"Open my eyes so that I may see the **wonders** of Your Torah"

בס"ד

# Wonders

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of HaRav Yitzchak Ginsburgh

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**שַׁבָּת וַיֵּצֵא ❁ י-יא כִּסְלֵו תשפ"ז**



*"As soon as I entered the sacred precincts of the tzaddik, a terrible fear fell upon me, until the hair of my head stood on end. Never in my life had I felt such fear. It was bitterly cold, and though I was dressed warmly and had not felt the cold the entire journey, now, from sheer fear, my body grew cold from head to foot, and I could not bear the chill. I began to recite passages from the Zohar..."*

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*The Lubavitcher Rebbe to Rav Ginsburgh, Elul 5741*

*"…It would be proper to publish your classes in book form. With blessings for success…"*



# Wonders

An anthology from the shiurim and farbrengens
of Harav **Yitzchak Ginsburgh**

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STORY

# THE MITTLER REBBE: MORE THAN IN THEIR LIFETIMES

*Rebbe Dovber Schneuri, the Mittler Rebbe (the "Middle Rebbe"), was the second Rebbe of the Chabad dynasty, the son and successor of the Alter Rebbe, author of the Tanya. He was born in fulfillment of a blessing from the Maggid of Mezritch and was named after him. He was renowned for the length and depth of his Chasidic discourses. His son-in-law, the Tzemach Tzedek, remarked that "if one were to cut my father-in-law's finger, it would not bleed blood, but Chasidut." Like his father, the Alter Rebbe, he too was imprisoned as a result of denunciations by his opponents. The festival celebrating his release from imprisonment falls on the tenth of Kislev. The day before, the ninth of Kislev, is both the birthday and the day of passing of the Mittler Rebbe, on which the verse "I will fill the number of your days" (Exodus 23:26) was openly fulfilled. The Mittler Rebbe led the Chabad movement for fifteen years, and passed away in the midst of delivering a Chasidic discourse, with the words "for with You is the source of life, from the life-source of all life" (echoing Psalms 36:10) upon his lips. He was laid to rest in the city of Nizhyn, Ukraine.*

A Jew from the town of Vilkomir, Lithuania, who made his living from the tobacco trade, once traveled to the region of Nizhyn to purchase tobacco for his business. He did not belong to the community of chasidim, but he was a devoted friend of the chasidic Rabbi, Rebbe Yaakov Kaidaner, of blessed memory (author of the books Metzaref HaAvodah and Sippurim Nora'im), who was likewise a resident of Vilkomir.

Before setting out on his journey, he came to take leave with a blessing from Reb Yaakov, as is customary among close friends. Reb Yaakov said to him: "My friend! Though you are not counted among the community of chasidim, I ask of you nonetheless that when you are in Nizhyn, you go to pray at the grave of the tzaddik interred there—the Mittler Rebbe of Lubavitch, son of the Alter Rebbe, author of the Tanya." His friend promised that he would do so.

The merchant set out on his way, and was delayed more than half a year, for the railroad had not yet reached those parts, and the road from Vilkomir in Lithuania to Nizhyn in Little Russia (Malorussiya) was long and difficult. In the meantime, his business affairs on this trip were not prosperous.

During that time, his wife fell gravely ill, and the doctors despaired of her life.

Once, she fainted, and three expert physicians sat at her bedside the entire night but could not rouse her. They gave up hope and left the house. This state continued until ten o'clock the next morning, when she suddenly woke up and slowly returned to health. Within a month she had recovered completely, without physicians or medicine. All who witnessed it were astonished, and the physicians were even more astonished.

After several months the merchant returned, and as soon as he entered his house. Before even removing his coat and changing out of his travel clothes, he hurried straight to his friend Reb Yaakov. Reb Yaakov greeted him with "shalom aleichem" and asked him: "Is this proper conduct after being away from your home more than half a year not to have stayed even a short while to spend time with your wife and household, but to run straight here to greet me?"

The merchant answered him: "There is a special reason for this, a wonder of wonders." And he related the following:

"For various reasons, my business affairs on this journey did not succeed. I lost everything I had and incurred further debts besides. Throughout the entire journey I was also deeply worried. In my thoughts, it seemed to me that I could see my wife lying gravely ill. When I reached Nizhyn, I remembered my promise to you to go and pray at the grave of the tzaddik, and so I did. I went to immerse in the mikveh (ritual bath) and afterward entered the tzaddik's tomb. As soon as I entered the sacred precincts of the tzaddik, a terrible fear fell upon me, until the hair of my head stood on end. Never in my life had I felt such fear. It was bitterly cold, and though I was dressed warmly and had not felt the cold the entire journey, now, from sheer fear, my body grew cold from head to foot, and I could not bear the chill. I resolved to flee from the fear and the cold, but I reconsidered and said to myself: Surely no harm can come to me from the tzaddik. Why should I flee from here?"

"I began to recite passages from the Zohar, chapters of Psalms, and passages from Ma'avar Yabok that were hanging there on a plaque on the wall. As I recited them, I wept profusely from the depths of my heart, as I had never wept before, and rivers of tears streamed ceaselessly from my eyes.

"Afterward, I placed two pidyonot (petitionary notes) upon the grave—one for myself and my entire household in general, and the second for my wife in particular, for my heart told me that she was gravely ill. The very moment I placed the pidyonot, my soul was filled with a joy and a delight the like of which I had never felt before, to this very day, and I had no wish whatsoever to leave the holy tomb, for I felt there a taste of the Garden of Eden itself. I remained there in joy and exaltation for two hours, for it was very hard for me to part from so

great a delight. I then departed in peace, and I was joyful the whole way home."

"When I arrived home safely, I immediately asked about my wife's health, and she related all that had happened to her—that she had fainted for an entire night, that the doctors had given up all hope for her, and that the following morning at ten o'clock she had begun, of her own accord, to slowly return to health without any medicine, and within a month, she had fully recovered. I asked my family whether they remembered the day when my wife began to recover. When they told me the day, I recalled that it was the very same day I had been in the holy tomb of the tzaddik, and at that very hour, ten o'clock in the morning, I had placed the pidyonot at his sacred resting place. When I heard all this, I did not even change my clothes, but ran straight to you, my friend, to tell you of the wonders of God."

When the merchant finished his story, he added: "If your holy masters, after their passing, live on and endure and shine like the stars of heaven, how much more elevated must their holiness have been in their lifetimes!"

Reb Yaakov replied: "On the contrary. The Sages taught that tzaddikim are greater after their passing than in their lifetimes.

(*Sippurim Nora'im*)

Rebbe Menachem Mendel of Kotzk would say that every chasid needs two rebbes: one who lives in this world, and one who lives in the World of Truth. This teaching was vividly illustrated also in the words of the Lubavitcher Rebbe concerning his father-in-law as "the Nasi (leader) of our generation" even as the Lubavitcher Rebbe himself was the unchallenged leader of the Chabad movement. What is the meaning of this duality, and in what way does the great power of tzaddikim lie specifically in their passing?

The purpose of the Ba'al Shem Tov and of the entire Chasidic movement is "to bring the Messianic era." As a messianic movement, Chasidut strives toward what the Lubavitcher Rebbe termed "the lights of tohu (primordial chaos) in the vessels of tikkun (rectification)": the introduction of unbounded Divine light into our physical world.

Let us illustrate this connection by considering the way tzaddikim are perceived while alive, and after their passing. When a tzaddik (and indeed "your people are all tzaddikim") lives here in this world, he contends with a host of daily problems, great and small: financial difficulties, the struggle to rise in the morning, illnesses, and shifting moods. He also possesses many virtues and he may lead great numbers of Jews. But for all his greatness, he remains limited by the limits of the physical world, and this can be discerned. When he passes away, by contrast, all his great deeds rise in our memory, while the small and trivial ones are forgotten as though they never were.

The Torah ends the account of the six

days of Creation with the verse, "God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was all very good." But, the midrash relates that Rabbi Meir, who was a scribe, wrote a notation in his personal Torah scroll that instead of reading "it was all very good" (Genesis 1:31) one should read it as, "it was all good death." The word "very" (מְאֹד) and "death" (מָוֶת) are phonetically similar. The idea here is that in death, the mundane aspects of a person's life fall away, and only the "very"—the elements of life that have intensity—remain. These are the utterly unique things that only we, and no one else, could have accomplished. These actually express the chaotic dimension within our soul.

For this reason, in order to succeed in joining these two opposing sides and thereby reveal the Mashiach within himself, the chasid requires two tzaddikim: one who rises entirely above this world, connecting him to the eternal, all-encompassing dimension of chaos, and one who lives within this "world of deceit" and knows how to translate these chaotic revelations into a rectified form that can be integrated into the vessels of our rectified, mundane existence.

Indeed, in Chabad this poses no great difficulty. In Chabad there is one Rebbe who encompasses within himself all the Rebbes—their souls are all one, as the Rebbe himself expressed it. That single Rebbe is an exemplar of the Yiddish phrase in velt oys velt, which means "in the world, out of the world," simultaneously. He fulfills the teaching that "the words of Torah endure only in one who gives himself over to them utterly" (Berachot 63b). He is, quite literally, at once both a living Rebbe and a Rebbe who has passed on, in the manner of Mashiach, who is called a bar nafllah—a prematurely born child (Sanhedrin 96b–98a), alluding to his continuous experience of himself as dying and living anew at every moment. Because of this experience, the Rebbe is able to rectify both the souls of the living and the souls of the dead. Indeed, this was the sign that the Maggid of Mezritch gave his disciples, by which they would recognize who was destined to be his successor and fill his place.

THE WONDERING JEW

# MEDITATION, HURRICANES, MISSIONS, LIGHT, AND DARKNESS

We continue our series reviewing HaRav Ginsburgh's book of tweets and blog entries titled The Wondering Jew: Mystical Musings and Inspirational Insights. Each short article begins with a quote from the book followed by an elucidation and discussion written by one of the Rav's students, based on his teachings elsewhere.

## Meditation and Focused Thought

Someone defined meditation as 'conscious utilization of one's attention.' Divine meditation is paying attention to God.

Another way to describe meditation is 'focused thought.' It could be that one meditates for ten minutes or half an hour or an hour as we do when we pray. Meditation could even last for ten seconds as it is when we perform a mitzvah. Even taking a moment to focus intensely can become meditation.

While there may be legitimate and helpful forms of meditation that focus on self-awareness, exploring the self, and understanding the levels of one's own soul, Jewish meditation is overwhelmingly focused on God-awareness. The ultimate goal of meditation is not self-discovery; it is discovering God, His Torah, His will, and how we can bring about a sense of being closer to all these.

## Seeing God Everywhere

The essence of Jewish meditation is the soul's concentrated effort to search for and find God in every experience of our lives. Every verse, every word, and every letter in the Torah is a Divine portal through which we can see the Almighty's infinite light.

God is all around you, present in all six spatial directions. Turn your inner eye upward and see Divine providence in your life. Turn it downward and negate the existence of any power but God. Turn to your right and experience the love that resides in your heart's right side. Turn to the left and experience the fear in your heart, in your heart's left side. Turn to your front—there is an experience of unity—while to your back is purity of thought.

These six directions mirror the shaking of the lulav and correspond precisely to the Six Continual Mitzvot that are incumbent on all Jews, at all times and in all places: believing in God's providence (looking up; the first of the Ten Commandments),[1] having no other gods (looking down; the second of the Ten Commandments),[2] the absolute unity of God (front, the essence of the Shema),[3] the love of God (turning right; "You should love God with all your heart…"),[4] the fear and awe of God (turning left; "What does God request of you other than to have fear/awe of Him"),[5] and shielding oneself from negative thoughts (back; "Do not follow your heart and eyes…").[6]

## LIVING IN DIVINE SPACE

These six mitzvot can be envisioned as forming a cube surrounding the meditator who occupies the middle of this structure. Indeed, these six mitzvot create the "space" or constant state of consciousness within which a Jew should orient his or herself.[7] Through this constant meditation, individuals awaken to their ultimate purpose in the world.

Through contemplating the deeper meanings of each of the six constant mitzvot and their manifold associations with the directions, the sefirot and various archetypal souls who represent them, one orients him or herself within the middle of the cube, creating a spiritual force field and true center of focus from which one may then proceed to move out into the wider world with balance and integrity.

Along with the Six Continual Mitzvot, the one meditating represents the middle, seventh point, which has its own set of associations, as well as a mitzvah which "aspires" to be constant, as taught in the Talmud: "Would that a person pray all day."[8] King David alluded to this level of sustained consciousness and connection to God when he exclaimed: "I am prayer!"[9] In other words, prayer is more than an activity, it is a holistic and all-encompassing state of being.

For those interested in practicing this meditation, the six/seven mitzvot and their related associations are:

| Constant mitzvah | Direction | Sefirah | Inner experience | Archetypal soul |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Belief in the existence and Providence of God | Above | Victory | Confidence | Moses |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Neither believing in other gods nor relying on forces other than God | Below | Thanksgiving | Sincerity | Aaron |
| Belief in God's oneness, in His all-encompassing unity | Front/East | Beauty | Compassion | Jacob |
| Love of God | Right/South | Loving-kindness | Love | Abraham |
| Fear/Awe of God | Left/North | Might | Fear/Awe | Isaac |
| Not straying after negative thoughts | Behind/West | Foundation | Fulfillment | Joseph |
| Prayer | Middle point | Kingdom | Lowliness | David |

## You are an Emissary of Light

You are an emissary of God on earth, entrusted with bringing His light and goodness to all. You do this through meditation and by walking in His ways.[10] An emissary must be faithful to the one that sent him on his individual mission. Try to hear how your name is being called from on high, directing you to act.

This is a foundational concept deeply emphasized by the Ba'al Shem Tov: our purpose in this world is to bring light, healing, and rectification to everyone and in every circumstance. Much like the shluchim (emissaries) sent out by the Lubavitcher Rebbe—whose influence endures long after his passing—every human being is an emissary sent on a Divine mission to bring God's light, love, and Presence into the world.

## The Eye of the Hurricane

How can the eye of a hurricane stay calm amid turbulent winds? It stays focused on the Creator, remembering He created the hurricane for a good reason.

How can the eye of the storm stay calm when everything around it is whirling at immense speeds and causing such destruction? It is because the eye knows intrinsically that God has determined the hurricane must happen. In eras marked by tragedy, intense tests, and endless tribulations, having eyes to see the bigger picture allows one to recognize how redemption is playing

itself out. We might not understand why the hurricane is doing such damage, or appreciate the way it is unfolding, but there is a realization that everything that is happening is happening somehow for a reason, and in the end, it will lead to a good conclusion.

Translating this idea into our personal lives serves as a powerful parable for maintaining relative calm even when confronted with challenges, obstacles, even chaos and turbulence. Faith in God and trust that everything is ultimately for the good has the power to create a safe emotional space similar to being situated in the eye of the storm.

## The Divine Longing for the Lower Worlds

Four sages entered paradise (the Pardes, literally "orchard"), but only Rabbi Akiva came out in peace. But why not just enter paradise and stay there? Why must we leave?[11]

The word Pardes, "Orchard," is a code word for a very high level of mystical meditation and spiritual ascent. Many explain that the word "paradise" in Western languages derives from this very word as they sound very similar. In this story, four of the greatest sages of the era reached a state of consciousness so exalted that it was described as entering the "Orchard," a metaphor for entering the inner dimensions of the heavenly realms.

Who were these four sages? They were Ben Azzai, Ben Zoma, Elisha ben Avuyah (who later became a heretic, known only as Acher, "the Other One") and Rabbi Akiva.

### A DWELLING PLACE FOR GOD

God created us down here on earth for a good reason. We have a mission to perform. Our mission is to make this lowest realm of existence a dwelling place for God.[12]

This simple but foundational principle of Chabad Chasidut—championed by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson—is that every person must see themselves as a messenger of God. To lead a life that is dedicated to our mission is to ensure that we have a reason to live—that life is filled with meaning. When we do not see ourselves as messengers with a mission, life can become intolerable. While this is how only kings and great people lived in previous generations, today this is the cornerstone of leading a healthy life for all individuals.

# Darkness and Light

God wants to reveal himself to us as he really is. He can't do that in the higher spiritual worlds, in paradise. He can reveal some of his light but not His very essence. For God, that place is the physical world below, not the spiritual worlds above. God wants to be where he was initially most concealed. He wants to reveal his true self out of total spiritual darkness.

For some mysterious reason that we cannot fathom, God identifies most with darkness (before creation he was in a state of absolute darkness) and that's where he wants to be, not swallowed up in the darkness but revealed out of the darkness.

In almost all cases the expression of darkness in its various manifestations is a necessary state of preparation before the revelation of light. For example: the Hebrew words for exile (גָּלוּת) and redemption (גְּאֻלָּה) share the same root letters, teaching that these two realities are intrinsically tied together, as the verse states, "He who sows in tears will reap in joy."[13] Or in the common expression "the greatest darkness is just before the dawn."

King David asserted his belief in the Divine function of both darkness and light, when he declared: "If I ascend into heaven, there You are; if I make my bed in the abyss, behold there You are... If I say surely only darkness will cover me and the light be night about me, even the darkness is not dark for You, but the night shines like the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to You."[14]

The significance of darkness appearing in the Torah before light should not be overlooked.[15] Firstly, it teaches us that darkness acts as an incubator, providing an environment leading to new birth and growth. Just as in the spring, after the darkness and long nights of the winter have passed, vegetation and plants bloom anew, so too an individual grows by overcoming challenges and obstacles, symbolized by darkness. Secondly, since all creative processes are modeled on the Divine creative process, this realization also leads us to recognize that, ultimately, light appears against a dark background. Light manifests out of darkness. The contrast makes light appear much stronger than it really is.

In Kabbalah, the most secret and unfathomable aspect of God is associated with "darkness," the primordial womb-like "nothing" from which all creation, including the infinite light, emerged. Thus, the Psalmist stated: "He places His secret in darkness."[16] In the soul, this level of "darkness" corresponds to the most hidden point of faith, which is referred to in Kabbalah as "the unknowing and unknowable head."[17] This level of faith is so hidden that it only manifests at the highest level of the soul, the super-consciousness, where it is not even aware of itself or recognizable to others. Despite

its hidden nature, it gives birth to all lower levels of light in the soul. This primal darkness is not merely an absence of light, but the very womb-like reality from which all existence is born.

Notes

1. Exodus 20:2.
2. Ibid 20:3.
3. Deuteronomy 6:4.
4. Ibid 6:5.
5. Ibid 10:12.
6. Numbers 15:39.
7. For an in-depth treatment of how the Six Continual Mitzvot become a potent meditation see HaRav Ginsburgh's book, Living in Divine Space.
8. Pesachim 44b.
9. Psalms 109:4.
10. Deuteronomy 28:9.
11. Chagigah 14b.
12. Tanchuma, Naso 16; Tanya ch. 36.
13. Psalms 126:5.
14. Ibid 139:8-12.
15. Darkness first appears in Genesis 1:2, light appears in 1:3.
16. Psalms 18:12.
17. Zohar vol. 3, Idra Zuta.

## THE TORAH OF THE LAND OF ISRAEL

# LEARNING THE LANGUAGE OF THE WORLD OF EMANATION

*As part of his 82nd birthday farbrengen, Rav Ginsburgh analyzed a certain passage from the Zohar (not included in this excerpt), which is interpreted to be a description of the return of Jewish life—particularly the Torah and chesed worlds that were built in exile—to the Land of Israel and the stages involved in that return.*

*The following is an edited excerpt from these teachings as they appeared in Hebrew in the Toldot 5787 issue of Nifla'ot.*

When the Temple was destroyed, the world changed because the Divine Presence was exiled from its place in the Holy of Holies. For the Temple to be rebuilt and for the Redemption to be true and complete, the *Shechinah* must return. There are a few different statements made by the Sages on this topic, one of them reads[1]:

> **Rav Yehudah bar Idi said**, **Rabbi Yochanan said: The Divine Presence** [Shechinah] **traveled ten journeys,** i.e., it left the Temple and the Land of Israel in ten stages at the time of the destruction of the First Temple, as derived **from verses. And corresponding to them the** Sanhedrin **was exiled** in ten stages at the end of the Second Temple period and after the destruction of the Temple, and this is known **from tradition.**

> The Gemara elaborates: **The Divine Presence traveled ten journeys,** as derived **from verses.** The ten journeys are: **From the Ark cover to the** cherub**; and from** one cherub **to** the other cherub**; and from** the second cherub **to the threshold** of the Sanctuary; **and from the threshold to the courtyard; and from the courtyard to the altar; and from the altar to the roof; and from the roof to the wall** of the Temple Mount; **and from the wall to the city; and from the city to a mountain** close to Jerusalem; **and from** that **mountain to the wilderness; and from the wilderness it ascended and rested in its place** in Heaven, isolated from humanity, **as it is stated: "I will go and return to My place."**[2]

Another quote seems to corroborate this, "Five things were missing in the Second Temple: …the Divine Presence."[3] However, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai states that the *Shechinah* is not exclusively in Heaven. In fact, he says, wherever the Jewish people were exiled to, the Divine Presence was exiled with them.

When will the Divine Presence return? The Lubavitcher Rebbe identified the previous rebbe's last essay titled, *Bati Legani*, which describes the actions needed to bring the Divine Presence back to its rightful place as the mission statement for our generation. In some respects, as described in the longer passage from the Talmud, that means bringing the Divine Presence down from Heaven. In others, the return of the *Shechinah*, or the *sefirah* of kingdom as it is called in many places, depends on the actions taken by the leaders of the Jewish people wherever they are.

In the *Zohar*, the return of the *Shechinah* is described as the reunification of the *sefirah* of kingdom, or *Nukva*, with the *sefirah* of beauty (*tiferet*), or *Ze'er Anpin*.

## THE RETURN OF KINGDOM FROM EXILE

Kingdom is at first below—in a state of exile—in the lower Worlds of Creation-Formation-Action, and she must be elevated to the World of Emanation (*Atzilut*). When kingdom rises to the world of Emanation, there she can join her masculine partner, *Ze'er Anpin* in union. But to do so, she must first shift from a state of being a complete *partzuf*, a complete persona—the state she has attained when in the lower Worlds and acted there as their source of life—to a mere point.

Put another way, this first stage of ascent means that when kingdom descended into the lower Worlds, she became their crown, a full *partzuf*, a full persona, which is actually the source of the three lower Worlds. But when she re-ascends into the World of Emanation that is above the three lower Worlds, she must return to being a single point—a single *sefirah*, just "plain" kingdom.[4] All her previous existence and development in the three lower Worlds becomes as if nothing relative to the world of Emanation. But to unite with *Ze'er Anpin* (*tiferet*) in Emanation, all her previous existence must be nullified.

Yet, for kingdom to be able to receive the light of Emanation, she cannot remain a singular point—a single *sefirah* without her intellectual sefirot (wisdom-understanding-knowledge, known by its acronym Chabad). Her intellectual faculties are the vessels for receiving the light of the World of Emanation. Therefore, kingdom must be built as a new complete *partzuf* in the World of Emanation, given intellectual faculties suitable for the World of Emanation. Only then is she ready to receive internally the essential light of Emanation.

To be more precise, in the building

the *partzuf* of kingdom in the World of Emanation there are different stages: the first stage is adapting to the mentality of the world of Emanation, which includes the ability to understand it and function in it at the level of the innate (known as the מָטְבֵּע). The second stage is learning the language of the world of Emanation. When kingdom rises to Emanation, she can be likened to a student who cannot speak or understand the language of the wisdom he wants to learn; once she learns the language of Emanation, learning the language already makes it possible to sense the emotional dimension of the new world (known as the מָרְגֵּשׁ). Afterward, in the union itself, the essential novelty is drawn into kingdom—the intellectual faculties (known as the מָשְׂכֵּל), enabling a new birth to come from the union of kingdom and beauty (*tiferet*, or *Ze'er Anpin*).

## THE LANGUAGE OF THE TORAH OF THE LAND OF ISRAEL

So much for the technical description. To truly understand this process, let us look at a specific application.

It is taught that kingdom in the lower Worlds is like the Congregation of Israel when it is in exile. She has a complete *partzuf*, which manifests as an established community with great Torah scholars at its head. These leaders sustain an entire world of *yeshivot*, and a religious governance and community liaisons to the local non-Jewish leadership. When kingdom then ascends to the World of Emanation it is like taking this entire wide and important world of Torah and turning it into a single point. This would be like nullifying the entire *partzuf*, the entire complex community of Torah that grew and flourished in exile so that they merit the virtue of ascending to the Land of Israel. In the past, this type of nullification was willfully performed by individual scholars such as Rabbi Zeira who fasted until he forgot the Babylonian Talmud he had learnt, to merit understanding the Talmud of the Land of Israel.[5] Other great *tzaddikim* attested[6] that they had to lose the spiritual levels they had acquired in exile to merit attaining the intellectual faculties of the Land of Israel.

When one makes *aliyah* to the Land of Israel, one must adopt new intellect and learn to function in a place where the Jewish people are engaged also in material life—taking responsibility for defense, the economy, and foreign relations. But beyond this, the spoken language in the world of the *yeshivot* of the time of the exile is not compatible with the Torah of the Land of Israel, and one must give the Congregation of Israel a new language by teaching her the emotional language of the world of Emanation—the language of Mashiach and of the Redemption. Only after learning the new language can the union itself take place, and "the [essential] light of Mashiach"[7] be received internally in the Congregation of Israel.

## "JOSEPH WAS TAKEN DOWN TO EGYPT"

What is described here regarding the ascent of kingdom, with the example of language, is powerfully illustrated in the opposite direction, in a story of descent—the story of Joseph's descent from the Land of Israel to Egypt: "Joseph was taken down to Egypt."[8] Joseph's descent to Egypt is both the first example of the descent of the Congregation of Israel into exile and a beautiful illustration of what it means to learn the emotional underpinnings of a language. When Joseph descended to Egypt—it was the first and most powerful exemplar of the diminished existence of the Jewish people outside the Land—and therefore it is the root of all the subsequent descents and exiles.[9] For this reason, all the subsequent exiles (to Babylon,

to Assyria, and the Greco/Roman exile) are named after Egypt.[10] In addition, it is striking that throughout the years the people of Israel have been in exile, there were many leaders whose name was Joseph and who kept the people together through Torah.

Joseph was brought to the house of Potiphar who then put him in prison. Despite this, Joseph acquires the Egyptian mentality (akin to receiving the intellect of Egypt) and succeeds wherever he is, even by the standards of a free Egyptian. Still, it was only on the night before he was released from prison to stand before Pharaoh that he learns the language of kingdom, as alluded to in the verse, "I heard a language I knew not"[11]. At the time, Egypt was the greatest empire and Egyptian, their language, was in essence the inner dimension of the seventy languages of the world. It was the international language of the time—the language of a true king.[12] Though Joseph had already been speaking Egyptian for years, it was on that night that he learnt the language of speaking with the king of Egypt at the correct emotional frequency (corresponding to the emotional dimension).

Understanding the emotional undertones of the language was expressed when after interpreting Pharaoh's dream he also gives him advice. Conversing with Pharaoh in the right language led him to understand that this was what Pharaoh expected of him. In contrast, when he interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh's two servants, the Chief Cupbearer and the Chief Baker, because he did not yet understand the emotional undertones of Egyptian royalty, he offered only a factual decoding of the dream's symbols. He could not offer the Chief Baker advice on how to annul the decree that he would be executed in three days, and for the same reason he also erred in requesting the Chief Cupbearer to mention him before Pharaoh—something that was not appropriate. Joseph's lack of true understanding of Egyptian proved to Heaven that he was not yet ripe to stand before Pharaoh and that he needed another two years of preparation and training in prison. This further vindicates the claim made by the Chief Cupbearer, that he was a slave unfit for kingship according to the particular protocols of the Egyptian royalty.[13] But, following his successful interpretation of Pharaoh's dream and his ability to offer the right advice at the right time, Pharaoh gave Joseph his ring signifying the "union" that comes after all the preparations.

## DRAWING DOWN THE INTELLECTS OF THE FATHER AND THE MOTHER

The four stages in this process—1) the ascent of kingdom from the three lower Worlds to Emanation, 2) her transformation from a full *partzuf* back to a single point, 3) the building of her intellectual *partzuf*, and 4) the learning of the new language—these four stages are accomplished through the elements or aspects of loving-kindnesses and judgments contained in the intellect of the Father and Mother given by them to *Ze'er Anpin*, in the following manner.

Stage 1, the elevation of kingdom from the lower Worlds to the world of Emanation, is by the power of the loving-kindnesses of the intellect in the Father of *Ze'er Anpin*. This represents the strength of the right hand—the main strength of the body—providing the power needed to lift a heavy load from below to above, and in our case, to descend to the lower Worlds, to lift the "heavy" complete *partzuf* of Creation-Formation-Action and bring it into the world of Emanation (the Land of Israel) which as we saw is likened to the complete world of Torah the Congregation of Israel has built while in exile—worlds of Torah and loving-kindness. The heaviness of the *partzuf* stems mostly

from the parts that are described as, "a people heavy with iniquity."[14]).

After entering Emanation, stage 2 the power of the judgments present in the intellect of Father in *Ze'er Anpin*, his left hand, act to contract the *partzuf* of kingdom into a single point, by the power of the might and contraction (*tzimtzum*) of the left.

The third stage, which is the first stage of building kingdom anew, happens through a relatively contracted drawing down from the left side of the Mother, clothed in the victory-acknowledgment-foundation (the habitual *sefirot*) of *Ze'er Anpin* (the source of the intellect—the wisdom-understanding-knowledge—of kingdom). This drawing down builds intellect that is enough to understand the innate stature of the World of Emanation.

The second stage of building kingdom anew in Emanation, which is stage 4 of the entire process, requires learning the new language of Emanation and it happens through a higher drawing down from the right side, the foundation of the Mother, which ends at the "chest" of *Ze'er Anpin* and includes its emotional dimension in its entirety. This drawing-down builds the intellect that understands the emotional aspects of the World of Emanation, which are expressed in language.

Then, when kingdom is ready—after her building in the manner of "His left hand is under my head [habitual faculties] and his right hand embraces me [emotional faculties]"—the union itself takes place at the purely intellectual level to bring forth new offspring, i.e., in our application, the new Torah of the Land of Israel.

Notes

1 *Rosh HaShanah* 31a.
2 Hosea 5:15.
3 *Yoma* 21b.
4 Also known as, "a point beneath foundation." See *Likkutei HaShas*, *Berachot* and *Etz Chayim* 36:3.
5 *Bava Metzia* 85a.
6 See *Chayei Moharan*, §138–139.
7 *Pesikta Rabbati* 36.
8 Genesis 39:1.
9 See *Torah Or* 102a.
10 *Bereishit Rabbah* 16:4.
11 Psalms 81:6. The value of "I heard a language I knew not" (שְׂפַת לֹא יָדַעְתִּי אֶשְׁמָע) is 1716, or *Havayah* (הוי') times Your God (אֱלֹהֶיךָ), 11 times Joseph (יוֹסֵף); dividing into "a language" (שְׂפַת), 5 times Joseph (יוֹסֵף)—Joseph front and back—the triangle of 39, "*Havayah* is one" (הוי' אֶחָד); "I knew not I heard" (לֹא יָדַעְתִּי אֶשְׁמָע), 6 times Joseph (יוֹסֵף), or 36 (לו) times *Havayah* (הוי'), which itself divides into "I knew" (יָדַעְתִּי), Chavah (חַוָּה) times *Havayah* (הוי'), the filling and the root of the name *Mah* (מה), and "not … I heard" (לא … אֶשְׁמָע), tov (טוֹב) times *Havayah* (הוי')). Only the final letters of the words "שְׂפַת לֹא יָדַעְתִּי אֶשְׁמָע" equal 481, or 13 (אֶחָד-אַהֲבָה) times 37 (הֶבֶל).
12 See *Sotah* 36b.
13 See Genesis 41:12 and *Rashi* there.
14 Isaiah 1:4.




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