the patriarchs: Love (Abraham), Fear (Isaac), and Compassion (Jacob). With this (bringing together all three *Holy Emotions*) there is the strength to stand strong against all the trials and tribulations of exile, and to nullify them.

And we will better understand the connection between the *15 Songs of Ascent* and the (spiritual) service of Jacob, according to the second comment brought by the *Chidahhh*, that the *15 Songs of Ascent* are in correspondence with the 15 words in the verse (-Genesis 21:11; concerning Jacob's travels to Laban):

וַיִּפְגַּע בַּמָּקוֹם וַיִּלְוֶן שָׁם כִּי-בָא הַשָּׁמֶשׁ וַיִּקַּח מֵאֲבָנֵי הַמָּקוֹם וַיָּשֶׂם
מֵרָאשֵׁיתוֹ וַיִּשְׁכַּב בַּמָּקוֹם הַהוּא:

("And he arrived at the place and lodged there because the sun had set, and he took some of the stones of the place and placed [them] at his head, and he lay down in that place.")

ומזה למדים בנוגע לעבודת ה'

[כתורת הבעש"ט שמכל ענין שרואים או שומעים, צריך ללמוד
הוראה בעבודת ה'],

שכדי לנצח במלחמת היצר, יש לעורר כל ג' מדות דקדושה (אהבה ויראה ורחמים) לעומת מדת אחת דקליפה, ועי"ז בודאי יפילו וינצחו אותה, וזהו כמשל האטאקירען כו', וכמו"כ אח"כ יעירו ג' מדות דקדושה הנ"ל נגד מדה השנית דקליפה, עד כלותם.

וזהו פירוש הפסוק ונאספו שמה כל העדרים, שהם אהוי"ר ורחמנות דקדושה כו'.

ועפ"ז מובן הצורך בט"ו שיר המעלות שהם כנגד ט"ו שנים שחיו האבות ביחד, כיון שע"י שישנם ג' מדות דקדושה ביחד, שזהו ענינם של ג' האבות, אהבה ויראה ורחמים, אזי ישנו הכח לעמוד בכל הנסיונות של הגלות ולבטל אותם כו'.

ויובן יותר הקשר דט"ו שיר המעלות עם עבודת יעקב, ע"פ פירוש הב' המובא בחיד"א, שט"ו שיר המעלות הם כנגד ט"ו תיבות שבפסוק ויפגע במקום גו' ויקח מאבני המקום

6. The Seven Year War (-[Link](#))

-See (-[Link](#)): "French foreign minister, Choiseul developed a plan to invade Britain in three separate places at Portsmouth, Essex and Scotland. He oversaw the construction of a massive fleet of transports to convey the troops during 1759. Defeats of the French navy at Lagos and Quiberon Bay put an end to these plans and he was forced to call off the invasion in the late autumn."

This may be what the explanation of the *maamor* is referring to.

7. *Klipah* means *husk*, referring to the peel that covers the fruit. So too, the *Klipah* covers, denies and blocks the *Light* which is within it. Another name used for this in the teachings is *Sitra Acharah* -the Other Side.

Which, from that rock⁸, was made the drainpipes⁹, and it is the *Foundation Rock*¹⁰.

For, upon the concept of, "*And all the flocks would gather,*" it is also explained that gathering the flock --which refer to the three *Holy Emotions of Love, Fear and Compassion of Holiness--* is accomplished, "*and they would roll the rock off the mouth of the well.*"

For *rock* shows upon the physicality and coarseness of the world, for among the *Four Categories of Inanimate, Vegetation, Animal and Human*, the lowest category is that of *Inanimate*.

And through the, "*And all the flocks would gather,*" was accomplished, "*and they would roll the rock off,*" that the coarseness and physicality of the world is refined, and is converted to holiness.

And this is also the concept of, "*And he took from the stones of the place, and he placed them at his head.*" For *stones of the place* show upon all of the existence of *This [physical] World*, that each existence occupies its own place (*stones of the place*), and, "*stones*," is plural, which is the concept of separation¹¹.

And upon this it states (first) "*And he took from the stones* (plural) *of the place, and he placed them at his head,*" and then, "*and he took the stone* (singular¹²) *that he had placed at his head,*" that all the existence of *This (physical) World* is refined and transformed into holiness.

To the point that, "*from this stone was made the drainpipes, and it is the Foundation Rock,*" which is connected with the Holy Temple¹⁰, and from it was drawn forth into the entire world¹². As our sages teach (-Talmud, Yoma 54b) concerning the *Foundation Rock*, "*From it the world was created.*"

So too, concerning the *drainpipes*, that they, "*descend to the depths*¹³," which, *the depths*, is the foundation of the entire world

8. The *Chidahhh* is giving a mystical concept, connecting the *15 Songs of Ascent* with the verse concerning the rocks that Jacob placed by his head, and then based upon the Zohar, that this rock that Jacob took from by his head is connected to the drainpipes (of the altar), which is (connected to) the *Foundation Rock* (in the Holies of Holy). --See the explanation on this chapter to understand these concepts.
9. There were drainpipes built into the altar, which extended to beneath the altar. --See the explanation on this chapter to understand this concept.

שמהאבן ההיא נעשו שיתין, והיא אבן השתי'.

דהנה, בענין ונאספו כל העדרים מבואר גם שע"י אסיפת כל העדרים, שקאי על ג' מדות דקדושה, אהוי"ר ורחמנות דקדושה, נפעל וגללו את האבן מעל פי הבאר

– שאבן מורה על גשמיות וחומריות העולם, כיון שבין ד' הסוגים של דצח"מ הנה הסוג הכי תחתון הוא סוג הדומם,

וע"י הענין דונאספו כל העדרים, נפעל וגללו את האבן, שמבררים את חומריות וגשמיות העולם, ומהפכים זאת לקדושה.

וזהו גם הענין דויפגע במקום גו' ויקח מאבני המקום, שאבני המקום מורים על עניני עוה"ז, שכל אחד מהם תופס מקום לעצמו (אבני המקום), ואבני (המקום) הוא לשון רבים, שזהו"ע של פירוד.

ועז"נ ויקח מאבני המקום וישם מראשותיו, ואח"כ ויקח את האבן אשר שם מראשותיו, אבן לשון יחיד, שמבררים ומהפכים את כל הענינים של עוה"ז לקדושה.

ועד שמהאבן ההיא נעשו שיתין, והיא אבן שתי', שזה קשור עם ביהמ"ק, וממנו נמשך בכל העולם,

כמארז"ל בנוגע לאבן שתי' שממנה הושתת העולם,

ועד"ז בנוגע לשיתין שיורדין עד התהום, שהתהום הוא יסוד כל העולם כולו

ועד שמהאבן ההיא נעשו שיתין, והיא אבן שתי', שזה קשור עם ביהמ"ק, וממנו נמשך בכל העולם, כמארז"ל בנוגע לאבן שתי' שממנה הושתת העולם,

ועד"ז בנוגע לשיתין שיורדין עד התהום, שהתהום הוא יסוד כל העולם כולו

10. Our sages teach that a stone sat in the Holy of Holies, and it was called, "*Even Shetiyya -Foundation Rock*. --See the explanation on this chapter to understand this concept.
11. Kabbalah and Chassidus explain that what defines holiness and purity from impurity is that holiness is all about unity, while impurity and the *Other Side* are defined by separation. -See CHAPTER 6: *PUBLIC VS PRIVATE DOMAIN*.
12. --See the explanation on this chapter to understand this concept.
13. An opinion in the Talmud, Sukka 49a. --See the explanation on this chapter to understand this concept.

◆ A List of Concepts

In this chapter, the Rebbe touches upon a slew of mystical concepts, in his journey to explain the opinion that Jacob recited specifically the *15 Songs of Ascent* in order to overcome his state of exile while being in the house of Laban. The explanation is, exile is all about that the physicality and the coarseness of our world are an opaqueness, which denies the *Light* of G-d within it to be revealed, and hence, the physicality and coarseness of our world needs to be refined into becoming translucent to holiness, and then transformed in itself to holiness. This is what the *15 Songs of Ascent* are all about.

The concepts that serve as the building blocks to understanding this concept are:

- The fifteen years of the coexistence of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob on this world
- The tactic that won the *Seven Year War*
- The *Fifteen-Worded Verse*.
- The *Drainpipes* of the altar.
- The *Foundation Rock* of the Holy Temple

Let us now explore each of the concepts, and then see how the Rebbe is connecting them, building his point.

◆ 15 Years of Coexistence of Abraham, Isaac & Jacob

Abraham lived for 175 years, and had Isaac at the age of 100. Isaac had Jacob at the age of 60. Therefore, when Abraham passed away at the age of 175, Jacob was 15 years old.

Upon this, the *Chidahh* quotes a teaching that the *15 Songs of Ascent* were written for these fifteen years that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were physically alive together.

To understand the connection, the Rebbe begins by explaining that Jacob was evoking the merit of his grandfather Abraham and his father Isaac to join his own merit, in order to win over the exile.

The merit of Abraham was the attribute of *Love*, through which he served G-d, as the verse states (-Isaiah 41:8), "*Abraham who loved Me* (G-d)." The merit of Isaac was the attribute of *Fear*, through which he served G-d, as the verse states (-Genesis 31:42), "*The Fear of Isaac*." The merit of Jacob was the attribute of *Compassion*, through which he served G-d, as Tanya states (-Chapter 45), "*The attribute of our forefather Jacob, peace unto him, this being the attribute of mercy*."

Hence, Jacob's reciting the *15 Songs of Ascent*, which corresponds to the 15 coexisting years of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, which is about bringing together the *Holy Emotions* of *Love*, *Fear* and *Compassion* for G-d.

And in order to understand why Jacob had to bring together all three of the *Holy Emotions* to overcome the exile, the Rebbe introduces us to a teaching concerning the *Seven Year War*.

◆ The Tactic that Won the Seven Year War

When Jacob first arrived to the city of his Laban, he happened upon the following scene (-Genesis 29:2-3 & 7-8): "*And he looked, and behold! a well in the field, and behold! three flocks of sheep lying beside it, because from that well they would water the flocks, and a huge rock was upon the mouth of the well. And all the flocks would gather there, and they would roll the rock off the mouth of the well and water the sheep, and [then] they would return the rock onto the mouth of the well, to its place... And he (Jacob) said, 'The day is yet long; it is not the time to take in the livestock. Water the sheep and go, pasture.' And they (the shepherds) said, 'We cannot [do that], until all the flocks are gathered together, and they will roll the rock off the mouth of the well, and we shall [then] water the sheep.'*"

Focusing on the verse, "*And all the flocks would gather there, and they would roll the rock off the mouth of the well,*" there is an amazing explanation from the *Tzemach Tzedek*, based on what his grandfather,

the *Alter Rebbe* told him, on Friday, a day before the *Alter Rebbe* passed away, in the name of Rabbi Avrohom 'The Angel,' (-[Link](#)) son of his teacher, Rabbi Dovber of Mezeritch (-[Link](#)), which speaks of a war that took place during the lifetime of the *Alter Rebbe*. Many historians refer to this war as the true World War I. The war went on for more than just seven years, in which, each side could not overcome the other side.

Here, the *Tzemach Tzedek* explains that the regular procedure of war was that each army would set up their soldiers into three platoons, center, right and left, and each side would have their platoon wage were on the enemy's coinciding platoon. Finally, in this war, one side decided that in order to win this war, they would bring all of their three platoons together as one, and together attack against only one of the enemy's three platoons, overcoming it, and then moving on to the second of the enemy's platoon, overcoming it, and then moving on to the third, completely overrunning their enemy in entirety.

So too, there are times when the three flocks, the *Three Holy Emotions* of Love, Fear and Compassion, need to be gathered all together, to wage war ("roll the rock off the well") against just one *Egocentric Emotion of Impurity* at a time, and then use all three *Holy Emotions* against the second *Egocentric Emotion of Impurity*, and then use all three *Holy Emotions* against the third *Egocentric Emotion of Impurity*, until all the *Egocentric Emotion of Impurity* are overturned. And this is the mystical meaning behind, "And all the flocks would gather there," all three *Holy Emotions*, and only then could it be, "and they would roll the rock off the mouth of the well."

Now, to fully appreciate this, we need to have a deeper exploration into the, "rock," that they are rolling off the mouth of the well.

◆ The Fifteen-Worded Verse

After the *Chidahh* connects the *15 Songs of Ascent* to the fifteen years that our three patriarchs were alive together, he then brings another explanation that the *15 Songs of Ascent* are connected to the *Fifteen-Worded Verse*¹⁴ (-Genesis 21:11):

וַיִּפְגַּע בַּמָּקוֹם וַיִּלְךְן שָׁם כִּי בָא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וַיִּקַּח מֵאֲבָנֵי הַמָּקוֹם וַיִּשָּׂם מֵרֹאשֵׁיתָיו וַיִּשְׁכַּב בַּמָּקוֹם הַהוּא:

("And he arrived at the place and lodged there because the sun had set, and he took some of the stones of the place and placed [them] at his head, and he lay down in that place.")

Jacob's Pillow

What the Rebbe is going to explain here is based upon the teachings of Chassidus, of what happened on that night that Jacob dreamt of the ladder, which ascended from earth to heaven, and the angels ascending and descending upon it.

After the previous verse, of how Jacob gathered stones (plural), placing them around his head, his going to sleep, and his having the dream, the verse then goes on to say (-verse 18), "And Jacob arose early in the morning, and he took **the stone** (singular) that he had placed at his head, and he set it up as a monument, and he poured oil on top of it."

Right away, on the plural language in verse 11, Rashi explains the discrepancy between the plural and the singular in verse 18:

"He arranged them in the form of a drainpipe around his head because he feared the wild beasts. They [the stones] started quarreling with one another. One said, 'Let the righteous man lay his head on me,' and another one said, 'Let him lay [his head] on me.' Immediately, the Holy One, blessed be He, made them into one stone. This is why it is stated (-verse 18): 'and he took the stone [in the singular] that he had placed at his head.'"

With this teaching, which Rashi takes from the Talmud (-Chulin 91b), Chassidus explains the entire journey of Jacob from his father's home in *Be'er Sheba* (lit. *Well of Seven; Well of Oath* -Two high levels in holiness, from which the soul comes), to Laban's home in *Haran* (lit. *Anger* -the place of egocentrism, narcissi, sin; which angers G-d), is in order to refine, elevate and transform the place of *Anger* into a pleasurable

Dwelling Place for G-d.

This journey begins with, "And he arrived at the place and lodged there because the sun had set, and he took some of the stones of the place and placed [them] at his head, and he lay down in that place." Jacob takes from the lowest levels of the physicality and coarseness of our *Physical World of Separation* from holiness, in which the opaqueness of the ego covers, exiles and denies the *G-dly Spark* within it, and denies the *Unity* (not singular, put plural, "stones of the place") of, "G-d is our G-d, G-d is one," that, "G-d is everything and everything is G-d," and places them around his head, refining the rocks by making them subservient to his head and service to G-d. And through this service of subduing all physical items to have no value other than to be used in the service of G-d, Jacob succeeded in transforming the *Separation* of the plurality of "stones of the place" into the *Unity* of the singularity of, "and he took the stone [in the singular] that he had placed at his head."

Only then, could Jacob take this to the next level of, "And he set it up as a monument, and he poured oil on top of it," which was the best he could do at the moment, knowing and promising that his work continues until, "Then this stone, which I have placed as a monument, shall be a house of G-d."

After the *Chidahh* connects the 15 Songs of Ascent to the 15-Worded Verse concerning the Stone of Jacob, the *Chidahh* goes on to explain, "Which from this stone they made the 'drainpipes,' and it is the 'Foundation Stone.'"

So, let us now understand what the "Drainpipes" are all about.

14. The *Chidahh* also connects it to the fifteen-worded Priestly Blessing (-Numbers 6:23-27):

יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ: יְאֹר יְהוָה | פָּגְיוֹ אֱלֹהֵי וַיַּחַנְּךָ: יֵשָׂא יְהוָה-הַ פָּגְיוֹ אֱלֹהֵי וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם:
 ("May G-d bless you and watch over you. May G-d cause His countenance to shine to you and favor you. May the Lord raise His countenance toward you and grant you peace.") and the fifteen-worded verse of (-Leviticus 26:42):

וְזָכַרְתִּי אֶת בְּרִיתִי גְעֻזָּב וְאֵף אֶת בְּרִיתִי יִצְחָק וְאֵף אֶת בְּרִיתִי אַבְרָהָם אֶזְכֹּר וְהֶאֱרַץ אֶזְכֹּר:
 ("And I will remember My covenant [with] Jacob, and also My covenant [with] Isaac, and also My covenant [with] Abraham I will remember. And I will remember the Land.") However, the Rebbe does not explain these connections in this *maamor*.

◆ The Drainpipes of the Altar

The outside altar (-[Link](#)) of the Holy Temple had blood, wine and oil regularly poured on it, and on the holiday of Sukkot (-[Link](#)) it had water poured onto it in a special service called, *Nissuch HaMayim - Water Libation* (-[Link](#)). Therefore, there were drainpipes installed in the altar, bringing the liquids into the river called *Kidron*.

Maimonides (-Laws of Beit HaBechira, Chapter 2, Laws 11-12) states:

"There were two holes in the southwest corner [of the Altar's base], resembling two thin nostrils. They were called *Shittin*. The blood [which was poured onto the Altar] would run off through them and be mixed together in the drainage canal in that corner. From there, it would flow out to the Kidron River.

"Below, in the floor of that corner of the Altar, was a place, a cubit by a cubit, [covered by] a block of marble, with a ring affixed to it. They would descend there to the *Shittin* and clean them."

These two drainpipes were called *Shittin*, and that name was derived from the word *shotet* meaning "flow." The blood from the altar flowed away through these holes.

Concerning the origin of these drainpipes, we find three opinions in the Talmud (-Sukkah 49a):

- (a) Rabbah bar Channah in the name of Rabbi Yochanan, and the School of Rabbi Yishmael hold that the went down to the *depths*, from the *Six Days of Creation*¹⁵.
- (b) Rabbi Yossi holds that it was made by the building of the Holy Temple, and it went down until the *depths*.
- (c) Rabbi Elazar bar Tzadok, holds that they did not descend to the depths but that the liquids would collect between the ramp and the altar and would be collected once every seventy years.

Concerning the digging out of the drainpipes the Talmud tells us (-ibid 53a):

"[The musicians would stand on the] *fifteen stairs* [that descend from the Israelites' courtyard to the Women's Courtyard, corresponding to the fifteen Songs of the Ascents in Psalms]. Rav Hisda said to one of the Sages who was organizing *aggada* (the non-legalistic exegesis) before him: Did you hear [with regard to] these fifteen [Songs of] Ascents, corresponding to what did David say them? He said to him [that] this [is what] Rabbi Yochanan said: At the time that David dug the drainpipes [in the foundation of the Temple, the waters of] the depths rose and sought to inundate the world. [Immediately,] David recited the fifteen [Songs of the] Ascents and caused them to subside. [Rav Hisda asked:] If so, [should they be called] fifteen [Songs of the] Ascents? They should have been [called Songs of the] Descents! Rav Hisda continued and said to him: Since you reminded me of this matter, this is what was originally stated: ...He [David] wrote the [sacred] name on an earthenware shard and cast it into the depths, and the [waters in] the depths subsided sixteen thousand cubits. When he saw that they subsided excessively, he said: The higher [the waters in the aquifers], the moister [and more fertile the soil of] the world. He recited the fifteen [Songs of the] Ascents and elevated¹⁶ them fifteen thousand cubits, and established them at [a depth of] one thousand cubits."

From the Talmudic teaching we have the connection between the *Drainpipes* and the *15 Songs of Ascent*. And from the *Chidah* who states, "Which from this stone they made the drainpipes," connecting the rock that Jacob established as a monument and declared that it will be a house for G-d, to the drainpipes under the altar, we have the connection between the *Drainpipes* and the *15 Worded Verse* concerning *Jacob's Stone*.

The point that the Rebbe is making from these connections is, we explained earlier that Jacob's taking the rocks (1. the lowest physical category of *Inanimate*, and 2. *rock*s plural), and refining, elevating, uniting them into one. And now we see that this service us Jacob then goes on to become the *Drainpipes* of the Holy Temple, from which the entire world is created, as we just explained (according to two of the three opinions) that the *Drainpipes* descended all the way down into the *Depths*, which is the foundation of the entire world.

The *Chidah* then goes on to connect the *Drainpipes* with the *Foundation Rock*, so let us look into the *Foundation Rock*.

15. According to one opinion this is extrapolated from the verse (-Songs 7:2) "The hidden of your thighs are like the links of a chain, the handiwork of a skilled workman," which the Talmud defines as: "The hidden of your thighs'; these are the drainpipes (that are concealed within the altar); 'are like the links of a chain [halal'im]'; they are hollow [meholalin] and descend to the depths; 'the handiwork of a skilled workman'; this is the handiwork of the Holy One, Blessed be He."

According to another opinion, this is extrapolated from a play on the first word of the Torah, "Bereishit -In the Beginning:" "Do not read it as Bereshit, but rather as: Bara (created) Shit (singular for Shittin).

16. Hence, they are called Songs of Ascent.

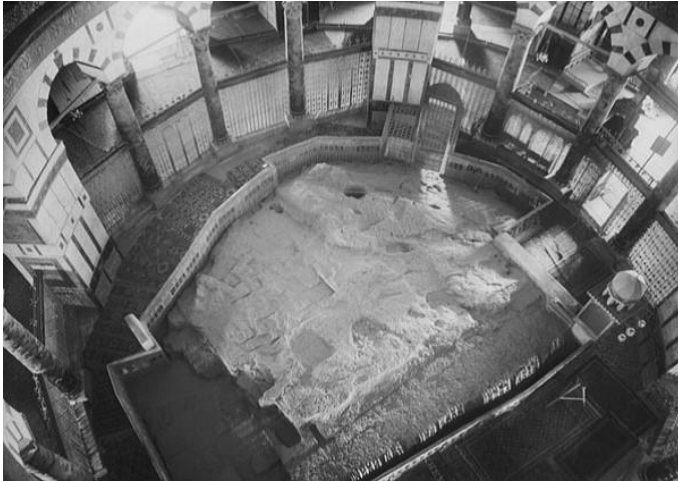
◆ The Foundation Rock

In a *Mishna* in *Tractate Yoma* (-53b) we are taught, "After the Ark was taken (into exile), there was a rock (in the Holy of Holies) from the days of the early prophets, (David and Samuel, who laid the groundwork for construction of the Temple,) and (this stone) was called (the) foundation (rock. It was) three fingerbreadths higher than the ground." Upon which the Talmud explains (-54b), "And it was called (the) foundation [shetiyya] (rock). A Sage taught: (Why was it called shetiyya?) It is because the world was created [hushtat] from it. (The Talmud comments:) We learned (the Mishna) in accordance with (the opinion of) the one who said (that) the world was created from Zion. As it was taught, Rabbi Eliezer says: The world was created from its center, as it is

stated (-Job 38:38): 'When the dust runs into a mass, and the clods cleave fast together.' (The world was created by adding matter to the center, like the formation of clumps of earth.)"

While the *Chidah* connects the *Drainpipes* with the *Foundation Rock*¹⁷, nevertheless, the connection between the *Foundation Rock* and *Jacob's Stone* is already mentioned earlier in more than one place in the Zohar. Here is this connection in *Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer* (-[Link](#); Chapter 35):

"Jacob took twelve stones of the stones of the altar, whereon his father Isaac had been bound, and he set them around his head in that place... And Jacob returned to gather the stones, and he found them all (turned into) one stone, and he set it up for a pillar in the midst of the place, and oil descended for him from heaven, and he poured it thereon, as it is said (-Genesis 28:18), 'And he poured oil upon the top of it.' What did the Holy One, blessed be He, do? He placed (thereon) His right foot, and sank the stone to the bottom of the depths, and He made it the keystone of the earth, just like a man who sets a keystone in an arch; therefore it is called the *Foundation Stone*, for there is the navel of the earth, and therefrom was all the earth evolved, and upon it the Sanctuary of G-d stands, as it is said (ibid. 28:22), 'And this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall



The *Foundation Rock* on Temple Mount today¹⁸

be G-d's house."

Concerning the two different teachings, in which it speaks of the *Foundation Rock* existing for the *Six Days of Creation*, and then there is its being from the times of the *First Prophets* (Samuel and David), the Kabbalist, Rabbi Emanuel Chai Ricchi (-[Link](#)), in his book *Hoin Ashir*, explains that while the *Foundation Rock* was there from times of creation, it was rising, until in the times of the *First Prophets* it emerged 3 fingers high above the ground, upon which the Holy Temple was built, and then rose no more, Rabbi Ricchi explains the reason behind this.

There are different opinions as to where in the Holy of Holies the *Foundation Rock* was. Maimonides, (-Laws of Bet Habechirah, Chapter 5, Law 1) states that it was on the west side of the Holy of Holies. *Tosafot* (-[Link](#)) says (-See Baba Basra 25a, d"h Utzva Hashomayim) that it was on the east side of the Holies of Holies, while the *Tosafot Yom Tov* (-[Link](#)) says (-Mishnayot Yoma, Chapter 5, Mishna 2) that it was in the center of the Holy of Holies.

The point that the Rebbe is focusing on here is again that of, we explained earlier that Jacob's taking the rocks (1. the lowest physical category of *Inanimate*, and 2. *rocks* plural (-See below: CHAPTER 6: PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE DOMAIN), and refining, elevating, and uniting them into one. And this service us Jacob then goes on to become the *Foundation Rock* of the Holy Temple, from which comes the entire world, as our sages explained that it was called *Foundation Rock* since it is the foundation, from which the entire world was built.

17. The context of this connection is explained only on its mystical level. However, others discuss it on a physical level, as in how can the rock that is in the Holy of Holies, all the way to the west of the Holy Temple be where the *Drainpipes* are going through in the *Courtyard* at the east of the Holy Temple.

Rabbi Yechiel Michael Tucazinsky (-[Link](#)), in his book *Eir HaKoidesh VH'Mikdash*, discusses the *Foundation Rock* actually running under the *Holy Temple* from the Holy of Holies until the Outer Altar (only that it emerged above ground in the Holy of Holies).

18. While there is discussion (-See Encyclopedia Talmudit ([Link](#)), Vol. I Page 85, Footnote 14) concerning the *Rock of the Dome*, whether it is or isn't the original *Foundation Rock*, nevertheless, it is interesting that in an address in 1988 (-Sefer HaSichois 5788, Vol II, Page 546) and again in 1991 (-Sefer HaSichois 5751, Vol. II, Page 794) the Rebbe states that the *Foundation Rock* did not go through any changes, and is visible to the nations of the world.

◆ Test Yourself



- (1) What do we learn in the service of G-d from the history of the *Seven Year War*? Which verse in the Torah is this connected to?
- (2) Why was Jacob evoking the merits of all three patriarchs to help him overcome his state of exile in the house of Laban?
- (3) What is the ultimate purpose for which the soul descends into this world?

◆ Discussion/Meditation



- (1) What understanding and meditation can we extract from this chapter for when the world becomes challenging to our service to G-d?

Answers:

1. (i) That sometimes we must summon all *Three Holy Emotions of Love, Awe and Compassion* to battle against one of our *Unholy Three Emotions* at a time.
 (ii) "And all the flocks would gather there, and they would roll the rock off the mouth of the well." (-Genesis 29:3)
2. Jacob was using what would later become the victorious tactic in the *Seven Year War*, in arousing all three *Holy Emotions of Love (Abraham), Awe (Isaac) and Compassion (Jacob)*.
3. To take even from the lowest levels of the world, the inanimate, even while they are in a state of separation, and to refine them, unify them, transform them, until they are transformed into becoming the *Holy Temple* home for G-d.

Discussion/Meditations:

1. At the very start of creating the world, G-d placed at its core and foundation the rock that would serve as the foundation of the *Holy Temple*, the base to the *Holy Ark*, and the *Drainpipes* to the *Outer Altar*.

☆ CHAPTER THREE ☆

In this chapters we explore a mystical insight to the number 15, in which the *Higher Intellects* bring about a unity among the *Lower Emotions*.

3) And we can add and clarify (according to the way of Chasidism) the (mystical) hint and accuracy in the number 15 *Songs of Ascent* and the 15 years that the patriarchs lived together.

Behold, the number 15 reflects the letters *yud* and *hai* (first two letters) of the *Ineffable Tetragrammaton* (*yud* (10) and *hai* (5) equal the numerical value of 15),

For the letter *yud* is the *Emanation of Wisdom*, and the letter *hai*, the *Emanation of Understanding*, which are the manifestation of (-Deuteronomy 29:28), "*The hidden things belong to the L-rd, our G-d,*" which are the intellects and the concentration (upon the greatness of G-d), which is the (deeper Chassidic) service of prayer.

After which there is the (-ibid), "*but the revealed things apply to us and to our children,*" (which are the 3rd and 4th letters of the *Ineffable Tetragrammaton*,) the *revealed vov* and *hai*, which are the manifestation of *Emotion (Emanations)* and *Action (Emanation of Kingship)*.

And upon this it is said, that in order to unite the *Three Holy Emotions* together (and have them in a revealed state), we need to (evoke) the *yud* and the *hai* (15), the *Intellects*, for the *Intellect (Emanations)* are above that of the format of *separation* that exists among the *Emotion (Emanations)*. Therefore, they (the *Intellect Emanations*) effect a (unity) among the *Emotion (Emanations)*.

And the concept in this is, for behold, *Emotion (Emanations)* on their own are three *different* emotions, (which are) the three (*different*) lines (of *Right, Left and Center*).

And upon this (differences among the emotions) it is said (-Talmud, Shabbat 10a), "*The time for prayer is distinct and the time for Torah is distinct,*" and after this, there is (the distinct time for), (-Talmud, Brochoit 35b) "*Assume in their regard, the way of the world* (meaning, earning a living and doing mitzvot)."

However, all this is when the *Emotions* are already in a revealed state, and so too, when they are later drawn into action, at which time they are divided into the (248) *Precepts* and the (365) *Prohibitions*.

ג) ויש להוסיף ולבאר (ע"פ דרך החסידות) הרמז והדיוק במספר ט"ו שיר המעלות וט"ו שנים שחיו האבות ביחד.

דהנה, מספר ט"ו מורה על אותיות י"ה של שם הוי' (י"ה בגימטריא ט"ו),

שיו"ד הו"ע החכמה, וה"א הו"ע הבינה, שהם הנסתרות לה' אלקינו, שזהו"ע של מוחין והתבוננות, עבודת התפלה.

ולאח"ז ישנם והנגלות לנו ולבנינו. Error! Bookmark not defined.
ו"ה נגלות, שזהו הענין של מדות ומעשה (מלכות).

ועז"נ שכדי שיהי' חיבור של כל ג' המדות דקדושה ביחד (ובהתגלות), יש צורך בענין של י"ה (ט"ו), ענין המוחין, דכיון שמוחין הם למעלה מאופן התחלקות המדות, לכן פועלים התכללות במדות.

והענין בזה, דהנה, מדות מצ"ע הם שלוש מדות שונות, ג' קוין,

ועז"נ זמן תורה לחוד וזמן תפלה לחוד, ולאח"ז ישנו הענין של הנהג בהן מנהג דרך ארץ.

וכל זה כפי שהמדות הם כבר בגלוי, ועד"ז כשנמשך אח"כ במעשה בפועל, שאז הרי זה נחלק למ"ע ומל"ת וכו'.

However, the way the *Emotions* as they are in their source, in concentration and intellect (that bring about the emotional outcome), the service of prayer, (there) they (the *Emotions*) stand all (untied) together.

-[As we find concerning the concept of Torah-study, that even though (on the one hand), Torah-study is one of the 248 *Precepts*, (nevertheless,) there is the way Torah-study (does not stand as an isolated and distinct precept, but rather, is an all-inclusive) root and source to the observance of all the (613) *mitzvot* (included the precept of Torah-study (itself)), for study brings to action.

And so too, concerning the study of the *Interior of the Torah* (esoteric teachings), that even though it is a distinct precept of *Knowing G-d*, etc., which is a great and exalted *mitzvah*, (nevertheless,) it (also) gives a liveliness (passion) in all of Torah(-study) and *Mitzvot*(-observance).

And so too, it is concerning the service of prayer, that even though it is a distinct precept, (nevertheless) it is (also) the foundation and root to all of Torah(-study) and *Mitzvot*(-observance).

And so too, we find concerning the (precept of) building the Holy Temple --[which is connected with the 15 *Songs of Ascent*, for they correspond with the fifteen steps that descend from the *Israelite's Courtyard* to the *Women's Courtyard*]- that even though it is a distinct *mitzvah*, (nevertheless,) it is also a general concept in all of Torah(-study) and *Mitzvot*(-observance), (and the world), for (-Isaiah 2:3), "for out of Zion shall the Torah come forth, and the word of the L-rd from Jerusalem," to the point that through the windows (of the Holy Temple) being (-Kings I 6:4), "broad without, and narrow within," this had an effect on the entire world.

And so too, it is with our case, that even though the *Emotions* as they are in a revealed state, they are three *distinct* emotions, nevertheless, as they are within their source, within the (intellectual) concentration, before they are drawn out below into a revealed state (of an emotional outcome to the intellectual concentration), they are all standing (united) together.]-

And through this is understood, that in order to gather all the *Three Holy Emotions* there is the need of *Intellects*, (Chassidic) service of prayer, and this is connected with the number 15 (15 *Songs of Ascent*, and 15 years that the patriarchs were alive together)--the numerical value of (the) *yud* and *hai*, the concept of *Intellects*.

אבל כפי שהמדות הם בשרשם, בהתבוננות במוחין, עבודת התפלה, ה"ה עומדים כולם ביחד.

[וע"ד שמצינו בענין לימוד התורה, שאע"פ שלימוד התורה הוא אחד מרמ"ח מ"ע, הרי ישנו הענין של לימוד התורה כפי שהוא שורש ומקור קיום כל המצוות (כולל גם – מצות ת"ת), כיון שתלמוד מביא לידי מעשה.

ועד"ז בנוגע ללימוד פנימיות התורה, שאע"פ שהיא מצוה פרטית של ידיעת הבורא וכו', שהיא מצוה רבה ונשאה, הרי היא נותנת חיות וכו' בכללות התורה ומצוות.

ועד"ז בנוגע לעבודת התפלה, שאע"פ שזוהי מצוה פרטית, הרי זה גם יסוד ושורש של כללות התורה ומצוות.

ועד"ז מצינו בנוגע לבנין ביהמ"ק [שקשור עם ט"ו שיר המעלות, שהם כנגד חמש עשרה מעלות היורדות מעזרת ישראל לעזרת נשים], שאע"פ שזוהי מצוה פרטית, הרי זה גם ענין כללי בכללות התומ"צ (והעולם), כיון שמציון תצא תורה ודבר ה' מירושלים, ועד שע"י חלוני שקופים אטומים הרי זה פעל בכל העולם כולו.

ועד"ז בנדו"ד, שאע"פ שהמדות כפי שהם בגלוי הם שלוש מדות שונות, אעפ"כ, כפי שהם בשרשם בהתבוננות (לפני שנמשכים למטה בגלוי), עומדים הם כולם ביחד].

ועפ"ז מובן, שכדי שיוכלו לאסוף את כל ג' המדות דקדושה, יש צורך בענין המוחין, עבודת התפלה, וענין זה קשור עם מספר ט"ו (ט"ו שיר המעלות, וט"ו שנים שחיו האבות ביחד) – הגימטריא של י"ה, ענין המוחין.

◆ Numerology of 15

At this point we understand that the special connection between the number 15 (**15** *Songs of Ascent*) with Jacob's battling the spiritual and physical exile he was undergoing at the house of Laban is the tactic of bringing together all *Three Holy Emotions* (Theocentric Love, Awe and Compassion), which is represented in the 15 years that Abraham (Theocentric Love), Isaac (Theocentric Awe), and Jacob (Theocentric Compassion) were physically alive together. However, from this understanding, the numerology gives no insight in how to practically apply this victorious tactic of the *Seven Year War* into our personal lives, in our personal state of exile. Hence, the Rebbe gives us deeper insight into how to work the *Number 15* in our own experiences.

To understand this, we are going to explore:

- The *Four Letters* of the *Ineffable Tetragrammaton*
- The *Intellect Emanations*
- The *Emotion Emanations*
- Unifying our Emotions
- How This Applies in *Torah-Study, Prayer, and Mitzvot*

◆ The Four Letters of the *Ineffable Tetragrammaton*

Of all the different *non-erasable* names of G-d, the *Ineffable Tetragrammaton* is explained to be the *Essence Name* of G-d, while the other names are explained to represent different *Emanations* through which G-d creates, vivifies and sustains the complex universe. In some teachings it is explained how all the other 7 (or 10) names are the *vessels* of the emanations, while the *Ineffable Tetragrammaton* is the *Light* of the emanations.

While there is a complex conversation on whether there exist *Wisdom Light, Understanding Light, Kindness Light, Strength Light, Kingship Light*, etc, or whether the *Light* before descending into the *vessel* is simplicity, while in the *vessel* embodies defined complex forms (like liquid, which while it has no shape of its own, embodies the shape of the *vessel* while it is in it), or whether the *Light* is always in a state of simplicity, or whether within the transcending *Light* itself, there is the inner-dimension of simplicity, and the outer-dimension of complexity, what we do have is that the *Ten Emanations*, divided into *Three Intellects* and *Seven Emotions*, are represented in the *Four Letters* (*yud-hai-vov-hai*) of the *Ineffable Tetragrammaton*, divided into the two categories of *yud-hai* (*Intellects; Wisdom and Understanding*; "The hidden things belong to the *L-rd, our G-d,*") and of *vov-hai* (*Emotions & Actions*¹⁹; *Small Faces*²⁰, and *Kingship*; "But the revealed things apply to us and to our children").

The numerology of the *Ineffable Tetragrammaton* is *yud* -10, *hai* -5, *vov* -6 and *hai* -5 =26. Well then, 15 is the numerology of the first category, the *yud* and *hai*, which are the *Intellects* of *Wisdom* and *Understanding*.

Let us then delve further into the difference between the *yud-hai* (*Intellects*) and the *vov-hai* (*Emotions*).

Understanding Emanations

The simplest way to understand the *Ten Emanations* is to see them as a transformer between the infinite, simple, and formless *Light* and the finite, complex and defined universe.

A palatable metaphor would be that of the colorless sunlight and the color-stained window. As the colorless sunlight shines through the different colors of glass, the colorless sunlight now becomes colored light, picking up the color of the specific colored-glass it is shining through.

So too, the *Infinite Light* has no form of intellect or emotion. However, as it shines through a specific *Emanation*, it manifests itself in that specific form.

This is why we always find specific names of G-d used in specific experiences. For example, the name *E-l* in experiences of compassion, and the name *Elo-him* in experiences of retribution.

19. the 10th Emanation of Kingship, while it is an emanation of the *Light* and an attribute of the soul, it represents the descent of the *Light* into creation, and the descent of the attributes of the soul into its *Garments of Expression: Thought, Speech and Action* of the body.
20. In the emanations the *Six Emotions*, called the *Small Faces* are: *Kindness, Strength, Splendor, Victory, Majesty and Foundation*, while in the attributes of the soul they manifest as, *Love, Awe, Compassion, Principle, Gratitude and Commitment*.
The *Emotions* are referred to as *Small Faces* in relation to the *Intellects*, which are not as contracted and minute.

◆ The *Intellect Emanations*

The difference between the *Intellect of Wisdom* and the *Intellect of Understanding* is that *Wisdom* experiences itself as a *Flash*, like a single *Dot*, which contains everything within it, but yet none of it is actually understood nor digested. For example, when a teacher presents the students with a difficult riddle, the students become silent, turned into themselves trying to solve the riddle. Suddenly, one student can't contain himself, jumping up and down yelling, "I got it!" Yet, when the teacher asks him for his solution, the student sits back down and says, "one minute! I got it, but I have to figure it out..." What just happened is, that the student actually experienced a *drop* drip down from his *Wisdom Intellect* into his mind, where he now has the solution, but still has to decipher it into *Understanding*.

Another, maybe more palatable metaphor is that of a man lost in the forest on a pitch-black night, when suddenly a flash of lightening lights up the night. The person, without moving, has to replay everything he just saw in detail. *There was the ditch, there the lake, and there the road. Now I know how to cautiously proceed.* The flash of lightening gave him everything in one flash, however, he had nothing until he replayed everything detail by detail, making sense of it all, and owning it all.

The flash of *Lightning* is *Wisdom*, while the processing of it and owning it, is the *Understanding*. Hence, in the works of Kabbalah and Chassidut, *Wisdom* is presented as the *Father*, who, in his sperm, has the DNA of the child, which is however useless until the *Mother*, who presents *Understanding*, slowly (nine months) dissects, processes, and manifests from the *Dot* of the semen (*Wisdom*) into a *Three-Dimensional* child.

Hence, the *Emanation of Wisdom* is presented in the *yud*, (י) which is literally a *Dot*, and the *Emanation of Understanding* is presented in the *hai* (ה), which is literally made up of three lines. In the world of *Intellect*, the three dimensions (lines of the *hai*) are *Width* (multiple of details), *Length* (manifesting lower and lower into the more tangible and practical), and *Depth* (shedding into the more abstract and finer depths).

What both these intellects have, which emotions do not, is a broadness that allows it to travel beyond the coarse, tangible and simple palatable palate. This is why we see, that in a situation where broad, deep and refined intellect is necessary, what is mandatory is to shut down the excitement, nervousness, or fear of the emotions, which constrain, interfere and literally block the intellects.

--Brain scans show how the area of the brains where the higher intellects function, such as the *Frontal Cortex* and *Broca's Area*, literally go *offline* when trauma (intense emotional) capsules are opened.--

Additionally, in the true sense of intellect, such as in a Torah-court hearing, for example, there only exists the pure intellectual pursuit of the truth of G-d's will, with no concern as to what verdict this may result in. Any emotional concern of the outcome of this pursuit of truth (which must take place only in the realm of intellect) is an interference and hindrance, which denies the pure goal of the pursuit.

Taking it a step further, the deeper meaning of an intellectual person is one who can simultaneously entertain two antithetical logics, in which he fully appreciates two exact opposite processes and understanding of one concept, which is something that emotions cannot entertain.

Hence, within the *Infinite Light*, the *Three Heads (Intellects)* are mystically referred to in the verse Deuteronomy 29:28) "*The hidden things belong to the L-rd, our G-d.*" For they contain that which is far greater than the tangible nature of the *Seven Days (Zohar: Emotion Emanations; Seven Inferiors) of Creation*.

And now let us explore the *Emotion Emanations* of the letters *vov* and *hai*.

◆ The *Emotion Emanations*

The *Emotion Emanations* are sub-divided into the two categories of: *Six Male Emotions*, known as *Small Faces*, and the *Feminine Mystic* known as *Kingship*.

The *Six Male Emotions* are presented in the letter *vov*, firstly, because the numerology of the letter *vov* (the sixth letter of the *Aleph Bet*) is 6. Additionally, the letter *vov* (ו) is a *yud* on the top, with a line drawing down from it. This represents the bringing down, the *giving* from that above to that below. This is what the *Male Emotions* represent, in which there is the outwardly experience of that which is taking place within one's self. Hence, the *Six Male Emotions* are represented by the *male offspring* (son) of the *Intellectual Consummation (Da'at²¹)* of the *Father (Wisdom)* and the *Mother (Understanding)*.

Deeper yet, the *Six Emotion Emanations* themselves divide into two sub-categories, in which the first three represent the from the neck to the waist, which is defined as the person's personal experience of what from the neck up is receiving from above itself. It is the person's personal emotional response of *Love, Fear* or *Compassion*, to what he is now learning about.

Then there is from the waist down, including the reproductive region, in which he is emotionally charged to *act* upon his feelings. More particularly, within his emotions, he is prepared for victory in overcoming obstacles, restraint in how to go about it productively, and commitment in it being all about the recipient. However, for this to *actually* happen, there has to be the recipient, which is the *Feminine Mystic of Kingship*, which is the *daughter* of the consummation of the *Intellectual Consummation (Da'at²¹)* of the *Father (Wisdom)* and the *Mother (Understanding)*.

Even the *Receiver* that we are speaking of here is the *Receiver* within the person (*Giver*) themselves. Meaning, for example, the difference between a good gift buyer and a not-so-good gift buyer is whether when buying a gift, the person (*Giver*) is thinking as himself, what he would want to receive, or whether, he can find the *Receiver* within himself, thinking like the *Receiver*, asking, what would the *Receiver* most appreciate. This process is where the *Giver* finds the *Receiver* within himself, and is functioning from the *Receiver's* paradigm and point of view. This is what the seventh emotion, *Kingship (Feminine Mystic; Receiver; Daughter)* within our soul, is all about.

So too, in the *Ten Emanations* of the *Infinite Light*, it is where the "Creator" is finding and is "thinking," from the paradigm²² and point of view of reality of the "creation," within itself ("Creator").

Being that *Kingship* is all about the *Receiver*, to which the *emotions* of the *Giver* mean nothing, but their (emotional) drive into actual *action*, hence, *Kingship* is defined as *Thought, Speech* and *Action*, which is where the *Giver* is in real-time stepping out of self (*feelings*) and into the other (*engaging; Actions*). This is why the *Emanation of Kingship* is presented in the (second) *hai* (ה), which has three lines, whose job it is to take that which the one line of the *vov* (emotions) brought down, and expand it into the three lines of *Thought, Speech* and *Action*.

One of the great pains of any true artist, whether it be an artist in words, painting, music, sculptures, etc., is the pain of knowing that the *expressive* work of the artist can never truthfully capture the *essence* of the artist. Hence, while we marvel at the mastery of the art of an artist, somewhere within the artist there is the pain and frustration of a betrayal to his *essence* of what he truly tried to express. For by definition, *expression* is the contraction of the essence, so that it can be *expressed*. Hence, the *Emotion Emanations* are always *Small Faces*, being but an expression experience of the *Essence*, which (the *essence*) is far more housed in the *Intellect Emanations*.

21. Loosely translated as *Knowledge*, while more correctly defined as *hakorah* (recognition) and *hargasha* (intuitive feel), which is the manifestation of a deep personalization and bound with the intellectual concepts being perceived (-see the book *Blink* (-[Link](#)) by Malcolm Gladwell, for a secular understanding of this)
22. Hence, Chassidut teaches upon the verse (-Samuel I 2:3), "*For the L-rd is a G-d of thoughts*" (-Plural)," that G-d carries within Himself *two* thoughts, the *Supernal Paradigm* of reality from the "Creator's" point of view, in which, *G-d is everything and everything is G-d*, and all else is absolute naught, and the *Lower Paradigm* of reality from the "Creation's" point of view, that because G-d ultimately did create me, therefore, *I am a something*, albeit dependent upon G-d, Who without, I am naught.

◆ Unifying Our Emotions

When discussing the *broadness* of the *Intellects*, we quoted the teaching that the true capacity of the broadness of intellects is its capacity to simultaneously entertain two antithetical logics, in which he fully appreciates two exact opposite processes and understanding of one concept. This is something which emotions cannot entertain. (Human) emotions do not embrace *Love* and *Fear*, nor *Kindness* and *Strictness* simultaneously. Hence, the magic of the tactic of the *Seven Year War*, the secret to the number *15*, in which we bring together all three battalions of *Abraham* (Theocentric *Love*), *Isaac* (Theocentric *Awe*), and *Jacob* (Theocentric *Compassion*) as one, do not lay within the power of the emotions (*Love*, *Awe*, and *Compassion*) themselves. Rather, they lay in the secret of *15*, the *yud* and the *hai*, the *Intellect Emanations*, in which the antithetical can simultaneously coexist.

Hence, we now have a deeper understanding of how, through the **15** *Songs of Ascent*, manifesting the three patriarchs (*Holy Emotions* of *Love*, *Awe* and *Compassion*) living together, is only when we ascend into the way our *Holy Emotions* exist within their source, the *Intellectual Concentration* (*yud-hai*, which is the numerology of **15**, which is the presentation of *Wisdom* and *Understanding*) in the greatness of G-d.

This is the deeper and Chassidic *Avodas HaTefillah - Service of Prayer*, in which, after studying a *maamor* Chassidus, one begins to concentrate on what he learned about the greatness of G-d, the kindness of G-d, the exaltedness of G-d, and how, "*For He is your life!*," literally, G-d alone is our life-force, this *Intellectual Concentration* part of the *Service of Prayer* is from which we then give birth to a *Love* and *Awe* for G-d.

Together with a *Compassion* for how our sins have brought G-d into an exile, in which G-d is being "*forced*" into being a life-force for the egocentric and narcissi evil that we pursue and indulge in. This includes the (-Tanya, Chapter 2), "*Truly a Piece of G-d*," within us, of which our sages teach that when we sin, we are holding the *Head of the King* and dragging into the place of filth and garbage.

Now, in the time of the concentration upon the greatness, kindness and exaltedness of G-d, all the *Holy Emotions* coexist, in which we simultaneously and equally experience a *Love*, *Awe* and *Compassion* for G-d. Not so, after the concentration, when we are leaving the realm of the *broadness of intellects*, and entering into the very defined and distinct emotional experience, which we are having as an *outcome* of our intellectual concentration and oneness with G-d. Now, there are distinct differences in our experience when we are studying Torah, praying or engaging with the *ways of the world*. Hence, the sages tell us, "*the time for prayer is distinct and the time for Torah is distinct*," and after this, there is the, "*assume the way of the world*."

Hence, we must engage in the deeper service of prayer, in the concentration (*yud-hai*; **15**; *Wisdom* and *Understanding*) of the greatness of G-d, in order to implement the war tactic of bringing together all three battalions of our *Holy Emotions* against each battalion of the egocentric emotion of the *Evil Inclination* and its temptations, one at a time.

◆ How This Applies in Torah-Study, Prayer, and Mitzvot

And in order to show how this is possible, the Rebbe is now shows how an example of this exists within Torah-study, Prayer and in Mitzvah-observance, that albeit in its own right each is a distinct (individual) mitzvah, and nevertheless, it is the source and drive to (all-inclusive of; united with) all of Torah and mitzvot:

Torah-Study (a):

Torah-study, on the one-hand, is a distinct precept among the 613 precepts of the Torah. Maimonides states (Mishneh Torah, Laws of Studying Torah, Chapter 1, Law 8), *"Every Jewish man is obligated to study Torah, whether he is poor or rich, whether his body is healthy and whole or afflicted by difficulties, whether he is young or an old man whose strength has diminished... as it states (-Joshua 1:8): 'You shall meditate therein day and night.'*" And in his Sefer HaMitzvoit, in which Maimonides lists the 613 commandments, he lists as the 11th Positive Commandment ("248 Thou Shall's"): *"To study Torah and to teach it [to others], as it is stated (-Deuteronomy 6:2): 'And you shall teach them to your children.'"* Hence, Torah-study is but one distinct precept of the 613 Precepts of the Torah.

Nevertheless, Torah-study also exists as the source for the observance of all the mitzvoit, including even the mitzvah of studying Torah itself, for, as the Talmud rules (-Kedushin 40b), *"Study is greater, for it leads to action."* Hence, even though on the one-hand Torah-study is an individual distinct precept --which even is antithetical to other precepts, as even the law itself discusses when a person has to stop learning, in order to do other precepts, and when he doesn't-- and nevertheless, we find a dimension to Torah-study which is precisely not distinct, but the root and drive to observing *all* of the 613 Mitzvoit.

Torah-Study (b):

So too, concerning the *Inner Soul of Torah* (Chassidut), even though it is the distinct individual precept Of (-Mishneh Torah, Laws of Yesodei HaTorah, Chapter 1, Law 1), *"The foundation of all foundations and the pillar of wisdom is to know that there is a Primary Being who brought into being all existence."* And in his Sefer HaMitzvoit, Maimonides lists as the 1st Positive Commandment *"The first of the positive commandments is the mitzvah to know that there is a G-d, as it is stated (-Exodus 20:2): 'I am G-d, your L-rd.'"*

Nevertheless, Torah-study of Chassidus is precisely not a distinct precept, but gives a liveliness and passion in observing *all* of the 613 Mitzvoit.

Prayer:

To pray to G-d is the distinct individual precept of (Mishneh Torah, Laws of Tefillah and Birkas Kohanim, Chapter 1, Law 1), *"It is a positive Torah commandment to pray every day, as it states (-Exodus 23:25): 'You shall serve G-d, your L-rd.' Tradition teaches us that this service is prayer, as it states (-Deuteronomy 10:12): 'And serve Him with all your heart' and our Sages said (-Talmud, Taanit 2a): 'Which is the service of the heart? This is prayer.'"* And in his Sefer HaMitzvoit, Maimonides lists as the 5th Positive Commandment, *"To pray, as it states (-Exodus 23:25): 'And you shall serve G-d, your L-rd.' This service is prayer."*

Nevertheless, prayer is also the foundation of all of Torah and Mitzvot, as prayer is the birthing and fueling of Love for G-d, which is the soul and drive to all of Torah and Mitzvot.

Mitzvah of Building the Holy Temple:

So too, we find with the precept of building the Holy Temple²³. On the one-hand there is the distinct precept of (-Mishneh Torah, Laws of Beit HaBechirah, Chapter 1, Law 1), *"It is a positive commandment to construct a House for G-d... as it states (-Exodus 25:8): 'And you shall make Me a sanctuary.'"* And in his Sefer HaMitzvoit, Maimonides lists as the 20th Positive Commandment *"To build [G-d's] chosen house, [the Temple,] as it states (-Exodus 25:8): 'And you shall make a sanctuary for Me.'"*

Nevertheless, the building of the Holy Temple is a foundation and source to *all* of Torah and Mitzvot, as Isaiah states (-Isaiah 2:3), *"For out of Zion shall the Torah come forth, and the word of the L-rd from Jerusalem,"* which refers to the *Supreme Court*, which sat in the Holy Temple.

And so too, it is a foundation to all of the world. The verse tells us that the windows (of the Holy Temple) were (-Kings I 6:4), *"broad without, and narrow within."* All windows were made narrow without and broad within, so that the sunlight can enter and spread throughout the room. However, the windows

of the Holy Temple were purposely made inside-out, so that the light of the Holy Temple will spread itself out throughout the world!

23. Which is connected specifically to the *15 Songs of Ascent*, (which is reflecting the 15 steps descending from the *Israelite's Courtyard* to the *Women's Courtyard* of the Holy Temple.

◆ The Point Being

The point of this chapter being: We see how G-d has made it that even a *distinct one* service of G-d is, on a deeper level, an *all-inclusive* service with all other services to G-d. However, this only exists when we elevate our services to a higher level, through the deeper dimension of prayer, which is the *Intellectual Concentration* (15: *yud* -Wisdom and *hai* -Understanding) upon the greatness of G-d, where all *Holy Emotions* and services to G-d coexist as one.

This is the deeper dimension of what the *Chidah* is saying: The **15** *Songs of Ascent* (which Jacob prayed every night while in a state of exile at Laban's house) is connected to the **15** years of the *coexistence* of the three patriarchs in this world, which represents the togetherness of the distinct three services of the *Three Holy Emotions of Theocentric Love, Awe and Compassion*, which can only be brought together to the deeper *Intellectual Concentrative* service of prayer, which is the **15** of the numerology of *yud* and *hai*, which are the *Emanations of Wisdom and Understanding* (the concentration upon the greatness, exaltedness and kindness of G-d), through which all our *Holy Emotions of Theocentric Love, Awe and Compassion* coexist as one, which is how the tactic of the *Seven Year War* is applied, for our victory over our own state of exile and separation from G-d.

Test Yourself



- (1) How does the number 15 connect with the *Intellect Emanations*?
- (2) Why did Jacob need to evoke the *Intellect Emanations*?
- (3) What is the deeper *Service of Prayer*?
- (4) Why is it important to learn Chassidus?
- (5) Why were the windows of the Holy Temple made *inside-out*?

Discussion/Meditation



- (1) What meditation can we learn from this chapter, when we feel that some mitzvoit just aren't for us, and just doesn't, "*speak to me*"?

Answers:

1. The four letters of G-d name represent (i) *Wisdom*, (ii) *Understanding*, (iii) *Six Male Emotions*, and (iv) *Feminine Mystic*. The first two letters (*yud* (10) and *hei* (5)), which present *Wisdom* and *Understanding* carry the numerical value of 15.
2. Because Jacob was looking to bring together three distinct and different emotions (*Love, Awe and Compassion*), which in their own right do not coexist. However, when we rise up into their source, which is the *Intellectual Concentration* upon G-d's greatness, exaltedness and kindness, then the *Three Holy Emotions* coexist and unite together.
3. The deeper *Service of Prayer* is to give birth, and to then fuel, a tangible love for G-d. This happens by first studying about G-d in Chassidut, and then to concentrate deeply upon what we have learned about the greatness, exaltedness and kindness of G-d, in slow and heartfelt prayer to G-d.
4. (i) To fulfill the exalted and great mitzva of, "*To Know G-d*;" (ii) To imbue our Torah-study and Mitzvah-observance with a liveliness and passion.
5. A primary point of having the Holy Temple is to have its *Light* spread outward, throughout the world.

Discussion/Meditations:

1. To understand that all the different distinct mitzvoit and services to G-d, on its deepest level, are all one, in which they feed and strengthen each other. Hence, doing the mitzvoit we do enjoy, strengthens us in doing even the mitzvoit that we presently don't enjoy.

This is greatly accomplished when we concentrate on the *Who* and the *why* we do them, rather than, on the *what* we are doing. This way, we rise above the different experiences of the different mitzvoit, and instead do whatever it is that G-d wants us to do at the moment.

☆ CHAPTER FOUR ☆

In this chapter we are given the mystical insight as to why the *15 Songs of Ascent* begin at chapter 120 of the Book of Psalms.

4) And we can also explain the (esoteric) hint as to why the *15 Songs of Ascent* begin with chapter **120** in the *Book of Psalms* in accordance with that which is explained in the (book) *Pri Eitz Chaim*

--[Concerning saying (the words) *E-I Elyon* (exalted G-d) in the *Amidah Prayer* (-[Link](#)) both, on the weekdays and on Shabbat and holidays]--

Through the multiplication of the letter *yud* (*Wisdom*) by the letter *hai* (*Understanding*)

--[as the letters *yud* and *hai* are with the letters that spell them out (spelled with the *aleph*), which the general concept of the letters that spell out the letter is connected with revelation to others]--

Which is 20 (*yud* (10) -*vov* (6) -*daled* (4)) times 6 (*hai* (5) -*aleph* (1)) equals 120, which are the *120 Lights*.

And the number 120 is connected with the (120) formations of the name *Elo-him*, which effects the concept of (-Genesis 1:1), "*In the beginning Elo-him created,*" to reveal the internal intention of the name *Elokim*, as (is explained) in the teaching of the *Bal Shem Tov* (-[Link](#)) upon this.

ד) ויש לבאר גם הרמז שבהתחלת ט"ו שיר המעלות בקאפיטל ק"כ בתהלים, ע"פ המבואר בפע"ה

[בנוגע לאמירת א-ל עליון בתפלת העמידה, הן בימות החול, והן בשבתות וימים טובים],

שע"י הכאה (הכפלה) של אות יו"ד (חכמה) באות ה"א (בינה)

[כפי שאותיות י"ה הם ביחוד עם המילוי (מילוי אלפי"ן), שכללות ענין המילוי קשור עם גילוי לזולת],

דהיינו, עשרים (יו"ד) פעמים שש (ה"א) – אזי עולה ק"כ, שהם ק"כ אורות.

ומספר ק"כ קשור עם (ק"כ) צירופים של שם אלקים – שפועלים הענין ד"בראשית ברא אלקים", לגלות את הכוונה פנימית של שם אלקים, כתורת הבעש"ט בזה.

◆ *A Kabbalistic Chapter*

This chapter, which is short in its quantity of words, is filled with Kabbalistic insights.

Here are the mystical concepts that we are going to need to explore in order to understand this chapter:

- Adjective for G-d in the Amidah Prayer
- The Numerology of G-d's Name
- *120 Formations of Elo-him*
- The *Internal Intent* of the Name *Elo-him*

◆ *Adjectives for G-d in the Amidah Service*

The Amidah of both, weekdays and of Shabbat & Holidays are made up of three parts (i) *Salutations*, (ii) weekdays: *Requests*; Shabbat/Holidays: *Theme of the day*, and (iii) *Gratitude*. Part (i) is always made up of three blessings, and the first blessing, called *Blessing of Patriarchs*, in which we evoke the merit of our patriarchs, begins with giving glory to G-d, in which we use many adjectives for G-d:

"Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d and G-d of our fathers, G-d of Abraham, G-d of Isaac and G-d of Jacob, the great, mighty and awesome G-d, exalted G-d, who bestows bountiful kindness, who creates all things, who remembers the piety of the Patriarchs, and who, in love, brings a

redeemer to their children's children, for the sake of His Name. O King, (You are) a helper, a savior and a shield. Blessed are You L-rd, Shield of Abraham."

In the teachings of Kabbalah and Chassidut, every adjective for G-d is precise, and is referring to a specific spiritual level, emanation, etc. Our focus is going to be upon the adjective of, "exalted G-d."

In the book *Pri Eitz Chaim*, one of the books in which Rabbi Chaim Vital ([-Link](#)) documents the teachings of his teacher, Rabbi Isaac Luria, known as the *Arizal* or the *Ari Hakodosh* ([-Link](#)). Rabbi Vital, in the *Gateway of Amidah* (-chapter 12), focuses on the words "the great, mighty and awesome G-d, exalted G-d," explaining which emanations, unifications and Divine flow each represent.

Concerning the words, "exalted G-d," Rabbi Vital explains:

"To begin with have the intention that by revealing (the emanation of) Foundation of Understanding, light will be added to the Small Faces itself, with the secret of multiplication of the Lights that go out and touch each other.

"And it is in this way: Have the intention that yud (10) -vov (6) -daled (4) times hai (5) -aleph (1) equals 120, for Wisdom of Small Faces strikes in (multiplies by) Understanding of Small Faces, and brings forth 120 Lights. After which, vov (6) -aleph (1) -vov (6) strikes in (multiplies by) hai (5) -aleph (1), which is 13 times 6, which equals 78. And all together (120 and 78) they equal 198, as the numerical value of 'Exalted G-d --E-I Elyon (א-ל-עליון; aleph (1) -lamed (30) --- ayin (70) - lamed (30) -yud (10) -vov (6) -nun (50)).' And because... which is the Name of 45 of the aleph's therefore these multiplications are with the Name filled with alephs."

We are going to discuss only that which pertains to this chapter, for this is not the place to explain all of the intentions mentioned in this quote. And in order to understand this, we are going to explore the numerology of G-d's Name

◆ The Numerology of G-d's Name

For those unfamiliar with numerology of Hebrew letters and words, it goes as follows. The 1st letter (*aleph*) equals 1, and this goes on until we reach the 10th letter²⁴ (*yud*), after which each letter proceeds in the *tens* (*chof* = 20, *lamed* = 30, etc.) until we reach the 19th letter²⁴ (*koof*) which equals 100, after which, the last three letters excel by hundreds (*reish* = 200, *shin* = 300, and *taf* = 400).

Hence, the simple numerology of G-d's *Ineffable Tetragrammaton* name is 26 (*yud* (10), *Hai* (5), *Vov* (6), and *Hai* (5)). However, there are what is called *Letters with the Fill*, which means that you spell out the name of the letters. To write out the actual name of the letter *yud* we would need to use the three letters *yud* (10), *vov* (6), and the *daled* (4), in which just the letter *yud* of the *Ineffable Tetragrammaton* equals 20.

However, for the next three letters of *hai*, *vov* and (second) *hai*, we have different ways to write them out. We can use an *aleph*, a *hai*, or a *yud*. For example, the letter *hai* can be written out as *hai-aleph*, *hai-hai*, *hai-yud* or *hai-aleph-hai*. This is why, in Kabbalah, and Chassidus there are four different numerologies to G-d's name in the *filled-out* manner.

There is the *Name of 45*, which uses only *alephs*:

yud (10) -*vov* (6) -*daled* (4), and, *hai* (5) -*aleph* (1), and, *vov* (6) -*aleph* (1) -*vov* (6), and, *hai* (5) -*aleph* (1).

There is the *Name of 52*, which uses only *hai's*:

yud (10) -*vov* (6) -*daled* (4), and, *hai* (5) -*hai* (5), and, *vov* (6) -*vov* (6), and, *hai* (5) -*hai* (5).

There is the *Name of 63*, which uses *yud's* -and an *aleph* for the *vov*-:

yud (10) -*vov* (6) -*daled* (4), and, *hai* (5) -*yud* (10), and, *vov* (6) -*aleph* (1) -*vov* (6), and, *hai* (5) -*yud* (10).

There is the *Name of 72*, which uses *yud's* -and an *aleph* for the *vov*:

yud (10) -*vov* (6)-*daled* (4), and, *hai* (5) -*yud* (10), and, *vov* (6) -*yud* (1) -*vov* (6), and, *hai* (5) -*yud* (10).

Each *Filled-out Name* represents a different *World*, a different level of *Emanations*, etc. Hence, Rabbi Vital concludes with why in this teaching he is using the *Filled-out Name of 45*, the *Name Filled-out with alephs*.

Going back to our teaching, we are therefore going to use the letter *hai* with the *fill-out* of an *aleph*, which equals 6, and when we multiply the *filled-out yud* (20) by the *filled-out vov* (6) we have the total of 120. And the Rebbe uses only this part of the teaching of Rabbi Vital, because we are speaking of the **15** *Songs of Ascent*, explained as the simply numerology of *yud* (10) and *hai* (5), which represent the *Intellect Emanations* of *Wisdom* (*yud*) and *Understanding* (*hai*). Only, that now, we are also applying the numerology of the *filled-out* of these letters (120), to explain why the **15** (*yud-hai*) *Songs of Ascent* begin at chapter **120** of the *Book of Psalms*.

However, in Chabad, numerology never stands alone. Rather, it hints to a deeper meaningful connection that looks to be explained. So too, in our case of the *15 Songs of Ascent* starting at chapter 120, because of the connection of numerology between 15 (simple *yud-hai*) and 120 (*filled-out yud-hai*).

24. This excludes counting both the *harsh* and *soft* letters (such as *bet-vet*; *kof*, *-chof*; etc) and *final letters* (such as *final chof*, *final mem*, etc.) separately.

◆ 120 Formations of the Name Elo-him

The Kabbalistic book, *Sefer Yetzira* (-[Link](#)) discusses how all of creation came about through the letters of the utterances of G-d, as the verses in Genesis continuously state, "And G-d said, 'Let there be...'" In Chapter 12, it explains, "Two stones build two houses; three stones build six houses; four stones build twenty-four houses; five stones build one-hundred-and-twenty..." Simply meaning, that from the two letters A and B one can build 1. AB and 2. BA, while from the letters A, B, and C, one can build 1. ABC, 2. ACB, 3. BAC, 4. BCA, 5. CAB, and 6. CBA. And so on.

G-d's name of *Elo-him* is made up of five letters: *aleph-lamed-hai-yud-final mem* (א-ה-ל-י-ד), from which 120 formations can be made. This is what Rabbi Vital is referring to with, "120 Lights, which are the 120 formations of *Elo-him*." For, from each different formation of the letters of G-d's name, comes forth a different *Light*.

Hence, the connection of the **15** (plain *yud-hai*) *Songs of Ascent* to the 120 (*filled-out yud-hai*) *Lights of Elo-him*.

To understand this, let us understand the function of the name *Elo-him*

◆ The Internal Intent of the Name *Elo-him*

The verse states (-Psalms 84:12), "For a sun and a shield is the L-rd (*Ineffable Tetragrammaton*) G-d (*Elo-him*)." This is explained in Kabbalah and Chassidus to mean that just as G-d has placed the original light of the sun in a shield, so that its full force is not upon the Earth, so too, the name *Elo-him* is a shield through which the *Infinite Light* of the *Ineffable Tetragrammaton* is contracted through, so that its infinite strength not shine upon creation, overwhelming and exploding the finite universe.

Hence, throughout the entire process of creation in Genesis, we found the verse using the name *Elo-him*, as in "And *Elo-him* said, 'Let there be...,'" and "*Elo-him* saw that it was good."

Upon the verse "In the beginning *Elo-him* created," the Baal Shem Tov teaches (-Sefer HaMamrim 5705, Page 74), that, "*Berishis* -In the beginning," -the beginning of our work is- "*Bara*^{24a} *Elo-him*," -to reveal the intent of *Elo-him*, and this is through- "*The heavens and the earth*," -through concentration upon the heavens and the earth, which "*the heavens*," refers to all the celestial creations, and, "*the earth*," refers to all the terrestrial creations.

The internal intent of the concealment that the *Elo-him* places upon the *Ineffable Tetragrammaton* is not for the sake of concealment. Rather, it is only for the sake of the finite creation being able to productively receive its vivification and sustenance from the *Ineffable Tetragrammaton*, and that we then go on and reveal, in a sustainable manner, that ultimately, "*Everything is G-d and G-d is everything.*"

And this gives us insight into why the *15 Songs of Ascent* --which is about revealing the *Primordial Intellects* into the *Seven Days of Creation* (*Seven Emotion Emanations; Small Faces*), through which we overcome our state of exile, begins at chapter 120-- which is all about the revelation of the *Inner Intent* of the concealment of the name *Elo-him* upon the *Ineffable Tetragrammaton* during the process of creation, in the first place.

And to make this concept clear, the Rebbe also quotes that when we speak of the *Filled-out letters* of the letters of a word, versus just the simple letter of the letters of a word, the *Filled-out letters*, when revealed, spelled out, and used in the numerology, is precisely all about *revealing to others that which lay hidden within*. So too, it is the concept here of the *120 Formations of Elo-him* (chapter 120) is to reveal that which lay hidden in the *15 (yud-hai)*, which is the *Higher Intellect Emanations* bringing *unity* among the *Three Holy Emotions*, in order to victoriously overcome, refine and elevate the exile into total redemption, becoming the *Foundation Rock* and *Drainpipes* of the *Holy Temple*.

24a. I believe that the connection between *Bara* and *Reveal* in the *Baal Shem Tov's* teaching may be either (i) *Bara*, being creation, and creation is about the revelation from the potential to the actual (-See CHAPTER SIX: REVELATION OF THE COMPLETENESS OF HIS POWERS), or (ii) *Bara* also means clear, as in the saying, "*Bara KaChamah -As clear as the sun.*"

Test Yourself



- (1) How can the *Ineffable Tetragrammaton* have any numerical value other than 26 (10+5+6+5)?
- (2) How can the *filled-out* form of the *Ineffable Tetragrammaton* have more than one value?
- (3) How is the name *Elo-him* connected with the number 120?
- (4) What is the meaning of revealing the *inner intent* of the name *Elo-him*?

Discussion/Meditation



- (1) What meditation do we have to see beyond the darkness of our state of exile?

Answers:

1. Because besides the simple four letters of G-d's name, there is the *filled-out* format of the four letters, in which we spell out the pronunciation of each of the four letters.
 2. Because three of the four letters have more than one format of being *filled-out*, using either the *aleph, hai* or *yud*
 3. The Hebrew word *Elo-him* has five letters, and out of 5 letters, 120 different formations can be made.
 4. The only reason that G-d has *Elo-him* cover the *Infinite Light of Elo-him*, is that a finite world be created and vivified from the *Infinite Light* of G-d. Hence, ultimately, the covering of *Elo-him* is not about creating darkness, but rather, *only* about creating a digestible *Light*, from which we can then progress and reveal in its fullest strength.
- Discussion/Meditations:
1. Understanding that darkness is only for us to be able to maintain an identity, with a freedom of choice, so that we can then *choose* G-d, Torah and life. And as of such, in truth, all darkness is but for the purpose of a positive experience of *Light*.

☆ CHAPTER FIVE ☆

In this chapter we are explained why Jacob went through the war of exile with song and joy.

5) However, we still need to understand what is the concept behind *Song (of Ascents)*, *Song* specifically, which is connected with the concept of revealed joy.

(as in understood from the saying (ruling) of our sages (-Talmud, Brochot 35a), "*One only recites a song (of praise in the Temple) over (the libation of) wine (on the altar).*")

For, seemingly, true that in these songs (chapters of the *Songs of Ascent*) there is the empowerment to overcome the concept of exile, etc., however, nevertheless, it is not understood. How is it possible that there was the concept of *song* by Jacob, whose attribute is the *Attribute of Truth*?

--[And especially in accordance with what is explained in the *maamorim* of the *Tzemach Tzedek* (-[Link](#)), in explaining (the verse Micha 7:20), "*You shall give the truth to Jacob,*" that in addition to that which Jacob on his own is the *Attribute of Truth*, there was added on to him a far higher level of the *Attribute of Truth*]-

while he (Jacob) was in a state of exile?

And the explanation in this is, that the descent of our patriarch Jacob to the house of Laban was for the sake of the ascent, in a fashion of (-Genesis 30:43), "*And the man (Jacob) became exceedingly wealthy,*" (in a fashion of, -Ecclesiastics 2:13), "*as the advantage of light over darkness,*" and the advantage of, "*wisdom over folly.*"

And being that Jacob saw --(since by him there was the concept of (-Psalms 121:1), "*I shall raise my eyes to the mountains,*")-- the ultimate intent within this (exile at the house of Laban), therefore, even while he was at Laban's house, there was (already) by him the concept of *Song (of Ascents)*, in a fashion of revealed joy.

To the point that this is the concept of the connection of the *15 Steps in the Holy Temple*, which shows upon the concept of *ascent*, from level to level, within the service of G-d itself, in a fashion of (-Talmud, Brochot 28a), "*One (must always) elevates to a higher level of sanctity.*"

ה) אך עדיין צריך להבין, מהו הענין דשיר (המעלות), שיר דייקא, שקשור עם ענין של שמחה גלוי'

(כמובן ממאמר רז"ל אין אומרים שירה אלא על היין),

דלכאורה, הן אמת שבמזמורים אלו יש נתינת כח לעבור את ענין הגלות כו', אבל אעפ"כ אינו מובן, איך יתכן ענין של שירה אצל יעקב, שמדתו היא מדת האמת

[ובפרט ע"פ המבואר בדרושי הצ"צ בפ"א תתן אמת ליעקב, שנוסף לכך שיעקב מצ"ע הוא מדת אמת, ניתוסף אצלו דרגא נעלית יותר במדת האמת].

בהיותו במעמד ומצב של גלות.

והביאור בזה, שירידת יעקב אבינו לבית לבן היתה בשביל העלי', באופן דויפרוץ האיש מאד מאד, כיתרון האור מן החושך ויתרון החכמה מן הסכלות.

וכיון שיעקב ראה (כיון שהי' אצלו הענין דאשא עיני) את תכלית הכוונה שבזה, לכן, גם בהיותו בבית לבן הי' אצלו הענין דשיר (המעלות), באופן של שמחה גלוי'.

עד שזהו ענין הקשור עם חמש עשרה מעלות שבביהמ"ק, שמורים על ענין העלי' מדרגא לדרגא בעבודת ה' גופא באופן של מעלין בקודש

◆ *Song?!*

At this point, we now understand the mystical secret of Jacob's reciting the *15 Songs of Ascent* while being in the house of Laban, where Jacob was in a state of exile, specifically because these 15 chapters of psalms carry an empowerment to battle with and to overcome exile. However, why specifically have them as songs, while in a state of exile?

And in emphasizing the question, the *maamor* emphasizes two points:

- Song is the experience of revealed joy
- Jacob is the epitome of the *Attribute of Truth*, and hence, was fully present in the moment, here being a moment of exile

And in answering the question, the following concepts are explained:

- The descent into exile is only for the sake of the ascent derived from it
- Within the *Holy Temple* of service to G-d, there are *steps* (ascents)

◆ *Song: Revealed Joy*

--The Talmud in tractate *Brochot* (*Blessings*) is searching for the source that one has to make a blessing over food before eating of it. In answer the Talmud extrapolates: "(The verse states (-Leviticus 19:24)), '*sanctified for praises before the L-rd,*' teaching (that) *they require* (praise of G-d in the form of a) *blessing* (both) *beforehand and thereafter*, (as the verse says praises in the plural). *From here, Rabbi Akiva said: 'A person is forbidden to taste anything before he recites a blessing.'*"

Upon using this verse for this teaching, the Talmud makes an abjection, "*And did this verse: 'Sanctified for praises,' come for that purpose? This verse is necessary to derive other matters...*" The teaching of the other matter leads into with that which the *maamor* quotes in proving that *song* is connected specifically to a state of revealed joy:--

"*Rabbi Shmuel bar Nahmani said (that) Rabbi Yonatan said, as Rabbi Shmuel bar Nahmani said that Rabbi Yonatan said: From where (is it derived that) one only recites a song (of praise in the Holy Temple) over the (libation of) wine (on the altar)? As it is stated (-Judges 9:13): 'And the vine replied: Should I leave my wine, which gladdens G-d and man, (and go and wave above the trees)?' If (wine) gladdens people, in what (way) does it gladden G-d? (Rather, derive) from here that one only recites a song (of praise) over wine, (as wine gladdens G-d when offered as part of the service in the Holy Temple).'*"

Hence, we see that *song* is only connected with joy, and if so, these 15 chapters of Psalms, each beginning with, and being called, "Song of Ascent," means that Jacob was reciting them in a state of revealed joy.

◆ *Jacob: The Attribute of Truth (a)*

We explained earlier that in the teachings of Kabbalah and Chassidut, each of the patriarchs manifested a different *Attribute of the Three Holy Emotions*, in which Abraham is *Love*, Isaac is *Awe* and Jacob is *Compassion*. It is explained that Jacob's being *Compassion* is Jacob's being the *Attribute of Truth*.

This is explained as firstly, the *Attribute of Truth* is that *Truth* is (-Exodus 26:28), "*And the middle bar in the midst of the planks shall [extend and] penetrate from one end to the other end,*" for the rule of *Truth* is, as explained (-Leviticus, Acharei, end of chapter 16) by the Rabbi Levi ben Gershon, the *RaLBaG* (-[Link](#)), "*And this is one of the virtues of truth, meaning to say that it testifies of itself from every side and corner.*" Concerning Jacob this is explained as having manifested itself within (-Vayirah Rabba, Portion 36:5), "*His bed (children) was complete before him,* (-see also, Talmud, Pesachim 56a, "*and not as,*"), *unlike Abraham,*

from whom Ishmael emerged and all the sons of Ketura, Isaac, from whom emerged Esau and all the Heads of Edom."

The teaching behind this is, that *Compassion* (Jacob) is a compilation of both *Kindness* and *Strictness* (*Justice*). *Kindness* states, "It makes no difference what the recipient deserves or doesn't deserve, because, kindness demands that I give him!" *Strictness* states that, "The recipient can only receive that which he has earned and deserves, even if conditions, education and healing demands that we look away and give him more." *Compassion* states, "You must first know what you do and don't deserve, and nevertheless, with compassion I will then give you more, so that you may heal and grow."

Being that there are no offspring or situations alike, neither *Kindness* nor *Strictness* will ultimately be able to, "penetrate from one end to the other end," and while *Kindness* will work well for *Isaac*, it did not work well for *Ishmael*, who demanded some discipline of *Strictness* to protect and guide that the *Kindness* be productive and positive. So too, while *Strictness* worked well for *Jacob*, it did not work well for *Esau*, who demanded some tenderness of *Kindness* to protect and guide that the *Strictness* be productive and positive. However, the *Truth* of *Jacob*, in being able to embrace, both, *Kindness* and *Strictness*, in a perfect blend of *Compassion*, was able to guide each and every one of his twelve children, that they each be able to be righteous and remain on the holy path, because, "And this is one of the virtues of truth, meaning to say that he testifies of himself from every side and corner."

Our discussion here is that the *Attribute of Truth* is always truthfully and completely in the present, and hence, *Jacob* being the *Attribute of Truth*, how could he be, in a truthful and complete state of exile, and yet simultaneously be, in a truthful and complete state of song and revealed joy?

◆ *Jacob: The Attribute of Truth (b)*

In addition to this there is a teaching of Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch, (the third Rebbe in the dynasty of Lubavitch, known as the *Tzemach Tzedek*), upon the verse in Micha (-7:20), "You shall give the truth to Jacob."

In the simple meaning of the verse, Micha is speaking of G-d's forgiving us for our iniquities, and concludes with, "You shall give the truth of Jacob, the loving-kindness of Abraham, which You swore to our forefathers from days of yore." However, in the actual texts it reads with the prefix *lamed* (לַיַּקוֹב -לַיעֲקֹב) which literally means to Jacob. Hence, the verse reads that G-d will give truth **to** Jacob.

The mystical meaning behind this is, that while *Jacob*, on his own right, worked, earned and developed within himself to be the embodiment of the *Attribute of Truth*, nevertheless, there is *Truth* and then there is the *Truth of Truths*. For example, The Talmud (-Eiruvin 13b) states concerning the two antithetical opinions between the *Schools of Shammai* and *Hillel* (-[Link](#)) "a Divine Voice emerged and proclaimed: Both these and those are the words of the living G-d. However, the *halackha* (Torah Law) is in accordance with the opinion of *Beit Hillel*. So, even though on a spiritual level, each opinion is *Truth*, nevertheless, it is only the *Truth of Truths*, which, "penetrates from one end to the other end," into the physical realm, and thus, becomes the actual physical *halacha*²⁵.

In the teachings, the difference between these two levels of *Truth* (every Torah opinion) and *Truth of Truths* (*halacha*), is that the level of *Truth* is connected with the (lower) name of *Elo-him*, while concerning *halacha* the Talmud states (-Sanhedrin 91b), "And the L-rd (*Ineffable Tetragrammaton*; not just *Elo-him*) is with him (-Samuel I 16:18), 'means that the *halacha* is ruled in accordance with his opinion in every area."

Therefore, how can it be that *Jacob* --who not only attained the embodiment of the *Attribute of Truth* (*Elo-him*), but was even gifted by G-d with the *Truth of Truths* (*Ineffable Tetragrammaton*)-- not be truthful, in that while he is truthfully in a state of exile, he is truthfully in a state of song and revealed joy?!

25. An example of this is explained by the Rebbe concerning a Talmudic argument (-Brochot 35b) between Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai and Rabbi Yishmael:

"*The Sages taught: What (is the meaning of that which) the verse states: 'And you shall gather your grain'? Because it is stated (-Joshua 1:8): 'This Torah shall not depart from your mouths, (and you shall contemplate in it day and night); I might (have thought) that these matters are (to be understood) as they are written; (one is to literally spend his days immersed exclusively in Torah study. Therefore,) the verse states: 'And you shall gather your grain, (your wine and your oil),' assume in (their) regard, the way of the world; (set aside time not only for Torah, but also for work). This is the statement of Rabbi Yishmael.*

"*Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai says: Is it possible that a person plows in the plowing season and sows in the sowing season and harvests in the harvest season and threshes in the threshing season and winnows in the windy season, (as grain is separated from the chaff by means of the wind, and is constantly busy); what will become of Torah? Rather, (one must dedicate himself exclusively to Torah at the expense of other endeavors; as) when Israel performs G-d's will, their work is performed by others, as it is stated (-Isaiah 61:5): 'And strangers will stand and feed your flocks, (and foreigners will be your plowmen and your vinedressers),' When Israel does not perform G-d's will, their work is performed by them (themselves, as it is stated): 'And you shall gather your grain.' Moreover, (if Israel fails to perform G-d's will), others' work will be performed by them, as it is stated (-Deuteronomy 28:48): 'You shall serve your enemy (whom G-d shall send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness and in want of all things).'*

"(Summing up this dispute,) *Abaye said: (Although there is room for both opinions,) many have acted in accordance with (the opinion of) Rabbi Yishmael, (and combined working for a living and learning Torah,) and (although they engaged in activities other than the study of Torah,) were successful (in their Torah study). Many have acted in accordance with (the opinion of) Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai and were not successful (in their Torah study. They were ultimately forced to abandon their Torah study altogether).*"

Hence, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai is demanding of each and every one of us that we be (-Talmud, Shabbat 11a), "*Torah is his job.*" However, the conclusion of the Talmud is that this is not for everyone, and the *halacha* is that we should be (-Ethics, Chapter 2, Mishna 2), "*Beautiful is the study of Torah with the way of the world.*" However, the opinion of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai is *True!* Hence, the Rebbe explains that in quantity, the law is like Rabbi Yishmael, and we must work for a living, but still set aside times for study. However, in quality, the law is like Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, in which, while we are learning, "*it alone is our job!*" We must shut off the cellphone, etc., and be only completely in our Torah-study.

◆ Descent for the Sake of Ascent

The answer to this is that the descent of Jacob was for the sake of an ascent.

Concerning exile, our sages teach (-Talmud, Pesachim 87b), "*And Rabbi Elazar said: The Holy One, Blessed be He, exiled Israel among the nations, only so that converts would join them, as it is stated (-Hosea 2:25): 'And I will sow her to Me in the land'. Does a person sow a se'a (of grain for any reason other) than to bring in several kor (of grain during the harvest)? (So too, the exile is to enable converts²⁶ from the nations to join the Jewish people.)*"

The Talmud's usage of the metaphor of *sowing* is precise, as it explains the exile process. We find in Chassidus (-Sichos 7 Tevet 5711, and other places) the teaching that, "*Just as a seed sown in the soil, if it is to germinate and yield flourishing vegetation, must itself decompose.*" The simple understanding of this is that in order to grow and progress to an entirely new plane, you must first undergo a period of nothingness. You need to come to a state where you have nothing in the middle, so to speak. What this means is that when growth is relative to the original stature, then the original stature is a foundation to the new level. Hence, the first level does not need to be decomposed. However, when the growth is exponential, and completely beyond the original stature, there needs to be a total decomposing of the original stature, in order to be able to embrace the new growth, for the original stature is a *hinderance* to the new level.

Simply speaking, in the realm of paradigms, Einstein (-[Link](#)) is quoted for saying, "*We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.*" When the problem is not due to a lack of knowledge of data, but due to a mindset of thinking, then the original mindset is a hinderance, and we must step out of it, before we can solve the problem. Hence, in the Talmud we find (-Baba Metzia 87a), "*When Rabbi Zeira ascended (from Babylonia) to Eretz Yisrael, he fasted one hundred fasts so that he (would) forget the Babylonian (method of studying) Talmud, so that it would not hinder him (from adapting to the unique style of study prevalent in Eretz Yisrael).*"

The methodology of the Talmud of Babylon and of Jerusalem (-[Link](#)) were two completely different methodologies, to the point that the *Babylonian Talmud* (method) was a hinderance to the Jerusalem Talmud (method)! The Babylonian methodology was that of the *Rebound Light*, meaning that it worked through the process of elimination, chiseling away and eliminating all that cannot be correct, until left with that which is correct. Hence, upon the Babylonian Talmud, Chassidus applies the verse (-Lamentations 3:6), "*He has made me dwell in darkness (process of elimination).*" While the Jerusalem methodology is that of *Direct Light*, going directly to the correct interpretation, without the process of questions, contradictions and rebuttals. Hence, Rabbi Zeira's mind, which was conditioned by the process of elimination of the Babylonian methodology, was unable to grow and succeed in the *Direct Light* process of the Jerusalem Talmud, Therefore, he fasted that his present mindset be forgotten (decomposed) so that he may embrace the exponentially higher format of *seeing* in Torah-study.

And with this we can understand why the ascent of, "*And the man (Jacob) became exceedingly wealthy,*" could only happen through Jacob's descent into exile.

On his own right (-Genesis 25:27), "*Jacob was an innocent man, dwelling in tents.*" Mystically, this means that Jacob lived in the *spiritual* world of *Tikkun -Orderliness and Correctness*. While Esau was (-ibid), "*a man who understood hunting, a man of the field.*" Mystically meaning that Esau lived in the physical world of *Chaos and Confusion*, which nourishes from the spiritual realm of *Tohu -Chaos*. So too, was Laban, who was a conniving cheat.

Now, in the spiritual realms, the *Lights of Tohu* were far greater than the *Lights of Tikkun*, to the point that the *Vessels of Tohu*, unable to contain and sustain the great *Lights*, shatter, and the *Sparks of Tohu* fell into the physical realm, in accordance with the rule (-see Sha'arei Oira, Sha'ar Purim, d"h yavioo L'vush Malchus, Chapter 12), "*That which is higher falls lower*²⁷."

In accordance with the different numerologies of the *Ineffable Tetragrammaton*, the world of *Tikkun* (realm of Jacob) is the manifestation of the *Name of 45*, while the world of *Tohu* (realm of Laban) is of the *Name of 63*. Also explained as, that by elevating and inheriting the *Fallen Sparks of Tohu*, the human of the *Finite Permeating Light* inherits and digests the *Infinite Circular Light*, and hence, this success is called, not only "(relatively) *Wealthy*," but, "*Exceedingly* (exponentially) *Wealthy*." And for this, Jacob had to be willing to have his original spiritual paradigm of *Tikkun* and *Finite Linear* spirituality nullified and decomposed, so that he could embrace the *Tohu* and *Infinite Light* spirituality. And this was done through Jacob subjecting himself to leaving his own *Tent of Orderliness*, and descend into *Laban's Field of Chaos*, which is the descent of the Fallen Sparks into the egocentric world of narcissi and of arrogant denial of a *Higher Power* and *His Holy Will* of right and wrong, and in this realm of *Chaos*, where Jacob, --even subjected to the persecution of Laban's immorality and thrust into a state of exile-- nevertheless, obediently maintains his commitment to spirituality, right and wrong, and selfless service unto G-d and unto others, Jacob corrects and refines the physical exile of the *Fallen Spark*, having the physical become but a transparent vessel for spirituality. For this, Jacob, the man of *Tikkun*, has to allow his own paradigm of *Orderly Spirituality* decompose, through which he then inherits and becomes, "*Exceedingly Wealthy*," with the *Infinite Chaotic Lights of Tohu*, embodying them within productive, *Orderly Vessels of Tikkun*.

26. Rabbi Isaac Luria, the *Arizal*, explains that we do not see in the 2000 years of exile that we have gathered such huge amounts of converts, and therefore, explains that *converts* here does not apply only to human beings, but to the G-dly Sparks within the physical objects, which when used for a mitzvah are refined, elevated, and transformed into the realm of holiness.

27. For example, a wall made of layers of stones, when it falls, the higher the row of stones, the further and the more deeply embedded in the ground it falls.

◆ "The Advantage of Light Over Darkness"

This is the deeper mystical concept of what King Solomon is saying (-Ecclesiastics 2:13), "*And I saw that wisdom has an advantage over folly, as the advantage of light over darkness.*"

There is *Light* and there is *Darkness*. Normally speaking, *Light* is greater than *Darkness*, as *Light* represents Divinity, revelation and goodness, while *Darkness* is used as a metaphor for the *Other Side*, concealment and evil. However, in Chassidus it is explained that we factually have witnessed the domination of *Darkness* over *Light*, which means that ultimately, *Darkness* is stronger than *Light*. Even more than this, even after the conquering of *Light* over *Darkness* in the times of King Solomon, and nevertheless, over that state of *Light* too, ultimately it was conquered by *Darkness*, as we are again in exile?!

The mystical reason for this is (-Psalms 18:12), "*He made darkness His hiding-place.*" What does this (mystically) mean?

Light is revelation, which by definition means a specific defined (spiritual or physical) shape. For example, the great infinite *Emanation of Wisdom* within the *Infinite Light*, as great and as infinite as it may be, it is but the defined form of *Wisdom* and not that of *Understanding*, or *Will*, or *Love*, etc. And it must be so, to be in a state of revelation, for how can *nothingness* (in the sense of being beyond any specific *somethingness*) reveal itself, if there is no (specific defined form of) self?! Therefore, the rule in Kabbalah and Chassidus is that within all there is the *Interior* and the *Exterior*, with the *Interior* being its *Essence*, while the *Exterior* being its *Expression*. The *Expression* being but a finite ray²⁸ of the *Essence*.

Therefore, the only *dwelling place*, so to speak, for the *Essence of G-d*, is in *Darkness*. Not in which there is the concealment or war against *Light*, but rather, (as explained concerning G-d's being called *nothingness*, versus being a defined *somethingness*,) it is the *Darkness* that is beyond any defined expression (*somethingness*) of *Light*. In some teachings this *Darkness* is a reference to the *Source of Light*, as looking directly into the sun causes darkness, and in some places, this is a reference to an *Essence*, which is beyond even being a *Source* to any *Light*. Be it as it may, this is the mystical deeper meaning to, "*He made darkness His hiding-place.*"

Because we are ultimately speaking of the *Essence*, which in itself is beyond any defined value of *Light* (goodness) or *Darkness*^{28a} (negative), hence, the way this *Darkness* of, "*He made darkness His hiding-place,*" manifests itself in the our physical world is as the (negative) *Darkness* of exile and evil to be able to overcome and dominate even the greatest of *Light*.

However, when we take this very *Darkness* itself --as Jacob did while being in *Laban's Darkness* imposing upon Jacob a state of exile-- and with obedience, commitment and self-sacrifice, we remain faithful to G-d and to His Torah and Mitzvot, and we use this very physical darkness itself for serving G-d and selflessly serving others, --through Torah-study moments in our office, praying *Mincha* services in middle of our working day, and giving of our hard-earned monies to charity--, we reveal within the physical *Darkness* its ultimate *Source* of, "*He made darkness His hiding-place!*" This is what is called, "*Light from Darkness,*" over which *Darkness* cannot dominate, for this *Light* comes *from*, and has the power of, *Darkness* of itself. Hence, King Solomon states, "*as the advantage of light over darkness,*" which in the original Hebrew text, the word is not, "*light over darkness,*" but, "האור מן החשך - *Light from darkness!*"

28. This being true even of the *Infinite Circular Light*, which is but a ray of *Expression* of its *Essence Source* of *Light*.

28a. See Job (-35:6), "*If you sinned, what do you do to Him, and if your transgressions are many, what do you do to Him? If you are righteous, what do you give Him?*" And Malachi (-1:2), "*Is not Esau a brother to Jacob?*" And (-Bereishit Rabbah 2:5), "*R' Abahu and R' Chiya Raba. R' Abahu said - from the beginning of the creation of the world the Holy One saw the actions of the righteous and the actions of the wicked. This is what is written (-Psalms 1:6) 'For the L-rd knows the way of the righteous...' (and (-Genesis 1:2)) 'Now the earth was astonishingly empty...,' these are the actions of the wicked, (and (-Genesis 1:3)) 'And G-d said, Let there be light...,' these are the actions of the righteous. But I don't know which one of them He desired, the actions of these or the actions of those. Since it is written (-Genesis 1:4), 'And G-d saw the light that it was good...' He desires the actions of the righteous and not the actions of the wicked.*"

In these teachings we see that to the *Essence* there is no defined value of good and evil, in which one must manifest itself in a specific fashion. This is a very difficult teaching, and here is not the place to explain it.

◆ Hence, Jacob Sang

Now, because Jacob knew this,

--Here the Rebbe makes a quick reference to Jacob's reciting the *15 Songs of Ascent*, in which the second song (-Chapter 121) begins with, "*I shall raise my eyes to the mountains,*" and therefore, Jacob saw beyond just the painful descent of exile, but also, and primarily, the ascent brought about through exile--

therefore, already while Jacob was serving G-d in his state of exile, nevertheless, Jacob was, in his state of *Truth of Truths*, able to *Sing* the *Songs* of Ascent, in a state of *revealed joy*!

--And here the Rebbe points out, upon that which we stated earlier, that the *15 Songs of Ascent* is connected to the *15 Steps* (*ascending* from the *Women's Courtyard* to the *Israelite's Courtyard*) in the Holy Temple, we are speaking here of Jacob achieving even within the realm of holiness (Holy Temple), the *ascent* (*steps*) of (-Talmud, Brochot 28a), "*One elevates to a higher level of sanctity.*"--

G-d's Strength:

In Chapter Six, the *maamor* emphasizes that (i) being that we go with song, we definitely go with strength and conviction, and (ii) nevertheless, we must be careful not to fall into the ego thought of (-Deuteronomy 8:17), "*And you will say to yourself, 'My strength and the might of my hand that has accumulated this wealth for me.'*"

Rather, we must know that our strength lay only in our (-Mishneh Torah, Law of Kings, Chapter 11, Law 4), "*And he will fight the war of G-d.*"

28a. See Job (-35:6), "*If you sinned, what do you do to Him, and if your transgressions are many, what do you do to Him? If you are righteous, what do you give Him?*" And Malachi (-1:2), "*Is not Esau a brother to Jacob?*" And (-Bereishit Rabbah 2:5), "*R' Abahu and R' Chiya Raba. R' Abahu said - from the beginning of the creation of the world the Holy One saw the actions of the righteous and the actions of the wicked. This is what is written (-Psalms 1:6) 'For the L-rd knows the way of the righteous...' (and (-Genesis 1:2)) 'Now the earth was astonishingly empty...', these are the actions of the wicked, (and (-Genesis 1:3)) 'And G-d said, Let there be light...', these are the actions of the righteous. But I don't know which one of them He desired, the actions of these or the actions of those. Since it is written (-Genesis 1:4), 'And G-d saw the light that it was good...' He desires the actions of the righteous and not the actions of the wicked.*"

In these teachings we see that to the *Essence* there is no defined value of good and evil, in which one must manifest itself in a specific fashion. This is a very difficult teaching, and here is not the place to explain it.

Test Yourself



- (1) Why is it specifically questionable that Jacob would be singing in a state of exile?
- (2) What is the difference between *Truth* and *Truth of Truths*, and between *Torah* and *halacha*?
- (3) What does one need to go through a descent in order to experience an ascent?
- (4) What is the deeper meaning of, "as the advantage of light over darkness"?
- (5) Why did the higher *Sparks of Tohu* fall into the lowliness of the *physical world*?

Discussion/Meditation



- (1) What meditation of, not only solace, but of revealed joy, can one find while being in a state of exile?

Answers:

1. Because Jacob is the embodiment of the *Truth of Truths*, and hence, is fully present in the moment, without any, "Fake it until you make it," tactics.
 2. While all *Truths* must, "penetrate from one end to the other," however, all *Truths* apply this only within, "one end to the other," within spirituality, while *Truth of Truths* includes within this also the physical. So too, with all *Torah* true opinions, that while they manifest itself as truth in the spiritual realm, it is *halacha* that carries this truth even into the physical realm.
 3. Because, in an *exponential* ascent, the original state of mind is a hindrance to the new unprecedented level, and hence, the original paradigm must decompose, throwing us temporarily into a state of descent.
 4. The ultimate advantage is within the *Light* that is in a darkness transformed into light.
 5. For the rule is, "That which is higher falls lower."
- Discussion/Meditations:
1. Even though presently it seems that we are physically and spiritually subjected to, and suffering from, the tyranny of being in a state of exile, nevertheless, this is but the "peel" of exile, while within it is the "fruit" of exile, which is the gathering of *Converted Fallen Sparks of Tohu*, rendering us, "Exceedingly Wealthy."

☆ CHAPTER SIX ☆

In this chapter we are explained the final verse in our chapter of the *15 Songs of Ascent*, "I am at peace, but when I speak, they [come] to [wage] war," that while praying and searching to serve G-d through peace, nevertheless, for the sake of elevation from *Righteous* to *Returnee*, G-d brings upon us the service of war.

6) And this concept (the ascent that comes after the descent of exile) is emphasized in the closing and sealing (Which everything follows its sealing) (of) the first song of (all) the *Songs of Ascents*: "I am at peace, but when I speak, they [come] to [wage] war."

And we will understand this after an introduction upon the general concept of war ("to [wage] war"), which is connected with the virtue of *iskafya* (subduing our *Evil Inclination*) and *ishapcha* (transforming our *Evil Inclination*), which through this is accomplished the, "advantage of light over darkness," and the "advantage of wisdom over folly."

And as explained in the *Hemshech of 5666*²⁹, (of the man of the birthday³⁰ (Rabbi Sholom DovBer of Lubavitch)), the metaphor of the prince, which while he is in the chamber of his father, the king, there is no novelty, and the virtues of the prince are not recognized. However, when to king sends him (the prince) far away, where they do not know at all of the existence of the king, and being there, he is not effected, and he remains in his (regality and committed to his father the king) status and condition, and even more so, he effects upon the others there that they should have a relationship with the king, behold, with this (being regal, committed, and transforming those there) is revealed the virtue of the prince.

And this causes an elevation in the king (himself), for, even though the king is (-Samuel I 9:2), "from his shoulders and upwards he was taller than any of the people³¹," nevertheless, through this that the prince's virtue is revealed, this causes an elevation in the king (himself, as well).

And so too, it is understood in concern with the service of mankind (to G-d), that the general descent of the soul into the body, and the general service of *iskafya* and *ishapcha* (the war with the *Other Side*), is in order to reveal the powers (virtues) of the soul.

29. On the Rosh Hashanah of 5766, Rabbi Sholom DovBer of Lubavitch began a series of *maamorim* that went on for 2.5 years, known as *Heimshech* (series) 5666.

30. It was on the 119th birthday of Rabbi Sholom DovBer of Lubavitch (20th of Chesvan 5780 (1980)) that the Rebbe delivered this *maamor* on chapter 120 of Psalms (see INTRODUCTION).

ו) וענין זה (העלי' שבאה לאחר ירידת הגלות) מודגש בסיום וחותם (שהכל הולך אחר החיתום) המזמור הראשון דשיר המעלות, אני שלום וכי אדבר המה למלחמה

ויובן בהקדים כללות הענין של מלחמה (המה למלחמה), שקשור עם המעלה של אתכפיא ואתהפכא, שע"ז נפעל יתרון האור מן החושך ויתרון החכמה מן הסכלות.

וכמבואר בהמשך תרס"ו (לבעל יום ההולדת) המשל מן המלך, שבשעה שנמצא בהיכל אביו המלך, אין זה חידוש, ולא ניכרת המעלה של בן המלך, אך דוקא כאשר המלך שולח אותו למרחקים, במקום שלא יודעים כלל אודות מציאות המלך, ובהיותו שם אינו מתפעל מזה, ונשאר במעמדו ומצבו, ואדרבה, הוא פועל על אלו שנמצאים שם שתהי' להם שייכות עם המלך, הנה בזה מתגלה המעלה של בן המלך.

וענין זה פועל עילוי במלך, כי, אע"פ שהמלך משכמו ומעלה גבוה מכל העם, ועד באופן של התנשאות עצמית, אעפ"כ, ע"ז שמתגלה מעלת בן המלך, הרי זה פועל עילוי במלך.

ועד"ז מובן בנוגע לעבודת האדם, שכללות ירידת הנשמה למטה, וכללות העבודה של אתכפיא ואתהפכא (המלחמה עם הלעו"ז), היא כדי לגלות את הכחות של הנשמה.

31. Explained in Chassidus to be referring to the superiority of the king's intellectual and emotional capacities, as well.

And the concept behind this is, that even though the Holy One, blessed be He, knows how the service of the soul down below (in the body) will be, (and He knows the powers of the soul, etc.), nevertheless, it isn't enough that this (the soul's power) is *known*, rather, the complete purpose of this (the soul's power) is when it truly *actualizes*, for then the power of the soul is *revealed*.

And this (that the soul descends and reveals its powers through actualizing them) is a resemblance of how it is by the Holy One, blessed be He, so to speak, for the general (purpose) of the creation of the world is (-Eitz Chaim, Gateway 1, Branch 1), in order that it be revealed the completeness of His powers. Being that it arose in His will (for a reason known to Him, or for *Secret Reason*) that His powers should come into revelation, which this happens specifically when they (G-d's powers) are actualized.

And so too, in the service of mankind (to G-d), that specifically when the soul descends to below (into the physical body) and there it serves (G-d) in a manner of *iskafya* and *ishapcha*, (only) then are revealed the powers and the virtues of the soul.

And this is connected with the actions of mitzvot in actual reality, which through this (actually doing mitzvot) we are connected with the *Essence* (of G-d), as the man of the birthday (Rabbi Sholom DovBer of Lubavitch) explains that all of the mitzvot are associated to the *Essence* (of G-d).

However, upon this is stated (last verse of our chapter of *Song of Ascent*), "*I am at peace*," meaning, that every Jew, from their own perspective, needs to want that their service (to G-d) should be in the fashion of peace, that there should be no concept of tests (challenges; temptations), etc., which he would need to wage war against. And he prays (-Daily Morning Blessings), "*And do not bring us... into temptations*," (and how much more so, that it is forbidden to look for temptation, as understood as well from that which the Talmud states (-Avoda Zara 11b) that is forbidden to walk in a market of an idol, or on a street where there is the opposite of modesty).

And this (service of G-d, without having to face temptations) is the general service of the Tzaddikim (righteous ones), which is in the manner of peace.

והענין בזה, שאע"פ שהקב"ה יודע כיצד תהי' עבודת הנשמה למטה (ויודע את הכחות של הנשמה וכו'), מ"מ, לא מספיק שיוודעים זאת, אלא תכלית השלימות בזה היא, כשזה בא בפועל ממש, שאז מתגלים הכחות של הנשמה. ובדוגמא כפי שזה כביכול אצל הקב"ה, שכללות בריאת העולם היא כדי שיתגלו שלימות כחותיו כו', כיון שעלה ברצונו (מטעם הידוע לו, או מטעם הכמוס) שכחותיו יבואו בגילוי, שזהו דוקא כשבא בפועל.

ועד"ז גם בעבודת האדם, שדוקא עי"ז שהנשמה יורדת למטה, ושם עובדת עבודתה באופן של אתכפיא ואתהפכא, אזי מתגלים הכחות והמעלה של הנשמה.

וענין זה קשור גם עם מעשה המצוות בפועל ממש, שע"ז מתקשרים עם עצמות, כפי שמבאר בעל יום ההולדת שכל המצוות מתייחסים אל העצמות

אך עד"נ אני שלום, היינו, שכל אחד מישראל מצד עצמו צריך לרצות שעבודתו תהי' באופן של שלום, שלא יהיו כלל ענינים של נסיונות וכו' שיצטרך ללחום נגדם, ומתפלל אל תביאני כו' לידי ניסיון (ועאכו"כ שאסור לחפש ענין של נסיון וכו', וכמובן גם ממ"ש בגמרא שאסור ללכת בשוק של ע"ז או ברחוב שהוא היפך הצניעות). וזוהי כללות עבודת הצדיקים, שהיא באופן של שלום.

However, nevertheless, there are "they," (from our verse, "I am at peace, but when I speak, *they* [come] to [wage] war.") (plural, for it refers to this physical world, etc., which is called (-Tanya, Chapter 33), "Public Domain" (lit. "Domain of the *Many*"), "To War," ((-Rashi on these words in the verse,) "coming to wage war against me."

Which upon this the verse states (-Genesis 22:1), "And G-d tested Abraham," that from Above (G-d) places him in a situation of a test, a situation which demands a service in the fashion of war, and the person needs overcome the test.

And this is the general concept of (-Psalms 66:5), "How awesome are Your plots upon mankind," that from Above they bring him to a test, and the intention in this is, as it states, (-Deuteronomy 13:4), "For the L-rd, your G-d, is testing (menase - מנסה) you, to know whether you really love the L-rd," in order that through this (overcoming the test), there should be the concept of *menase* (מנסה), which (also) means *Lifting up*, (that we experience,) "As the advantage of light over darkness," and, "The advantage of wisdom over folly."

And this is in general the service of the *Baal Teshuvah* (Returnee), that because from Above they want that by the individual that there should also be the virtue of the *Baal Teshuvah*³² (-See Zohar, Vol III, 153b), "To bring the righteous to (also have the virtue of) *Teshuvah*," so they bring him to the experience of a test, etc. which through this there will be by the individual also the virtue of the *Baal Teshuvah*.

And being that the intent of the war is in order that through it one reach the far greater elevation, etc. therefore, it is an experience over which one says, *Songs of Ascent*, which is the experience of song and (revealed) joy.

And from this (that the service of war is performed with revealed joy) it is understood that one is not impressed at all from the experience of war, and he performs his service with appropriate strength, being that this strength does not come from (-Deuteronomy 8:17), "My strength and the might of my hand that has accumulated this wealth for me," G-d forbid, but rather, it comes only because it is in the sense of (-Mishneh Torah, Laws of Kings, Chapter 11, Law 4) "and fight the wars of G-d."

אבל אעפ"כ, ישנו ענין שהמה (לשון רבים, דקאי על עוה"ז הגשמי כו' שנקרא רשות הרבים) למלחמה (המה באים להלחם בי).

שעז"נ והאלקים נסה את אברהם, שמלמעלה מעמידים אותו במצב וענין של נסיון, מצב שזקוק לאופן העבודה של מלחמה, וצריך לעמוד בנסיון.

וזהו כללות הענין דנורא עלילה על בני אדם, שמביאים אותו מלמעלה לענין של נסיון, והכוונה בזה היא כמ"ש כי מנסה ה' אלקיכם אתכם לדעת הישכם אוהבים את ה' גו', כדי שע"י עבודתו יהי הענין דמנסה, שהו"ע ההגבהה, כיתרון האור מן החושך ויתרון החכמה מן הסכלות.

וזהו כללות העבודה של בעלי תשובה, דכיון שמלמעלה רוצים שתהי' אצלו גם המעלה של בעלי תשובה, לאתבא צדיקיא בתיובתא, מביאים אותו לענין של נסיון וכו', שעז"נ תהי' אצלו גם המעלה של בעלי תשובה

וכיון שהכוונה של המלחמה היא כדי שעז"נ יגיע לעילוי גדול יותר כו', לכן הרי זה ענין שאומרים עליו שיר המעלות, שזהו"ע של שיר ושמהה.

ומזה מובן גם שהעבודה היא באופן שאינו מתפעל כלל מענין המלחמה, ועושה עבודתו בתוקף המתאים, כיון שתוקף זה אינו מצד כחי ועוצם ידי ה"ו, אלא לפי שזה בבחי' ילחם מלחמות ה'.

32. See Talmud (-Brochet 34b), "As Rabbi Abbahu said: In the place where penitents stand, even the full-fledged righteous do not stand, as it is stated (-Isaiah 57:19): 'Peace, peace upon him who is far and him who is near.' (Peace and greeting are extended first to) *him who is far*, (the penitent,) *and* (only) *thereafter* (is peace extended to) *him who is near* (the full-fledged righteous)."

And just as with a war in its simple (physical) sense (concerning the conquering of the land (of Israel)) that we must begin with (offering) peace, as the verse states (-Deuteronomy 20:10), "(When you approach a city to wage war against it,) *you shall propose peace to it.*"

--[As we find (-Jerusalem Talmud, Shvi'is Chapter 6, Law 1) when (Joshua) conquered the land (of Israel), that because of the fear (that they had) of the Children of Israel, behold, the land of *Girgashites* (-Link) turned away, etc., and they left to Africa³³]

Nevertheless, at the time where there needs to be war, it (the war) must be in the fashion of (-Talmud, Shabbat 19a), "(And so Shammai would say: (From that which is written (-Deuteronomy 20:20): 'And you should build a siege against the city that is waging war with you)) *until it falls,*' (it is derived that the siege should be sustained 'until it falls.' Consequently, the siege must continue) *even on Shabbat.*"

And through this service (for G-d) in the fashion of war, he refines the items of this physical world, and transforms them into holiness, as explained earlier (chapter 2) concerning the service (for G-d) of Jacob of (-Genesis 21:11), "*And he took some of the stones of the place,*" to take the physical items of this physical world (*stones of the place*) and to elevate them to holiness. Which this is the general service of Jacob (*Yaakov* - יעקב, which are made up of the words יעקב - *yud-okeiv* (*yud* represents G-d, *okeiv* means *heel*), that (Jacob) is occupying himself with the nether lower (physical items -inanimate stones) (*heel*) and he elevates them to holiness.

And as explained in Chassidus (-Torah Ohr, Vayishlach 24b) that Jacob (with this service of, "*And he took some stones of the place*"), from his own stature, was (now) finished his *Service of Refinement* (of this physical world and its *Fallen Sparks*), and from his perspective, was able to (-Obadiah 1:21), "*And saviors shall ascend Mt. Zion to judge the mountain of Esau,* (and the Lord shall have the kingdom)." Only, that when he sent the messengers (angels) to Esau (to make peace), they (the messengers) told him they Esau wasn't ready yet (for peace; for *Moshiach*). And therefore, Jacob said (to Esau -Genesis 33:13-14), "*the flocks and the cattle, which are raising their young,*" and therefore, "*I will move [at] my own slow pace.*" Until, through the service of, "*he will wage the war of G-d,*" we merit to the building of the Holy Temple in its (rightful) place, --(which also the place of the Holy Temple was (first) conquered by war, (after which) and David also bought this from *Arona*)-- with the coming of our righteous *Moshiach*, may he come, redeem us, and walk us upright to our land, speedily in our days, *mamosh* (truly so)!

וכמו במלחמה כפשוטה (בכיבוש הארץ), שיש להתחיל עם ענין של שלום, כמ"ש וקראת אלי' לשלום

[ע"ד שהי' בכיבוש הארץ, שמצד הפחד מפני בני"י, הנה גרגשי פנה וכו' והלך לו לאפריקי],

אבל בשעה שצ"ל מלחמה, הרי זה צריך להיות באופן דעד רדתה אפילו בשבת

וע"י העבודה באופן של מלחמה, ה"ה מברר את עניני עוה"ז הגשמי, ומהפכם לקדושה, כנ"ל (ס"ב) בנוגע לעבודת יעקב, ויקח מאבני המקום, לקחת את הענינים של עוה"ז הגשמי (אבני המקום) ולהעלותם לקדושה,

שזהו כללות ענינו של יעקב, יו"ד עקב, שמתעסק עם דברים תחתונים (עקב), ומעלה אותם לקדושה.

וכמבואר בחסידות שיעקב מצ"ע סיים אז עבודת הבריורים שלו, ומצדו ה' כבר יכול להיות ועלו מושיעים בהר ציון וגו', אלא שכאשר שלח את המלאכים לעשו, אמרו לו אח"כ שעשו לא מוכן עדיין, ולכן אמר יעקב הצאן והבקר עלות עלי, ובמילא אני אתנהלה לאטי גו'. ועד שע"י כללות הענין דילחם מלחמות ה', זוכים לבנה מקדש במקומו (שגם מקום ביהמ"ק כבשו ע"י מלחמה, ודוד המלך גם קנה זאת מארונה), בביאת משיח צדקנו, יבוא ויגאלנו ויוליכנו קוממיות לארצנו, במהרה בימינו ממש

33. The Roman province of Africa on the Southern shore of the Mediterranean.

◆ More Mystical Concepts

In order to understand this final chapter of the *maamor*, we are going to first have to introduce some more mystical concepts:

- *Prayer for Peace*
- *Private vs. Public Domain*
- *"Revelation of the Completeness of His Powers"*
- The art of *Iskafya* and *Ishapcha*
- The *Ba'al Teshuvah* vs. the *Tzadik*
- *Jacob: Yud-Okeiv*

◆ *Prayer for Peace*

Here the *maamor* is explaining how all of this (the elevation through the *Service of War -iskafya & ishapcha*) is emphasized in the closing and sealing verse of the first of the *15 Songs of Ascent*, which Jacob specifically recited nightly to overcome his own war with his state of exile in Laban's house.

- The emphases on the *closing and sealing* verse is based on the ruling (-Talmud, Brochos 12a): *Everything follows the sealing*. The Talmud, asks concerning the liturgy of blessings, when the blessing is made up of more than one part, and we need to know with which concept of the blessing do we seal the blessing: "*Do we follow the essence* (of the blessing, the first section,) *or do we follow the conclusion* (of the blessing)?" and the Talmud answers, "*The general principle is: Everything follows the conclusion* (of the blessing)." This ruling is used often to understand that the emphases of any Torah teaching is. As for example, in understanding what the emphases and empowerment of the *15 Songs of Ascent*, we are turn to the *sealing* verse of the first of the *15 Songs of Ascent*--

The verse begins with, "*I am peace*," being that regardless of how we have explained the elevations that are achieved only through the service of engagement and war against the arrogance and impurity of this physical world of separation, nevertheless, we, in choosing our service to G-d, must always seek for the service of peace.

Every morning, in our *Morning Blessings* (-[Link](#)) we pray, "*Do not bring us under the influence of... temptation*." Additionally, the Talmud specifically rules (-Avoda Zorah 11b) that it is forbidden for one to expose himself to a market of idol worship, and to a street where there is immodesty.

- Rabbi Elijah, known as *The Vilna Gaon* (-[Link](#)), would sit in a room with the window-shades closed, so that he not be disturbed by what was transpiring on the street outside, and study Torah. Once he was asked by a student, "*What is the great trick of sitting in a synagogue, with the window-shades closed, studying Torah?! Would it not be a bigger trick to have the window-shades open, and still be thoroughly focused on the Torah you are studying?*" To which the *Vilna Gaon* responded, "*Who says that one has to do tricks!*"--

A Call for Peace:

Even when we are commanded to go to war, as in the commandment to conquer the Land of Israel, we are commanded to first extend peace.

This is what Joshua did, when he crossed the Jordan to conquer the land for the Jewish People. And actually there was one of the *Seven Nations* to be conquered, the *Girgashites*, who took Joshua up on this offer, and the entire nation, trusting in G-d and His word that this land was to be that of Jewish people, they left and went to Africa.

However, when we are left with no choice but war, we wage the war unto complete victory, even battling on Shabbat, using weapons etc., which are normally forbidden on Shabbat!

Hence, the verse begins with, "*I am peace*," in which King David is saying that he is searching and praying to be able to serve G-d in peace, without war against an enemy.

However, then the verse goes on to say, "They [come] to [wage] war."

◆ *Private vs. Public Domain*

We begin understanding this phrase of the verse in it choosing the *plural* sense for the enemy, "They." In Kabbalah and Chassidus, as we explained earlier concerning Jacob's, "And he took from the stones of the place," we define Divinity and holiness as *unity* and *oneness*, while impurity and evil are defined by *separation* and *many*^{33a}. Let us explain the mysticism behind this concept.

In the laws of the prohibition of carrying something *out* or *in* on Shabbat (-[Link](#)), we define *out* as a *Public Domain*, and *in* as a *Private Domain*, in which the biblical prohibition of carrying on Shabbat is defined as not carrying something from a *Private Domain* to a *Public Domain*, or the reverse. The laws of *Private* versus *Public* (-[Link](#)) has nothing to do with the *ownership* of the domain, but in the specifics of the domain, in whether it is walled, size, amount of people traveling through it, etc.

In Kabbalah and Chassidus we define G-d's domain as the *Private Domain*, while our domain as a *Public Domain*. So much so, that the sages tell us (-Berishit Rabbah 11:6) of a conversation between *Turnus Rufus* (-[Link](#)) and Rabbi Akiva (-[Link](#)):

"Turnus Rufus asked Rabbi Akiva: 'If G-d honors the Shabbat, then He should not... cause rain to fall on it...!' Replied Rabbi Akiva: 'If two people live in one courtyard, unless they both contribute to an *eiruv* (-[Link](#)), would they be permitted to carry in the yard? But if one person lives in a courtyard, he has free reign in the entire yard. The same is true of G-d: since there is no other authority besides Him, since the entire world is His, He has free reign in the entire world.'"

Rabbi Akiva is simply explaining that even though our domain, from our paradigm, is *separated* and complex, and that (-Psalms 115:16), "The heavens are heavens of the L-rd, but the earth He gave to the children of men," hence, we see only heaven as a *Private Domain*, and earth as a *Public Domain*, nevertheless, from the true paradigm of G-d, in which, "**Everything is G-d, and G-d is everything,**" there exists only --in both heaven and earth-- a *Private Domain*.

Now, our knowing that, "Everything is G-d, and G-d is everything," is actually a commandment upon us:

Maimonides in his *Sefer Hamitzvois*, Positive Commandment #2 states:

"The 2nd mitzvah is that we are commanded to acquire knowledge of the nature of G-d's Unity, i.e. to understand that the Original Creator and Source of all existence is One.

"The source of this commandment is G d's statement (exalted be He), 'Hear [i.e. "understand"] O Israel, G-d is our L-rd, G-d is One.'

"In most Midrashim you will find this mitzvah described [in the context of G d's statement that a certain kindness was done to the Jewish people,] 'on condition that they unify My Name,' 'on condition that they unite Me,' or a similar expression. They mean to say that G-d took us out of bondage and heaped kindness upon us upon condition that we have His Unity firmly fixed in our minds — since we are required to do so...

"Our Sages also called this mitzvah 'Kingdom,' saying that [the paragraph *Shema* is read before *V'haya*] 'in order to accept upon oneself the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven,' i.e. to acknowledge and comprehend His Unity."

In his *opus magnus*, *Mishneh Torah* (-Yesodei HaTorah, Chapter 1, Law 7), Maimonides explains this commandment to be:

"This G-d is one. He is not two or more, but one, unified in a manner which [surpasses] any unity that is found in the world; i.e., He is not one in the manner of a general category which includes many individual entities, nor one in the way that the body is divided into different portions and dimensions. Rather, He is unified, and there exists no unity similar to His in this world."

The challenge for us in this commandment is that, even when we believe in G-d's being our Creator, nevertheless, we perceive a dualism in which there is G-d, our *Creator* and us, His *creations*. And even though we understand that without G-d we would not exist nor survive, nevertheless, with G-d we do exist, and seemingly, outside of G-d's oneness. Hence, there is a *relationship* that exists between G-d and us (a dualism; G-d and us), in which we even have *Freedom of Choice* to even deny G-d's existence or to simply rebel against G-d's will.

Let us understand (a) the unity of G-d *after* G-d created us, and (b) how can we see ourselves as separated from G-d, when in truth, "G-d is everything and everything is G-d"?

(a) When humans build, form or make³⁴ something, it can only be *Creatio Ex Materia* -creation out of pre-existent matter. Hence, there is always the *choimer* (*material*) and the *tzura* (*form*), in which the *choimer* is something outside of our power to create, while the *tzura* is what the human does. Hence, all of science is the study of that which exists, how it functions, and how to manipulate it.

With G-d, on the other hand, G-d's creation of the world (*'bara'* -See note 34) was *Creatio Ex Nihilo* -creation of something out of nothing. However, in truth, Kabbalah and Chassidus explain the concept of, "And G-d said, 'Let there be...,'" is that the actual existence of the universe is *Creatio Ex Deo* - G-d created everything from Himself, from the very *Letters of His Utterances*, which are from His very *Breath of Speech*. And the reason why the words *yesh m'ayin* (*Creatio Ex Nihilo*) are used is only because even the *Infinite Light* of the *Breath of G-d* in the *Letters of the Utterances* are "Nihilo," in relationship to the *Essence of G-d*.

In order to understand this, we need to understand the nucleolus of creation, as explained in *Etz Chaim* (-Gateway 1, Branch 2):

"Know, that that before He emanated emanations and created creations, there was a Supernal Simple Light, which filled all existence, and there was no space of void in way of empty air and emptiness. Rather, all was filled by this Infinite Light. And there was no concept of head, nor end, but rather, everything was one simple light (in which) all was equal with one equality, and this was called Infinite Light... And behold, He then contracted His Infinite Self at the midpoint within Himself, which is truly in the middle of His Light... and He contracted that light and moved it away to the sides around the midpoint, and then there remained truly a space of void and empty air and emptiness from this midpoint... And after the contraction mentioned above, which then there truly remained the space of void and empty air and emptiness in the middle of the Infinite Light, as mentioned above. Behold, here was already a place where there could exist... creatures. And then He drew forth the Infinite Light, from above to below, one straight line (ray) from the Circular Light, which evolved and descended into that (space of) void..."

This is the first place in which we find the teaching of Rabbi Isaac Luria, the *Arizal*, as it is documented by his student Rabbi Chaim Vital, on the *Tzimtzum HaRishon - The First Contraction*. This concept is explained in the greatest detail, in its *width*, *length* and *depth*, throughout the teachings of Chassidus. A primary teaching of this *Tzimtzum* is that: (i) There was no contraction within the *Essence* of G-d, G-d forbid, for there cannot exist a *Space of Void* from G-d, G-d forbid. (ii) The contraction was only in the *Infinite Light* on two different levels: (a) It cause the *Circular Infinite Light*, to reverse its shine,

A Joke to Open the Mind

A group of scientist informed G-d that they have figured out how to create a human, and hence, are equals to G-d. G-d said, "Very well, let us see."

Early the next morning, the group of scientists arrived at the beach, beginning to gather the earth that they would need to create the human. When suddenly, they heard a Divine cough, saying, "Ahem... mind gathering your own earth..."

so that it would become elusive, rather than, illuminative, within the *Space of Void*, and (b) it caused the *Finite Linear Light* to contract, becoming a very finite *One Ray of Light*, which can now become a finite lifeforce for a finite realm, in which there can be finite creations.

What we understand from this is, being that (-Avodas HaKodesh, Vol I, Chapter 8), "(The) *Infinity (One) is perfection without defect, and if you say that it has power in the infinite... And since there is no lack of His wholeness, we have to say that He is (has the capacity and power) in the finite, from (as he has the capacity and power in the) infinite.*" However, the finite as it exists within the infinite is lost, and hence, there had to be (a) the reversal of the shine of the *Infinite*, removing it from a *space*, allowing for the *finite* to have its *space* and *identity*, and (b) even that level of *finite* is too infinite, and hence there has to be a total contraction of the *finite*, bringing forth only *one ray* of the *Finite Light*.

The concept of, "G-d said," is the contraction of the *Finite Light (Breath of Speech)* into finite *Letters of Utterances*, which in itself is absolute *Nihilo* compared to the full *Finite Light*, which is *Nihilo* compared to the *Infinite Light*, which is absolutely *Nihilo* compared to the *Essence*. However, all that was contracted, etc., are all from G-d and of G-d, "*Creatio Ex Deo* -G-d created everything from Himself, while simultaneously being, *Creatio Ex Nihilo*, for the contractions to the point of *Letters of Utterances* is rendered as *Nihilo*, in the presence of the *Essence*."

But, even if the *Ex Deo* is *Nihilo*, it still is *Ex Deo*, so how is it that we see ourselves as truly *separated* from G-d? And how is that when there is now a (new) identity of *Nihilo* before G-d, and yet, all remains, (-Malachi 3:6), "*For I, the L-rd, have not changed,*" because (-Morning Prayer), "*You were [the same] before the world was created; You are [the same] since the world has been created?*"

To understand this, I will use the metaphor of a one-way mirror to understand *Tzimtzum*, in which, from the point of view of the *Essence of G-d*, it is all but a clear window pane, in which all remains, "*G-d is everything and everything is G-d,*" in the manner of, "*For I, the L-rd, have not changed.*" However, from our perspective, when we look up to see the *Essence* as our *Source* and very *Material* of our very existence, we are stuck seeing a non-penetrable mirror.

This is the mystical meaning behind the verse, "*There is none as holy as the L-rd, for there is none besides You; And there is no rock (tzur - צור) like our G-d*":

There is none as holy as the L-rd: The translation our sages give to the word *kodosh* (holy) is *separated* (removed from the mundane). Hence, the verse is telling us that even though G-d is *in* creation, is the *lifeforce* of creation, and *is* creation itself, and nevertheless, G-d is *separated* from creation, in the sense that G-d created the *contraction*, in which the *connection* between G-d and the world is all from the *Nihilo* of G-d's *Light*.

And there is no rock (tzur - צור) like our G-d: Our sages teach us (-Talmud, Brochot 10a), "*What is, 'And there is no rock (tzur - צור) like our G-d?'; 'There is no tzayer (צייר - artist) like our G-d.'*" The work of an artist is to take a two-dimensional canvas, and make it appear as a three-dimensional scenario. In which, even though the truth is, "*Everything is G-d and G-d is everything,*" and nevertheless, we see a scenario of us being *separated* from G-d.

And this concept of *unity* of, "*G-d is everything and everything is G-d,*" versus the paradigm of *separation*, plays itself over and over, throughout the *Order of Evolution*, from the higher realms and worlds to the lower realms and worlds, in which the higher (spiritually; more transparent to G-d) compared to the lower (coarse; opaque; narcissi) is a world of unity, and the lower to the higher is as a world of separation. Hence, we have the deeper meaning of the verse (-Genesis 2:10), "*And a (one; unity) river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and from there (distanced from G-d) it separated and became four heads.*"

This then is the commandment of, "To acquire knowledge of the nature of G-d's Unity, i.e. to understand that the Original Creator and Source of all existence is One." Meaning, that even though we are naturally bound in the *Lower Knowledge (Lower Unity)* of, "Without G-d I am nothing, but (being that G-d did create me, and does vivify me, hence) *with G-d I am a something,*" and nevertheless (-Amida Prayer), "Modim anachnu loch -I am modeh (humbly admit; acknowledge) to You (Your Higher Knowledge; Higher Unity of, 'G-d is everything and everything is G-d,')." "

Now, returning to our discussion of the closing verse of, "I am at peace, but when I speak, they [come] to [wage] war," emphasizing that the coming to wage war is specifically from the "They," plural. For any war against G-d can only exist when there is the paradigm of *separation*, which leads to experiencing reality as a *Public (plurality) Domain*, which is the paradigm of the *Other Side*. And not in paradigm of holiness, which is the paradigm of a transparency and humble acknowledgment of the unity of G-d, in there only being a *Private Domain*, for "G-d is everything and everything is G-d."

33a. See for example Rashi (-Genesis 46:26), "All the soul (Nefesh: singular) coming... with Jacob': ...I found in Leviticus Rabbah (-4:6): 'Esau had six souls [in his family], and the text calls them (-Genesis. 36:6), "the souls of his household," in the plural, because they worshipped many gods [in his family, each his or her own deity]. Jacob had seventy (souls), but the text calls them "soul," [in the singular] because they [all] worshiped one G-d."

34. I specifically use the word *build* instead of *create*, for Nachmanides in his commentary upon the second word of the Torah, "bara - created," explains that in Hebrew the word *bara*, --unlike all other terminologies used in the verses concerning G-d's creating the world: *yotzer, koneh, oseh*, etc.-- refers only to *Creatio Ex Nihilo*, the creation of *something from nothing*, which only G-d can do.

◆ "Revelation of the Completeness of His Powers"

The question here is, if we are commanded to pray that we not have to experience the service of war for G-d, and it is forbidden to place ourselves in any situation of temptation, that would then demand of us to wage a war for G-d, then why do we have to experience the service of war at all?

And the answer is that even though we are protecting ourselves from any situation of having to wage a war for G-d, nevertheless, there comes this moment in which *G-d's will* (As the verse states (-Genesis 22:1), "And G-d tested Abraham") is to put us into a situation in which we must wage a spiritual war within ourselves to bring forth our inner-strength, which lay hidden in the realm of "Potential," so that they be brought out into the realm of the "Actual."

Hence, the verse states (-Deuteronomy 13:4), "For the L-rd, your G-d, is testing (menase - מנסה) you, to know whether you really love the L-rd, your G-d, with all your heart and with all your soul." The word *menase* in this verse comes from the word *nisayoin* -which means *testing*. However, the word *menase* also comes from the word *nos*, which means to *raised*, as in the verse (-Isaiah 18:3), "When a standard of the mountains is raised (*nos horim* - נס הרים)." Meaning, that the verse is mystically saying that through the *test*, through which we actualize our soul's potentials, we are raised up to unprecedented heights, experiencing an unprecedented love for G-d.

This is why G-d puts the soul into an experience of descent, in which the soul is *tested* in having to wage war with the *Darkness* of the *Other Side*. And in order to understand this descent, test and its purpose, Rabbi Sholom DovBer of Lubavitch, in his *Series of 66'* (-See Note #29), gives a metaphor of how as long as the prince is in the house of his father the king, his regality a novelty and nor is his loyalty to his father, or his virtues, recognized. Only when his father the king sends the prince far away, to a land where the people do not know of their king, and while being there the prince is not impressed, and remains in his own stature, and even more so, the prince impresses upon the local people that they should have a connection with their king, through this the virtues of the prince is revealed.

And with this, not only does the prince experience an elevation, but through this revelation and actualization of the prince's virtues and stature, the king himself experiences an elevation!

So too, as in the metaphor, through the soul (prince) descending into a, faraway land (this physical world of *separation*) in which the inhabitants do not know of G-d (their King), and there the prince wages a spiritual war to refine, transform, elevate and unite this physical world of separation with G-d, through *this* is revealed the power and the virtue of the soul, which is the reason why G-d puts the soul into an experience of a *test*, in the first place!

However, the question begs to be asked, being that G-d *knows* the strength and virtues of the soul, and how this soul (the prince) will behave when it will descend into this world, even before the soul is forced to actualize them, then of what elevation is this experience? Hence, we see that the fact that the strength and virtues of the soul as they exist in the potential, and even though G-d knows of them, nevertheless, the completion of the soul is specifically when it reveals and actualizes them. And in order to understand this, we are going to see how this is so by G-d Himself, so to speak, that the completion of His strengths is not when they exist in the potential, even though G-d knows His own strength, but rather, G-d's strengths become completed only when they are actualized. In order to understand this, we are going to explore a mystical teaching in the book *Eitz Chaim* (-Gateway 1, Branch 1):

"Regarding the ultimate goal of the creation of the worlds we will now clarify two investigations of the Kabbalists. The first investigation, which the early and later sages investigated is to know the purpose for the creation of the worlds, for what purpose was it. And they finalized, decreed, and said that the reason for this is that because behold He, blessed be He, is definite that He be complete with all His actions and strengths, and with all the names³⁵ of greatness, virtue and honor. And had He not brought forth (actualize) His deeds and His powers, He could not, so to speak, have been called complete, either in His actions or in His names or in His attributes. Because, behold, the great Divine Name, yud-hay-vov-hai (יהוה), which is [composed] of four letters, is called thus³⁶ because it expresses His everlasting existence and eternity; that 'He was' (יהי-הוה), 'He is' (יהוה-הוה), and, 'He will be' (יהיה-הוה) -before the creation, during the existence of creation and afterward when it will revert back to what it was. And if the worlds had not been created, and all that is within them, the true manifestation of His blessed eternal existence - past, present, and future- could not have been seen, for He would not have been called by the name yud-hai-vov-hai, as mentioned above.

"And so too, the name Ado-nai (Master), which He is called, denoting that He is a master, and that He has servants, and He is the Master over them, and if there would be no creations, then he would not be able to be called by the name Adon, and so too concerning all other names...

"However, with the worlds being created, that came out His deeds and His strengths, blessed be He, and He will be called 'complete' with all His different deeds and strengths, and He will be complete in all his names and adjectives, without any lacking at all, G-d forbid...

"And this reasoning (of the purpose for creation) is well explained in the Book of Formation... 'And it is to be known that He is called wise with all forms of wisdom, and understanding with all forms of understanding, etc. Only that, before He created the world, He is called by all these levels, for the creations that He will in the future create, for if He would not create the world, then why would He be called Merciful (and) Just, only that He was called so because of future creations, etc. For if His Light would not spread forth upon all creations, how would they know Him, and how would it be fulfilled (-Isaiah 6:3), 'The whole earth is full of His glory?'"

What we are seeing here is that the Kabbalists are defining that the purpose for G-d's creating the world is so that there be the *revelation* of the completion of His attributes (strengths). And that because G-d (freely) willed it so (for a reason known to Him, or (even with Him it is on the level of) a *Secret Reason*³⁷), that He desires the revelations of His strengths (names³⁵), it is therefore (*only* because G-d willed it as such³⁸), that the revelation and actualization of His attributes constitute the completion of His attributes.

And so too, G-d has made it so for His prince, the soul, that it is specifically when it descends into below (into this physical world of separation), and wages the war of *iskafya* (submission) and *ishapcha* (transformation), only then are the strengths and virtues of the soul (prince) revealed, and the soul is complete.

And this unprecedented ultimate connection of the Essence of G-d (the King) with the soul (His prince) are specifically with the performance of physical mitzvot, as the man of the birthday (Rabbi Sholom DovBer of Lubavitch) explains that (specifically) all (physical) mitzvot are connected with the Essence of G-d (and not just spiritual revelations, which the soul had before it descended in this physical world). Therefore, it is specifically when the soul descends into the physical world of separation, and battles the *separation* by subduing and transforming his *physical* life into performing mitzvot, that the soul then has the ultimate unprecedented elevation (*menase* - test; raised up), connecting with the Essence of G-d.

35. This is based on the teaching that any and all names of G-d each refer to a different attribute of G-d, for G-d Himself has no name (form or description, G-d forbid). Hence, G-d's names are complete only through the actualization of His attributes (strengths).
36. This is a play of making the three words (*hoyo* -He was, *hoveh* -He is, and *y'hyeh* -He will be) out of the four letters of the Ineffable Tetragrammaton. See Code of Jewish Law (-Laws Regarding Washing the Hands, Chapter 5, Law 1):
 "[Whenever the blessings are recited,] *one should have in mind the meanings of the words he utters. When articulating G-d's name one should have in mind the meaning of the name as it is pronounced... In addition, one should have in mind the meaning of the name as it is written — הוהיהוה, which connotes existence: He exists in the past, present, and future.*"
37. Chassidus explains that within the higher level of Divine Wisdom ("The seeing of the essence of Wisdom") there is the *reasoning* that is beyond revelation, even to Self.
38. Here, the Rebbe is explaining that there is no such thing as "forced" or "must be so" by G-d. Only that it is G-d's will that makes it so, that the revelation of His attributes be the completion of His attributes.

◆ The Art of *Iskafya* and *Ishapcha*

We explained that the *Service of War* is through *iskafya* (submission) and *ishapcha* (transformation). Let us understand how this works.

The Zohar (-Terumah 128b) explains the great satisfaction the G-d has in our waging the war of *iskafya* and *ishapcha* stating that, "*when the Other Side is subdued (iskafya) here below, thereby G-d's glory rises above all, more than by any other praise, and this ascent is greater than all else.*"

The Rebbe explains (-d"h Basi L'Gani, 5711) that the term, "*Glory of G-d,*" refers to the Infinite Essence Light, and hence, the Zohar does not say that the *Glory of G-d* descends (shines) into this world, but rather it states, "*rises above all,*" for we are speaking of the Infinite Essence Light, of which it is as our sages state (-Beriehsis Rabba 68:9), "*G-d is the Place of the world, and the world is not the place of G-d.*"

Thus, the war of *iskafya* and of *ishapcha* is --in this sense of giving sensation to G-d-- even a greater service than performing the mitzva without having the *enemy* within to overcome! And this aspect is what the metaphor of the king sending away his prince to a faraway land, --where the prince would have to stand strong to (a) *iskafya* -not being impressed by the environment, and (b) *ishapcha* -getting the locals to connect with the king-- in which the completion of the virtue of the prince is actualized and revealed, and even more so, the revelation and completion of the King is actualized, for: "*Thereby G-d's glory rises above all, more than by any other praise, and this ascent is greater than all else!*"

◆ The *Ba'al Teshuvah* vs. the *Tzadik*

And with this we can understand the teaching of our sages (-Tanchuma, Vayeishev 4) upon the verse in Psalms (-66:5), "*How awesome are Your (G-d's) plots upon mankind:*"

"*Adam was created on the sixth day, and He (G-d) informed him in a roundabout way that He had brought death into the world, as it is said (-Genesis 2:12): 'For in the day that you will eat thereof (Tree of Knowledge), you shalt surely die.'*"

"To what may this be compared? It may be compared to a man who wished to divorce his wife. Before he enters his home, he writes out the divorce document and then enters the house with the divorce document in his hand. He then seeks a circuitous way to hand it to her. He says to her: 'Give me some water that I may drink.' She does so, and when he takes the glass from her hand, he tells her: 'Here is your divorce.' She asks: 'What sin have I committed?' 'Leave my house,' he retorts, 'you have served me a warm drink.' 'Apparently you already knew,' she replies, 'that I would serve you a warm drink when you prepared the bill of divorce you brought with you.'

"And that is what Adam told the Holy One, blessed be He: Master of the Universe, two thousand years before You created the world, You had the Torah as an artisan... Within it is written (-Numbers 19:14): 'This is the law; When a man dies in his tent.' If You had not previously decreed death for mankind, You would not have so stated in it (the Torah). The fact is, You introduced the threat of death against me in a roundabout way. Hence (-Psalms 66:4), 'How awesome are Your plots upon mankind.'"

The sages are teaching us that all of our tests, trials and tribulations are plotted upon us by G-d. And now we understand why, as we see that it is through the *tests*, which force us deeper into our soul's strengths, to wage the war of *iskafya* and *ishapcha*, that we reach an unprecedented elevation of our soul, as explained in great detail above.

Here the *maamor* gives us another angle through which to better understand the elevation of the soul through the service of war for G-d. And to understand this, let us first explore: The soul in itself is absolutely righteous, and the *Service of Peace* is the service of the righteous, in which there is the pleasant sweetness of service to G-d, hence, why is the soul at all in need of an elevation from its already being absolute purity, righteousness, and service of sweetness unto G-d?!

The answer is that the *Service of War* is the service of the *Ba'al Teshuvah* (Repented; Returnee), for we are speaking here of one who has engaged with the *Other Side*, and is now waging war to overcome and break free of the *Other Side*. Hence, by bringing the pure and righteous soul to an experience of war ("plotting upon mankind"), G-d is, "To bring the righteous to (the level of) *teshuvah*."

The Talmud states (-Brochot 34b), "As Rabbi Abbahu said: In the place where penitents stand, even the full-fledged righteous do not stand, as it is stated (-Isaiah 57:19): 'Peace, peace upon him who is far and him who is near.' (Peace and greeting are extended first to) *him who is far*, (the penitent,) and (only) thereafter (is peace extended to) *him who is near* (the full-fledged righteous)." And the meaning behind this is as we explained earlier in great detail the mystical meaning of King Solomon's statement, "As the advantage of light over darkness," and, "The advantage of wisdom over folly." For the *Light* of the *Ba'al Teshuvah* comes from the *Darkness*, through his war of *iskafya* and *ishapcha* of the *Darkness*. And simply knowing that this is the only reason why G-d is "plotting" upon us, bringing us into experiences of war, for this great elevation of our soul, hence, we wage this war with a song and revealed joy, and how much more so, we stand strong in our commitment to G-d, overcoming the external experience, which is the war, and receive the fruit, which is the elevation and actualization of the virtue, strengths, exaltedness, and connection with the *Essence* of G-d, which is inherent to the soul.

A Story Tells It Best:

Here is a story called "The Rebbe: 'Daniel I Envy You!'" as researched and published by The Avner Institute (-[Part 1](#) & [Part 2](#)):

...An intense, mind-altering encounter between Daniel, from Chabad of Antwerp, and the Rebbe. Special thanks to Rabbi Shabtai Slavaticki and the editorial staff of the Avner Institute.

Rabbi Slavaticki Relates:

"I first met Daniel at the Chabad House when someone brought him over for a visit. A tall young man, with a refined and intelligent face, he worked in computer operations for the European Common Market. Sometimes it can take weeks, months, or even years until two people make a connection. Other times the connection is made instantly. It might have something to do with *gilgulim* (past lives) or the celestial source of souls.

Whatever the case, we hit it off at once. Daniel loved to learn and expressed interest in the deepest concepts in Chasidus. With his quick mind and unusual sensitivity, he absorbed everything; he could bring the highest, most abstract concepts down into the practical and relate them to the world and people around him. Most importantly, however, was the way Chasidus changed him. A new world had suddenly opened up. Daniel began to understand himself better and find answers to his questions. Within a short time, he was laying tefillin, keeping kosher, and observing Shabbos.

Every few weeks Daniel would make a trip to Italy, especially on his time off. Whenever I asked him why, he answered, 'To meet friends.' I always found something strange about this, or more accurately, I always read something between the lines. He never looked me in the face when he said it; rather he seemed to toss it in at the end of our conversation, as if wishing to relieve himself of a burden. Once we were at the Chabad House until the middle of the night.

A long *farbrengen* (Chasidic gathering) had just ended. Still under the spell of the *niggunim* (melodies) and the magic of the Chasidic stories, we found it difficult to get back to "real life." It was then that Daniel approached me and opened up. 'I think I'm a little tipsy,' he began sheepishly. 'It's not the *mashkeh* (drink), it's the *farbrengen*,' I explained.

'A Chasidic *farbrengen* is like a fiery furnace. It brings the inner Jew to a 'boil' so that all the *chitzoniyyus* (externals) evaporate and the *penimiyus* (inwardness) becomes more concentrated. After a *farbrengen*, we are more 'real.' Some people know what is required of them, but they're not sure 'where they're holding.' Others, however, have the merit to know both what they must do and where they're holding. I could see that Daniel took the hint. He gave me a weak smile. 'You already know,' he said, 'that it's been awhile since I started becoming more observant, although everything is relative. Over the last few months I've severed all my ties to the past with the exception of one.' He trembled and lowered his voice. 'I just can't do it. If I take this step, it will tear me apart. Nothing of me will remain.'

I didn't ask him what the tie was; I knew it was something I shouldn't ask, something he had to tell me himself. Daniel was obviously uncomfortable. It seemed as if he was staring in the mirror for the first time and suddenly seeing himself as he really was, all the masks removed. Daniel averted his eyes, and I was reminded of his trips to Italy. It suddenly occurred to me that this might be the one tie that still bound him. 'I have a girlfriend,' he finally mumbled, 'but she isn't... one of us.'

He lapsed for a moment into silence. 'Some of my friends have suggested she convert, but I don't think it would be right. Conversion is too holy to profane simply for the sake of my conscience; it would be defiled if there were ulterior motives. If someone converts to Judaism just to get married, it isn't a real conversion. So. I've never even mentioned it to her.

'I went to a few different rabbis – specifically not Chabad – for help, and each one told me what a terrible sin it is to intermarry. Some of them even described the punishment in *Gehinnom* (Gehenna; Purgatory) that awaits someone like me, but nothing they said convinced me to break it off. I'm not sure I can do it.' Daniel was trembling; I could sense the battle royally raging inside him. The look he gave me almost broke my heart: 'Help me!' he pleaded wordlessly. 'Save me from myself!'

'Your problem,' I slowly replied, 'is universal, something we all face. It all goes back to the strangest shidduch (match) in the world: the 'marriage' between the body and the soul. The body and soul are essentially different, completely dissimilar in their likes, dislikes and loyalties. Yet not only do they have to live with one another, each one has to complete the other and make it whole. The funniest thing is, it works -- the greatest proof being that after 120 years, neither wants to be parted from the other. You are being pulled between the desires of the body and the desires of the soul.'

'What should I do?' Daniel cried. 'Where can I get the power to free myself?'

'If a well runs dry,' I answered, 'building a beautiful house over it won't help. The only solution is to dig deeper, all the way down to the water's source. You too must dig deeper until you reach your roots. There you will find the strength you need, as well as the answer to your questions.'

Daniel was puzzled. 'What do you mean?'

'I mean it's time to go to the Rebbe!'

By now I had his full attention. He no longer tense and desperate; rather, he waited, listening intently.

'Go to the Rebbe, There you'll find your answers and the strength you need.'

I didn't have to urge him further. A few days later Daniel was already at 770, standing in the long line for dollars. He waited there in excitement over his very first yechidus (audience) with the Rebbe.

Sunday in 770, Hundreds of people form a patient line, lasting hours. Although all of the rivers of the world flow into the ocean, the ocean never becomes full. Each and every river is different. Yet each and every river finds itself drawn in the same direction, longing to pour itself out. So too, every individual is different. Each person follows a different path in life – his or her own problems, questions, thoughts -- yet all are attracted to the same "head." The Rebbe greets everyone with the same love, without distinction between great and small. People are serious as they await their turn, hearts pounding. Daniel is also solemn as he recites Tehillim (Psalms) and practices (for the umpteenth time) the words he is planning to say to the Rebbe.

The line moves slowly as Daniel inches closer. Up the stairs, turning the corner, finally he has reached the "Lower Gan Eden." And then, Daniel finds himself face to face with the Rebbe. 'At first,' he told me afterward, 'the only thing I could see was the Rebbe's holy eyes. The Rebbe looked deep inside of me. All the words I'd prepared flew right out of my head. In the Rebbe's presence, my mind stopped working. I felt completely'

'I could not utter a sound. The Rebbe held out a dollar but when I tried to take it, he would not let go. For a long moment we stood there like that, both of us holding opposite ends of the dollar bill. The whole time the Rebbe kept gazing at me, a look filled with kindness and love. I could feel myself calming down.'

Daniel described what followed.

'I have a problem,' he blurted. The Rebbe tilted his head slightly. 'I've started to become more observant,' Daniel explained, 'but I have a girlfriend who isn't Jewish and I'm planning on marrying her.' Daniel fell silent; what else could he say?'

Mere words could not express the turbulence of his emotions, yet he sensed that the Rebbe understood exactly what he meant, what was going on inside. Daniel braced himself for a rebuke. He expected to be reprimanded, to be told by the Rebbe how grave a transgression it was to intermarry. Surely, the Rebbe would say something about Gehinnom and Gan Eden, as did the non-Chabad rabbis Daniel had consulted. But the Rebbe said nothing.

His holy face was serious, yet there was an imperceptible smile on his lips. 'I envy you,' he finally said. At first, Daniel could not quite grasp the meaning. All kinds of thoughts ran through his head: The Rebbe is holy of holies; I am small and insignificant. The Rebbe, who is on the highest spiritual plane, is envious of me—someone on the lowest?

'I can't remember the Rebbe's exact words,' Daniel told me, 'but their meaning was indelibly marked on my soul.'

'He said, 'There are many ladders in life; the ladder is the individual's free will. The Holy One,

Blessed Be He, gives every person free will, which is a ladder, reaching all the way to heaven. The test you are facing is a challenge. It will elevate you to the greatest heights. I personally,' the Rebbe said, 'have never been presented with this test. If G-d gives you a challenge, it means He believes you can overcome it. He is giving you the strength to withstand the test and to succeed.' Only then did the Rebbe relinquish the dollar bill and allow me to take it.

'I'm not sure what happened next, but a few seconds later I found myself in a corner of 770 crying like a baby. I could feel the tears cleansing me, washing away all the dirt. Someone came over and gently asked me if I wanted a drink. Without waiting for a reply, he handed me small bottle of water. I took a sip and felt better. 'I returned to Belgium and became another person entirely. My encounter with the Rebbe totally transformed my life.'

Daniel had taken the challenge. He ascended the ladder. Today, he lives as a full-fledged observant Jew living in Eretz Yisroel (Israel), where is he raising a fine Chasidic family."

◆ Jacob: *Yud-Okeiv*

It is through our *Service of War* that we refine and transform this physical world into holiness, just as we explained earlier concerning Jacob, in his service of, "*And he took from the stones of the place,*" Jacob took from items from this physical world ("*stones of the place*") in order to elevated them to holiness. And this is the general service of Jacob (which in Hebrew is *Yaakov* - יעקב), for the *Yaakov* (יעקב) is made up of (*יעקב*) *yud* (representing the essence of his soul, "*Truly a piece of G-d Above*") *okeiv* (heel).

In order to understand this concept, let us go to its source in Chassidus (-Torah Ohr, Vayeitzei 21a):

"The verse states (-Genesis 28:10), 'And Jacob left Be'er Sheba, and went to Charon.' Meaning that Yaakov, which is yud okeiv, which is the drawing (down) of the Supernal Wisdom³⁹, which is (represented in the letter) yud (first letter of the Ineffable Tetragrammaton, which represents the first of the Ten Emanations; Wisdom) to below below (lowest of low, until) also into the (lowest) level of 'heels.' And this is (the mystical meaning of the verse, that), 'And Yaakov left Be'er Sheba and went to Charan, which is (Jacob's) drawing down the level of Be'er Sheba⁴⁰, which is Above Above (higher than high, the level of) 'He and His Light and Vessels are one,' and draws this down the (chain of) evolution (down) to the below below, the lowest level, which is the level of Charan⁴¹, as will be further explained, with the help of G-d, blessed be He."

Our sages teach us (-Talmud, Chagigah 5b), "*Rabbi (Yehuda HaNasi) was holding (the) book of Lamentations and was reading from it. When he reached the verse (-2:1): 'He has cast down from heaven to earth [the beauty of Israel (the Jewish people)],' (in his distress the book) fell from his hand. He said: 'From a high*

roof to a deep pit', (i.e., it is terrible to tumble from the sky to the ground)." Mystically speaking, this teaching of, "From a high roof to a deep pit," is referring to the soul's descent from being in Heaven, to clothing itself into a physical body. And here, in this teaching, the *Alter Rebbe* is giving us a clearer understanding to the depths of this descent in itself, as it is defined in the name of Jacob (*Ya'akov*; (from being the) *yud* (descending down into the) *oikev*), and then, even more so, the service of Jacob in particular was to then descend from his holy experience, in his father's home, in *Be'er Sheba*, and to descend down to *Charan*. And what was his service in *Charan*? To take from the lowest of what is there (the *inanimate rocks*, in its state of *plurality* and *separation*), and elevate them into holiness.

And, important to note is, that Jacob --from his own right, in his own mission and service to G-d-- with this very service,

--of "And Jacob left *Be'er Sheba*, and went to *Charan*," where, "And he took from the stones of the place," where then, "and he took the stone (singular, for he had refined, elevated, and transformed the *Public Domain* of impurity, into the *Private Domain* of holiness)," and, "and he set it up as a monument (for G-d), and he poured oil on top of it," where he then ultimately committed to, "Then this stone, which I have placed as a monument, shall be a house of G-d,"--

Sufficed, to the point where Jacob was now ready for the ultimate and complete world redemption, and fulfillment of *The Days of Moshiach*, when there would be the fulfillment of the verse (-*Obadia*1:21), "And saviors (children of Jacob) shall ascend Mt. Zion to judge (refine, elevate and transform) the mountain of Esau, and the L-rd shall have the kingdom."

However, when (-*Genesis* 32:4), "Jacob sent angels ahead of him to his brother Esau, to the land of Seir, the field of Edom," and the messengers came back to Jacob with the news that (-*Rashi*, *Genesis* 32:7), "We came to your brother, to Esau: Concerning whom you said, 'He is my brother,' but he still behaves toward you like the wicked Esau. He still has hatred," meaning that Esau was still not ready for *Moshiach*, therefore, Jacob responded with (-*Genesis* 33:13-14), "The flocks and the cattle, which are raising their young, depend upon me," and therefore, "I will move [at] my own slow pace." Until the time that through our *Service of War* ((-*Maimonides*, *Laws of Kings*, Chapter 11, Law 4,) "a king will arise from the House of David who... and fight the wars of G-d... we may, with assurance, consider him *Moshiach*") we will merit the building of the third and final Holy Temple in its appropriate place

--Here, the *maamor* points out that the appropriate place of the Holy Temple, on Temple Mount (*Moriah* -[Link](#)) in Jerusalem, was first conquered by war, and then after, was bought by King David from *Araunah* (-[Link](#)).

In *Samuels II*, (-*Chapter* 5:6-9), King David captures all of Jerusalem:

"And the king and his men went to Jerusalem to the *Jebusite[s]*, the inhabitants of the land, who spoke to David, saying: 'you shall not come here unless you remove the blind and the lame'; as if to say: 'David shall not come here.' And David conquered the stronghold of Zion which is the city of David... And David dwelt in the stronghold and he called it the city of David. And David built round about from the mound and inward."

And in *Chronicles I* (-20:22-25) King David purchases Mount *Moriah*:

"And David said to *Araunah*, 'Give me the place of the threshing-floor, so that I may build thereon an altar to the L-rd; give it to me for the full price, so that the plague be stayed from the people.' And *Araunah* said to David, 'Take for yourself, and may my lord the king do what seems good in his eyes. See, I have given the cattle for burnt offerings, and the threshing tools for [fire] wood, and the wheat for a meal offering; I have given everything.' And King David said to *Araunah*, 'No, for I will buy [it] for the full price, for I will not take what is yours for the Lord, and offer up burnt offerings for nothing.' And David gave to *Araunah* for the place shekels of gold weighing six hundred."

Hence, the appropriate place of the Holy Temple was acquired, not only through the *Service of War* or the *Service of Peace*, but through both--

And with this --that through our *Service of War* we will merit building the Holy Temple-- the Rebbe concludes with the blessing, "*With the coming of our righteous Moshiach, may he come and redeem us, and walk us upright to our land, speedily in our days, mamosh (truly so)!*"

39. See Tanya (-Chapter 19):

"...For this nature stems from the faculty of *chochmah* (wisdom) found in the soul, wherein abides the light of the blessed *En Sof* (Infinite One). Now this is a general principle in the whole realm of holiness— it [holiness] is only that which is derived from *chochmah* called קדוּשׁ הַעֲלִיוֹן ('supreme holiness'), whose existence is nullified in the light of the blessed *En Sof* which is clothed in it, so that it is not a thing apart, as is explained above; therefore it is called *koach mah* [the word *chochmah* is made up of the words *choach-mah* - 'power of what' -nothingness; humility; abnegation]... yet when he faces a test challenging his faith in the One G-d, [a faith] which has its roots in the uppermost heights of holiness, namely, the faculty of *chochmah* of the divine soul, in which is clothed the light of the blessed *En Sof*, then all the *kelipot* (husks; coverings; impurity) are made null and void, and they vanish, as though they had never been, in the presence of the L-rd... The force of the Divine Light of the blessed *En Sof* that is clothed in the soul's *chochmah* is great and powerful enough to banish and repel the *sitra achra* (Other Side; evil) and the *kelipot*."

40. *Be'er Sheba* means *Well of Seven*, (called so by Isaac, representing the seventh well which they dug and found water) and was originally called by Abraham, *Be'er Shoba*, which means *Well of Oath* (representing the place of the oath made between Abraham and Abimelech). These names are mystically explained as, *Well of Seven* being the emanation of *Understanding*, which is the source (well) of the seven emotions. *Well of Oath* is explained to be the highest level of connection between the soul and G-d, in which the soul enters into a trans-rational oath of commitment to G-d, which stems from the level of the *Crown of the Soul* (See Talmud, Nida 30b: "An oath is administered to him [before birth, warning him]: 'Be righteous and be not wicked; and even if the whole world tells you that you are righteous, regard yourself as if you were wicked.'")

41. See Rashi (-Genesis 11:32), where he defines the name of the place *Charan* (lit. anger) to represent, "*the (place) of the anger of G-d,*" meaning, the place in where the people's behaviors angered G-d. Which, in general, is explained to be referring to this physical world of separation and narcissi.

Test Yourself



- (1) What is the reason to emphasize that the concept is found in the *sealing* verse of the first of the *15 Songs of Ascent*?
- (2) What is the art of *iskafya* and of *ishapcha*? Why is this form of *war* so important?
- (3) If war is so powerful, may we ever look for war?
- (4) What is the deeper meaning of the verse, "And Jacob left Be'er Sheba and went to Charan"?

Discussion/Meditation



- (1) With what meditation can we find our inner-strength to wage the war with certainty and with song?

Answers:

1. Because the Talmud gives a ruling (concerning a blessing that carries within it more than one topic), "Everything follows the sealing," mystically meaning that we find the ultimate empowerment within the *closing* of the Torah directive. So too here, in the *closing* verse of the chapter. The art of *iskafya* is to subdue the enemy, and the art of *ishapcha* is to transform the enemy. Firstly, the enemy within us (the *Evil Inclination* and its drive of ego), and then the enemy from without, fighting against the sovereignty and unity of G-d. The reason why these arts of war are so important, is because specifically of these is it said, "when the person does *iskafya* (and *ishapcha*) the *glory of G-d rises*," meaning that we now draw the *Essence Light* of G-d into our world! 3. No! Every day we pray for G-d not to bring us to tests and temptations. And even concerning a mandatory war (as the war to conquer the Land of Israel), we are commanded to first send out an offer of peace. 4. That our soul is, "Truly a piece of G-d Above," having within it the *Supernal Wisdom*, which houses the *Infinite One*. And this, "Truly a piece of G-d Above," then descends with the empowerment of the *Well of Oath* and the *Well of Seven*, and is sent to the far away *Charan*, place of anger to G-d, *This Physical World of Separation*, in order to transform its state of separation into unity, and to transform it into the ultimate *House of G-d*. Discussion/Meditations: 1. We are "Truly a piece of G-d Above," and even before we are sent down to this world, we are endowed with a trans-rational oneness and commitment to G-d, and this trans-rational oath permeates all of our *seven emotions*. More so, even in our moments of *Darkness*, it is but G-d *plotting upon us*, pushing us out of our comfort-zone, only so that we may actualize who we already are! And ultimately, this war is not one that we choose, nor do we rely on the strength of our hands to win, but rather, we can and must accept to be nothing but a conduit to, "And he (Moshiach) will wage the war of G-d, and be victorious," to bring the entire world to a state of, "And all will know me," in pleasantness, peace and goodness.

In Memory of
Marsha bas Herschel
(aka Gram, GG)
by
The Chavin Family

Dedication by
David & Dina Chedva
Reiss

In Memory of
Shmuel Eliyahu ben Chaim Elchonon
by
Chaim & Rikal Fogelman