

Weekly Shiur

6 Kislev 5773

Harav Yitzchak Ginsburgh

(Notes taken during the shiur by Moshe Genuth. Not reviewed by Harav Ginsburgh)

1. Hashem's right is victorious

Today is the wedding day of the Tzemach Tzedek, which is why we began with his nigun *Keli Ata*. Now we'll sing *Yemin Hashem*, also from the Tzemach Tzedek.

Lechaim lechaim.

This nigun is connected with our situation today in Eretz Yisrael. "*Yemin Hashem osah chayil*" (God's right hand is victorious), our strength to be victorious comes from Hashem's right hand, his loving-kindness, which is also the love of Israel. The right hand of Hashem means that we all hug each other out of true love of Israel (ימינו תחבקני) and with this strength we win against our enemies. First it says that the right of Hashem is רוממה, exalted, thanks to the יד רמה the exalted hand, we came out of Egypt, ובני ישראל יוצאים, and the Egypt today is mostly the improper thoughts and opinions that do not follow Torah, that each of us have in our minds. When we are able to exit these straits of the mind (the יד רמה refers to the head, the mind), then the right hand of Hashem עושה חיל, does war and is victorious. With this intent we will sing the *nigun* once again.

Lechaim lechaim.

The right hand of Hashem (ימין י-הוה) has 8 letters, the average value of each letter is 17, טוב, good. It is all good. The right hand of Hashem is goodness, אך טוב וחסד ירדפוני כל ימי חיי, ושבתתי בבית ה'. King David goes out to war only with the purpose of sitting in the House of Hashem for the rest of his life. Hashem should help that speedily in our days we merit the true peace with all our neighbors around us, and then the time will come for building the third Temple, the eternal Temple. But, it all begins with only good and kindness (אך טוב וחסד).

2. A time of goodwill

A week ago we spoke of the idiom עת רצון, "a time of goodwill" that appears only twice, once in Tehilim 69 and once in Isaiah (49:8). בעת רצון עיניתך. We said that the sages offer a number of different explanations for what this time is. There are special intentions by the Arizal about what to think about when saying these words, during Minchah of Shabbat. But, the highest time of goodwill in our reality is during the wedding, because an עת רצון is when the bride and groom come together. So today, with the wedding day of the Tzemach Tzedek and his wife Chayah Mushka, there is certainly a time of goodwill. So we can continue talking about this topic. In fact, last week we explained that the entire year is one of a time of goodwill, but tonight especially so. So let's continue with a few short points we didn't bring last week.

I am asleep and my heart is awake

First the initials of עת רצון are ער, which means "awake," alluding to the verse in Shir Hashirim, אני ישנה ולבי ער. The most common explanation in Chassidut is that "I am asleep" during the exile, but "My heart is awake" even when I am asleep. There are

moment of awakening towards God. We are now in the month of Kislev whose special sense is the sense of sleep (according to Sefer Yetzirah) including all the dreams that we read about in the weekly Torah readings this month, beginning with the dream in our parashah, Yaakov's dream of the ladder set on earth and reaching the heavens, and God is standing upon him. "And he feared and said how terrible is this place,"¹ this is the source in Torah of the unification called **יראה נורא** (awe, terrible), one of the most important principles of the BST² (after, submission, separation, and sweetening). In any case, "I am asleep" could be a golden opportunity as the Rebbe would say, to have Chassidic dreams, dreams that are destined to happen in practice. Messianic dreams.

My beloved is knocking

From this verse, I am asleep and my heart is awake, we learn that there is something particularly in sleep, when we are calm, that the heart's being awake is revealed. During the daily run and turmoil, there is no chance for the heart to awaken and reveal itself. But, when the person is asleep, it comes to his consciousness that his heart is actually still awake. His point of yiddishkeit comes to the fore and is revealed. Just as we say about these difficult times, when it is an **עת צרה ליעקב** (A time of peril for Yaakov), when most of our nation is asleep, but specifically at this time, the point of yiddishkeit, in this darkness, can awaken. And then, in the waking of the heart, in this hour of goodwill, we hear the continuation of the verse, **קול דודי דופק**, the voice of my beloved is knocking. The initials of these 3 words are the same as **קול דממה דקה**. By Eliyahu there were 4 experiences, the storm wind, etc. and then the fourth experience was of a very thin sound of silence, which is when God appeared to Him. Likewise, when there is this silence of sleep, the knocking of Hashem upon the heart can be heard. This is the sound of God growing and maturing the various levels of the congregation of Israel, **פתיח לי אחתי רעיתי יונתי תמתי**, whose initials are **יראת**, alluding to "a woman who fears God" (**אשה יראת ה'**).

(advanced topic) **Unification of pleasure and will**

The groom now, the Tzemach Tzedek, gives a number of deep interpretations for **עת רצון**, a time of goodwill. The main manifestation of this time as the Arizal says is when the yesod (foundation) of Atik goes into the will (the forehead) of Arich, which is also called **רעיא דרעוין** (the will of wills). When this happens, the essence of all pleasure in the Divine soul is illuminated in the forehead. So this is a unification of pleasure and will. The continuation of the verse is, "Elokim, with your great loving-kindness, answer me with your true salvation" (**אלקים ברב חסדך ענני באמת ישעך**). The Arizal writes that Elokim is

¹ "He feared...awesome" (**ויירא נורא**) equals 22 squared, the consummate wholeness of all 22 letters of the Alef-beit. Yaakov is the 22nd generation from Adam (and, "his face [Yaakov's] was similar to his [Adam's] face"), and the pillar of Torah that was given with 22 letters. "He feared...how awesome" (**ויירא... מה נורא**) equals 23 squared, the value of "pleasure" (**תענוג**), the secret of "the world of the garment" (**עולם המלבוש**), where using the 22 letters, God plans all that will be by combining the letters into the 231 gates. In the unification of **יראה נורא** (fear awesome) the source of all pleasure in Atik is revealed, similar to "the fear of Isaac."

². *Keter Shem Tov* (Kehot edition), 135.

מוחא סתימאה (the concealed mind) and ברב חסדך is the gulgalta, the skull (גולגלתא). In the concealed mind, the gevurah of Atik shines. The Arizal even writes out explicitly that this Elokim should be written אלף אלף למד הה אלף למד הה יוד אלף למד הה יוד מם, which is equal to 1001, in the filling used by the Arizal. 1001 is also the value of יראת שמים, fear of heaven). This Elokim is the chesed of Atik illuminating the gulgalta of Arich the source of will. Then the great loving-kindness (ברב חסדך) writes the Arizal is the chesed of Atik illuminating the gulgalta of Arich (the source of will). Then the final words, עניי באמת ישעך, is the light of the Radla—the simple faith in a Jew—in the air between the gulgalta and the mind of Arich. But, the main unification is again between the pleasure of Atik and the will of Arich.

Rectifying the sin of Yehudah's son, Er

The Jewish people are called “a cherished land” (ארץ חפץ). Cherished is the name of the unification between pleasure and will (it is a synonym for will). This phrase exactly equals will plus pleasure (עני רצון), whose initials are also ער, like רצון. In a few weeks time we will read about the sin of Yehudah's firstborn, Er (ער). So all that we speak about in this context is also a rectification of his sin. He is considered the soul of Mashiach son of David. And when we rectify his soul completely, the Mashiach will immediately appear. There is no greater time of goodwill then the coming of Mashiach.

So the sense of sleep of Kislev is the ability to sense the heart awakening specifically during our slumber. This is a sense, a special sense, an ability to experience something.

3. Building the House of Israel

The topic tonight from this week's parashah is also marriage. Yaakov marries all four of his wives. Leah the elder and Rachel the younger, each with her maidservant, Bilhah and Zilpah and from these marriages, he has his 12 children, 11 of whom are born in this week's parashah (except for Binyamin).

Rachel calls her firstborn Yosef, meaning, God should give me another child. Indeed, Binyamin is born in the land of Israel, which is where God's right is, that is why he is so named.

Yaakov's lifespan

So the entire house of Israel is built and rises in this parashah, the 7th parashah, and all sevens are endeared. Yaakov, who builds the house of Israel, lives 147 years of which in our parashah, he was for 20 years in Haran, outside the land of Israel, and then in parashat Vayechi, we learn that he spent another 17 years outside the land, in Egypt where he passed away. So actually, of his 147 years, he spent 37 years in the left, meaning outside the right hand of Hashem, the land of Israel. 37 is Isaac's age at the Akeidah. So Yaakov's years divide into 110 and 37. 110 was Yosef's lifespan.

It is known that the patriarchs gave David their 70 years. Abraham gave 5 years, Yaakov gave 28, and Yosef gave 37 years. These 37 years given by Yosef thus allude to the 37 years that Yaakov spent outside the land of Israel. There is something about Yaakov's final 17 years that was very good, since all his children were together in peace, still he was in exile in Egypt. Apparently for him, he was asleep in the exile, but his heart

awake. The 20 years he was in Haran, they were difficult, but he also had a lot of simchas, with all his marriages and children. So all his mazal tov's happened outside the land of Israel, and yet with all this goodness, it did not happen in the right. Mashiach has to come back here, to live in the land of Israel. We have not merited this yet, but we will immediately.

"Emet (truth) to Yaakov" and the number of verses in the parashah

Yaakov is connected with אמת, truth. The source of truth is in Yitzchak, but the harsh judgment (דינא קשיא) of Yitzchak is softened by Rivkah and then given to Yaakov, as we explained last week. The value of "truth" (אמת) is 441 or 21 squared. The average value of each letter is 147, the lifespan of Yaakov. That is the connection between Yaakov and "truth" (אמת). There is a beautiful phenomenon in the Torah. Vayetzei is the 7th parashah, and the middle between Bereisheet and Vayeitzei is the fourth parashah Vayeira. Bereisheet has 146 verses, Vayeira has 147, and Vayeitzei has 148, or **מהניים** verses (the last word of the parashah—the Masoretic sages always looked for a word towards the end of the parashah that alludes to the number of verses in the parashah). Together they equal of course 441, the value of "truth" (אמת). These three parashot have on average 147 verses, with Vayeira having exactly 147 verses. Vayeira is about Abraham and that is where the reference to Yaakov's lifespan is to be found. This is one of the phenomenon in the Torah related to truth, there is no truth but Torah. This was all to warm up.

The secret behind Yaakov's marriages and the birth of his children

To understand all the mazal tov's that we mentioned, with Yaakov's marriages and birth of his children, we have to understand who his wives were. The Arizal says that Leah and Rachel are the reincarnations of the first and second Chavah (Eve), a topic we've discussed many times in the past. The Torah describes them with the words, "The name of the greater (הגדולה)... and the name of the lesser (הקטנה)." Describing Leah as the greater and Rachel as the lesser alludes to Leah being binah, the world of thought, the greater hei (the first hei in Havayah) and Rachel being the world of speech, kingdom, malchut, the lesser hei in Havayah. We have to understand why each has a maidservant.

At first Leah has 4 children but then she can have no more children. Then we move to Bilhah, Rachel's maidservant who gives birth to Dan and Naftali. And then Leah gives her maidservant, Zilpah, she two has Gad and Asher, two children. And then suddenly, Leah's mazal changes, she keeps praying to Hashem to have more children, and then there is this wondrous story with the finding of the mandrakes by Reuven and thanks to the mandrakes and the deal between Rachel and Leah, Leah merits having her 5th child, Yissachar and then another Zevulun.

And only after all this, after Yaakov has 10 children (the Rebbe always said that each Jew should have a minyan of children), only then does Hashem give Rachel a child. She gives birth to Yosef, alluding to the fact that she should have another child. Why does all this happen, and why in this order?

4. Ayin Beis (ma'amar 69): Cause and effect vs. something from nothing

Let's connect all of this with Ayin Beis, where we are now holding the by 69th ma'amar in this hemshech. One of the topics he explains is the difference between עילה ועלול (cause and effect) and יש מאין (something from nothing). He says that when it comes to cause and effect (עילה ועלול), the effect knows its cause, and therefore wants to rise and elevate back to his source, and be contained therewith. The words, עילה עלול also hint to an elevation (עליה). But when something emerges from nothing (יש מאין), the source and what emerges are distant from one another. The something feels very separate from the nothing. If there is nothing to hold what has emerged, its nature will make it descend, just as the animal soul descends. So the nature of the effect is to return and elevate back to its cause, while the nature of the something, the being is to descend and grow ever more distant from its source. Between the something and nothing there is a contraction, like in the beginning of creation when God contracts His light, and only a very thin residue remains with a recollection of where everything came from, all because of the contraction.

Leah – cause and effect; Rachel – something from nothing

Whoever learns the Chassidut on Leah and Rachel understands that Leah is the higher mother—she gives birth to all the midot (sefirot from loving-kindness to malchut) in the world of Atzilut (Emanation), where the sefirot descend form one another in order, and there they are connected like cause and effect. But, Rachel is the lower mother and she gives birth to the midot in the lower worlds. There the relationship between the sefirot is more like something from nothing. Rachel is the malchut of Atzilut, while Leah is the binah of Atzilut.

The first point is that Leah, the higher mother, her main topic of meditation is on עילה ועלול, cause and effect. But the main meditation of Rachel, the revealed reality (עלמא דארתגליא) is about something from nothing.

Early Kabbalah – cause and effect; the Arizal's Kabbalah – something from nothing

If we said that something from nothing is related to contraction, we know that the contraction is a meditation taught us by the Arizal. All the Kabbalah before the Arizal terminates consummately with the Ramak (Rabbi Moshe Cordovero). For him everything is like cause and effect, עילה ועלול, he makes no use of the contraction—it is all cause and effect. So, we can conclude that Leah is related and knows the Kabbalah of the Zohar all the way to the Ramak, while Rachel is well-versed in the Kabbalah of the Arizal. This is a surprising new way to understand the evolution of Kabbalah with the Ramak corresponding to the concealed world (the higher mother and Leah) while the Arizal corresponds to the revealed world.

Yehudah: the aspect of Rachel within Leah

It is known that the coming of Mashiach is mostly dependent on reconstructing Rachel, the partzuf of Rachel. On the one hand Mashiach the son of David is a descendant of Yehudah and Leah. But, as we'll explain Yehudah is the revelation of Rachel within Leah, which is why in the supernal chariot, whose first three legs are

Abraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov, at first Rachel was the fourth leg and then when David was born he takes Rachel's place. Yehudah is the Leah's son after whose birth it says that Leah stopped giving birth. It was like Leah now became like Rachel, barren and unable to have more children. Because, Yehudah is like Rachel's son. This is the deepest secret in the story of the birth of Yaakov's children.

Leah: meditating on God's essence; Rachel: seeing the King

There is another way to understand these two levels of meditation, the higher mother, Leah and the consciousness of the lower mother, Rachel. Leah meditates upon *אין עוד מלבדו* ("there is nothing apart from Him"). She meditates upon God's essence and how there is nothing else but God—this is the concealed world, the hidden dimension (*עלמא דאתכסיא*). Leah is searching for that which God has hidden. But, Rachel doesn't strive to understand God's essence, she only looks directly, to look at what can be seen directly. She isn't searching for God's essence, but rather she is looking for the reality of the King. As much as we meditate upon revealed reality, we can't see the King, but this is indeed the King Himself.

Leah learns a lot of Chassidut, and the eyes of Leah were soft, because the eyes symbolize meditation (*התבוננות*), because it is so difficult to meditate upon the hidden reality, her eyes became soft. But, Rachel is meditating upon reality and her eyes are beautiful. What we see in reality is King Himself, this is the reality of the Creator. If there's a table here, it reflects God. Everything reflects and reveals the artisan who made it. That causes a person to come to bitul, sincere bitul, nullification. Rachel's nullification is greater than Leah's, because she is looking directly at the King. Like the BST brought the King directly to us. Rashbi tried to tell us stories about the king (that is the Zohar). The Arizal painted Him (that is what his Kabbalah is like, descriptions upon descriptions of the Divine), but the BST brought Him, he brought the King Himself to us. That is what Rachel is like.

Verses that capture Leah and Rachel's meditation

The verse related to the concealed world and Leah's meditation, is *אתה הראת לדעת כי ה' הוא האלקים אין עוד מלבדו*. This is deep meditation and it is very hard to comprehend this. But, Rachel's work is very simple, *שׁוֹתֵי ה' לִנְגֹדִי תָמִיד*, I see Hashem before me always, the first verse brought in the Shulchan Aruch. You wake up in the morning and you right away see that Hashem is standing upon you, there is no meditation required, this is just a direct experience of the reality of the King. I don't have to understand Him at all, but I see Him. Someone who sees the king immediately nullifies before Him. So Leah is meditating in order to understand more and more, which relates to the connection of cause of effect (*עילה ועלול*) with the effect constantly trying to return and understand its source. But, to see the King before me is Rachel's avodah. Why is Yaakov the choice of the patriarchs, because only he can unify, by marrying these two women (not of his own choice), he unifies the two of them together, he can unite these two types of Divine service. The concealed avodah and the revealed.

Rachel's nullification

We said that Rachel has more earnest nullification than that which is achieved by the meditation upon the concealed reality. This is because of the connection between wisdom and malchut, ה' בחכמה יסד ארץ. Rachel's true source is in chochmah (wisdom), giving her a special connection with earnest nullification.

Why Yaakov hates Leah and Leah's pursuit of the unknowable

Why does Yaakov fall in love with Rachel and wants to marry her but not Leah. It's not because of beauty. The holy Zohar writes that the reason is that every person hates his mother's ערוה. Why is Leah hated? Because for Yaakov, relative to Yaakov, Leah is his mother's private parts as it were, it is something that he cannot think about. It's something that one should cannot and should not try to understand and grasp. That is why Leah was hated. Leah feels that Yaakov can't understand her. It's hard to love someone, with warm deep love, someone you don't understand. Yaakov can't understand Leah also because her Divine service is to reach parts of the psyche that it is very hard to understand. She is like a scientist who is searching for a way to unify all of physics, without it he doesn't feel his life has meaning. Leah is seeking to understand God's essence, which is very difficult.

5. Yaakov's first four sons: Reuven, Shimon, Levi, and Yehudah

Procreation requires opposites

The next principle in this week's parashah is that when God created man he said he would create him a helpmate (עזר כנגדו), without whom he cannot procreate. In Chassidut, the helpmate is explained as an opposite. There is something in the woman that is the opposite to the man. Everything needs something opposite so that it can be complete. If there is no opposition, not in the sense of dispute, but rather in the sense of negative and positive, then there can be no procreation. Procreation requires a unification of opposites. The example is that when a person meditates he gives birth to the measures of the heart, just as Leah is the first to give birth. Indeed, her first three sons correspond to the first three measures of the heart: chesed (Reuven) gevurah (Shimon) and tiferet (Levi). She merits this because her true meditation is of the type that cannot be fully understood, but you try to understand it as best as possible (like the BST who said that regardless of what Rabbi comes before me, I can always contradict what he understands) because in-depth study is always lacking. There is always a hole in it. Every meditation is this way. Specifically because there are holes, there are questions, these are the opposites from which "children" come forth. All because it's not simple and not glatt. If everything is simple and glatt, there are no questions, problems, then there are no children.

Yaakov and Leah are opposites, Yaakov and Rachel see eye to eye

The relationship between Yaakov and Leah is like two opposites, there are always questions left open, and because of the attempt to work them out, that is where the children come from. Rachel is barren because Yaakov and Rachel see 100% eye-to-eye. They both are looking at reality and seeing it as God, as the revelation of Hashem.

Yaakov and Rachel are so aligned, without any problems, that she can have no children. She is not a truly opposite helpmate. Before she gives Bilhah to Yaakov she gets angry at Yaakov, probably the first time in their lives, and then the story of their relationship begins to move forward.

The birth of Reuven, Shimon, and Levi

It says that in the future there will be no procreation. Why? Because there will no longer be any questions. The Divine will be revealed, there will only be Hashem. This is the deep idea explained in Chassidut on the parashah. First Leah has Reuven (אור בן), the measure of loving-kindness in the psyche. All because she pushes to understand the concealed world. Then she has Shimon the measure of fear. Levi, her third son, about whom she says, הפעם ילדה אישי אלי, which is explained as dveikut (דבקות), meaning that from now on there will be connection with her husband. She wants to be loved. Sometimes אתה גבורה תפארת is חסד גבורה תפארת and sometimes in the Tanya (Igeret 27) it says that they are אהבה יראה אמונה, אהבה יראה דבקות, and there is as in this case, אהבה יראה דבקות. Shimon is from the verse, "God I have heard about You and I was filled with fear."

"The end of all knowledge is to know that we cannot know"

After she has these three and she continues meditating, she experiences what appears at the beginning of the Keter Shem Tov. There the BST explains that there are two types of people who come to the conclusion that the end of knowledge is to know that we cannot know, You (God). But, there is one type of person who gives up right away after understanding this. He right away says to himself, I don't know. This is faith without knowledge. But, the BST that God forbid that someone should be this way. One should come to faith after having fulfilled one's complete potential for knowledge and understanding. The years in which you are searching for understanding, when you are meditating, those are the years that you have children, when you are fertile. After those fruitful years, you come to an understanding that indeed one cannot know. The BST explains this with a parable, that the first type of person never tries to approach the king, he does not make the effort to reach the capitol, to reach the palace, to enter it. He lives just on faith. But the second type of person has done all he can to enter to see the king, until he comes to a certain place in the palace where he's told he can't go any further. But on his journey he is filled with the richness of learning about the king.

Yehudah - the end of Leah's path of meditation

Every person should follow the second path which is the path of Chabad. After you've reached your total potential and can go no further with knowledge and understanding, all that is left is to acknowledge, הודאה.

That is Leah's fourth child, Yehuda (הפעם אודה את ה', this time I acknowledge God). Yehudah is the culmination of all of Leah's meditation, her "the end of all knowledge is to know that we don't know" and all that is left is to acknowledge, to have simple faith. That is why she now could no longer give birth. Because when you come to earnest faith, you can no longer procreate, you can no longer be fruitful (this can be something

positive like in the future to come). So this is our first chapter tonight, understanding Leah's first four children.

We now understand how Yehudah is actually like Rachel. Rachel has no deep understanding of the King's essence, just simple faith, earnest nullification before the king.

How can Yehudah be first in the sacrifices of the princes?

We'll end this part with another question. According to the Ba'al Shem Tov, Yehudah cannot precede the first three children, corresponding to חסד גבורה דבקות. But, seemingly there is a question here. Because according to the Arizal, in the order of the months and their correspondence with the tribes, Yehudah is the first (Nisan). Reuven of course yells out, I am the first. How can Yehudah be really Yehudah (this understanding that we can't know) if there was not first Reuven, Shimon, and Levi. If Yehudah comes first it is like the BST's fool who never tries to know Hashem and gives up without trying. Who is Yehudah? He is the crown of the kingdom (כתר מלכות). Levi is the crown of priesthood (כתר כהונה). What can we learn from this about kingdom, מלכות ישראל? First of all, that kingdom is about not meditating any further, that is why she can deal with reality directly. Malchut had three older brothers who built the background for what malchut does. Once the fourth leg of the chariot is in place (malchut) there is no longer any more need for meditation. All you have to do now is run in the elections, all in a state of "the end of all knowledge is to know that you don't know). But, someone who runs for office in elections before he reaches this state of תכלית הידיעה שלא נדע, he is the BST's fool. So how can Yehudah precede his three brothers?

Yehudah is fourth, even when placed first

So we have to say that with Yehudah, even when he's placed first, in his genes he's always the fourth. He never forgets that he himself is the result of the end of all knowledge... has to come after a lot of meditation. He himself is the product of his mother's meditation, of his 3 older brother's meditations, and he himself is a talmid chacham who also meditates. He can immediately be placed as a king, because he has in his genes that the end of all knowledge is to know that we don't know, because he already includes within himself all the stages of the pursuit of understanding God's essence. He has already in himself passed all the stages, the capitol, the palace, and so on, until he is able to enter the innermost chambers (to the point where one cannot advance anymore). This needs to be better explained.

All this is connected with the "Three Crowns" (שלושה כתרים) as they define the relationship between the crown of priesthood and the crown of Torah and the crown of kingdom. The entire rectification of a state is based on the proper relationship between these three crowns.

Let's return to Levi. Levi precedes Yehudah, and he is the crown of priesthood. He has three levels in him. There is a Levi who is not a priest at all. Such a Levi is a singer, he sings in the Temple (משורר). He sings songs of love (for God) and dveikut. There is another Levi who is a priest; the priest acts solemnly and quietly, with the will of the

heart. The highest level of Levi is the High Priest, the crown of priesthood itself. We can correspond these to something from Ayin Beis this week. What is the difference between Reuven Shimon and Levi and Yehudah? The moment you've gone down to search for God's essence, you can run in the elections, because you've experienced an essential change in the lights and vessels. All the measures of the heart born from Leah's meditation in the concealed reality, they are lights in the psyche. But, the essence of light, which is that light clings to the source of light (האור דבוק במאור). When such a person comes to the conclusion that there is no way to know, then what happens is that the lights begin to thicken and become vessels. The vessels all come from the lights created by your great effort (in all your young age) to pursue more and more light of knowledge. But, once you've come to the conclusion that there is nowhere further to continue, the lights begin to become an actual reality, they become vessels, making you worthy of running for office, of dealing with reality. Lights are nothingness and vessels are being (something). In this week's ma'amar in Ayin Beis the Rebbe RAshab explains three levels in this thickening. Whenever we speak of a vessel in the Torah, the Torah is referring to a musical instrument. Like King David who knows how to play an instrument, he has light in his vessels. As much as he is comfortable in his vessels, he is always ascending higher. Why? because these vessels are a result of meditating upon the lights, upon cause and effect.

But, there is higher light, that is not in the vessel, but surrounds the vessels. It is related to the vessel but not contained in it. There is an even higher light that is still in the source. These three levels correspond to the Levi, the Priest (the Cohen) and the High Priest. The RAshab brings the saying in the Zohar that the supernal crown, even though it is a shiny bright light, it is dark, as it is the cause of all causes (עילת העילית). These three levels of light and the clinging of the light in its source correspond to binah, chochmah, and keter (understanding, wisdom, and crown). In the keter there are two levels. The external level wants to reach the source of the light, but the inner level is actually there. The difference between them is that the first is called אובך, dark, and it is ascending trying to return to the source. But, the inner level of the light that is returning to the source is that it is already in the source and is called לא ידע, unknown. The RAshab writes that all three levels are three levels of אין, nothingness. The absolute nothingness is called אפס, like null, אפס בלתי, אפס. The two levels below it are אין זולתך. The experience of "there is nothing but you" that is the experience of nullification. It is a feeling of the source of the light but without yet an ability to go back into it.

These three levels of the light, the nothingness in the light, can also be described as the עיבור יניקה מוחין of the light. The fact that the light is always trying to ascend that is the lowest level. When it is surrounding light, it already experiences and knows about its source, but cannot yet attain it. There is the wisdom of this experience and there is the external aspect of the crown of this experience. In the wisdom there is the feeling of הוא לבדו הוא ואין זולתו. But, the external level of the crown is already a feeling of "there is none like Him" (אין ערוך לעצמות), or אין זולתך, אין זולתך, there is no being without You). But, the highest level, אפס בלתי means that even with You I still have no reality unto myself, this is the absolute nothingness called לא ידע.

The higher light, the high priest, the inner level of the crown is the inter-inclusion of all that there is from the first contraction and on as it is before the contraction—there is nothing there but Hashem. The second level is after the contraction. And from Adam Kadmon and on, that is already the third level of the light. Apart from this being three levels of Levi, this also connects to the notion in Chassidut that there are three levels of nothingness (אין). [The middle level here is the wisdom and external aspect of the crown—it has two parts to it because it is an intermediate that contains both sides.] By Shabbat is says three times, “today,” from which we learn that there should be three meals on Shabbat, but the third time it says, “today not,” from which we learn that one should not eat too much on the third meal. Avraham Abulafia explains that Shabbat equals 702, the reverse of 207, the value of “light” (אור). On Shabbat there are three ascents, from meal to meal. These are the three aspects of nothingness, a type of nothingness that is ascending by its nature. The first one is the evening meal, songs of love. The first meal of the day has two parts to it (like Shacharit and Musaf, two prayer services). Finally, the absolute nothingness is in the third meal. These are Abulafia’s three aspects of nothingness on Shabbat.

7. A woman should not be her husband’s chossid

Lechaim lechaim.

Surprisingly, it is not clear what year the Tzemach Tzedek was married, either when he was 13.5 or 14.5. The Shadchan was the Alter Rebbe, who had planned it for a number of years. When the Tzemach Tzedek was 8 he was already versed in Talmud and Poskim, and then the Alter Rebbe came to his son, the Mittler Rebbe, the mother of the bride and offered the shidduch. The Mittler Rebbe said that he’s not sure that the shidduch was good, since the the Alter Rebbe, who would be giving the groom away, did not have a father who is a Rebbe, but the Mittler Rebbe, the bride’s father, does have a father who is a Rebbe (the Alter Rebbe). In any case, we bring this to show again that without opposition there is no power of procreation. Indeed, the Tzemach Tzedek had the most children of all the Chabad Rebbe’s. To our dismay, the Lubavitcher Rebbe and his wife, had no children at all, even though they carry the same names as the Tzemach Tzedek and his wife. The fact that opposition is required between the husband and wife means in simple terms that a woman should not be her husband’s chossid. There are three that cannot be Chassidim—every rule has its exceptions, this one two. One of the three is one’s wife. One might think that this is something negative. Why shouldn’t the wife be her husband’s chossid. Maybe the opposite should be true: the husband be his wife’s chossid. But, apparently neither option is good. From stories about the Tzemach Tzedek it is clear that his wife was not a very big chossid of his. This can be connected with two phenomena. First, that the shidduch was done with the background of who has a father who is a Rebbe, so it seems that the Mittler Rebbe’s daughter Chayah Mushka was a chossid of her grandfather, the Alter Rebbe. And secondly, and this explains the minhag that we have to get married as early as possible (the best is of course as brought in the Talmud, getting married close to age 13), which needs explaining. Why should young children get married? As much as the Tzemach Tzedek was a genius in Torah, why should he get married so early? The idea is that the marriage

is like a friendship. It's not at all a relationship of a chossid and a Rebbe. But, if, like by our Rebbe and his wife, who got married much later in life, and especially after Chanah, the Rebbe's mother said explicitly to the Friedeger Rebbe that the whole shidduch is on condition that her son become the next Rebbe, then all the more so, as we know that the Rebbetzin was a true chossid of her husband. The Rebbe's crown was certainly from her lineage. Yet, she was her husband's chossid. This is a reason for sterility. Whether it's good or bad, that only Hashem knows, it's all by Divine Providence. According to this we have to say that with Yaakov and Rachel, she was barren because they were too similar, too much in inner love. The question is how do you get out of this situation? How do you heal this sterility? We could say a bit tongue-in-cheek, that since ישועת ה' בהרף עין, one of them has to take his eye off the other, they have to separate a little in order to have children.

8. The four maidservants' children: Dan, Naftali, Gad, and Asher

Let's return to the story of the birth of the tribes. After Leah stopped giving birth following Yehudah's birth (and Yehudah is connected to Rachel, as we explained), Rachel argues with Yaakov asking him to give her children, and Yaakov gets angry at her. This argument is what makes procreation between them possible, as we stated earlier. Then Rachel introduces Bilhah, her maidservant.

Point-line-area and point-sefirah-partzuf

What is Bilhah's role? It is known that all the matriarchs have a hei in their name except for Rachel. The form of the letter hei reflects expansion (התפשטות). Rachel is like a point, she can't give birth because she's too much like a dimensionless point (in the point-line-area). A point cannot give birth, only a partzuf can. Relative to a dimensionless point, a partzuf is like an area. One of the simplest definitions of what a partzuf is in the Arizal's Kabbalah is that it represents the ability to give birth, and even more importantly, actually giving birth. If a person is capable of giving birth but has not yet done so he is defined as the intermediate stage between the point and the partzuf, the sefirah (the line, in the point-line-area model). But, a point cannot give birth at all.

Rachel's consciousness: a focused dimensionless point

We said that Rachel's service at the beginning was שויתי ה' לנגדי תמיד, I see Hashem before me at all times. This is the consciousness of a point. Wherever I look (like Rebbe Levi Yitzchak's *dudele*), I see you. You here, You there. Everything is just one point. A point cannot give birth.

The fact that Rachel is a point and not a partzuf is also seen in her not having a hei in her name, which symbolizes expansion in all three directions. But still, Hashem who is planning everything, gives her a maidservant who has two hei's in her name, בלהה, so that eventually she will give half of her procreative power of being a partzuf to her mistress, Rachel.

Rachel sees generalities, Bilhah sees detail

The relationship between Rachel and Bilhah, like that between Leah and Zilpah, is one of face to back (פנים באחור). Rachel is the face, Bilhah, her backside. So if Rachel is

seeing Hashem in everything (like the Dudele), it is a point, then Bilhah, her backside is like seeing the more particularized understanding of God in every point in reality. Rachel sees the general nature of creation as being God—but it's all the same. Left, right, up, down, it's all Hashem. Partzuf Rachel means that Rachel should be able to give birth. A person who has children (especially a woman) is called "built" (בנוי). To allow Rachel to give birth is only in merit of her maidservant. Why so? Because to say that everything in general is the same, all is God, that is the *מדת ההשתוות* of the BST, the equanimity. This is called general meditation. This is actually not even meditation. It is just a consciousness, without actual meditation that can procreate. Bilhah is the one who looks at reality's particular phenomena, the phenomena of nature and she is in wonder over how the Creator can be seen in every single facet of nature. For Rachel there are no particular phenomena, it's all the same. All of reality is transparent and all you see, wherever you look, is the Creator. But, for Bilhah it's important to first grasp each individual phenomenon separately and then see God in it.

Differentiation allows for feminine waters to ascend

If we say in general that Leah is a meditation on the infinite light that surrounds all worlds (alluded to by the letter samech, the letter of the month of Kislev)—the Rebbe explains that Kislev *כס לו* is the covering of *לו*, where Leah equals *לו* (36), then Rachel is meditation upon the light that fills all worlds (*ממלא כל עלמין*). It is explained that "I fill" (*אני מלא*), God's essence that fills all of reality is actually in its source higher than what Leah can see. So Bilhah is in general the wisdom of nature, she is a physicist, a chemist, a biologist, she knows all the exact sciences, but unlike any scientist today, she can tell at a moment, how the Creator is within what she is looking at. The person who wrote the *נפלאות הטבע* in the Sichot for young people was the Rebbetzin, Chayah Mushka. To see there are particulars in nature, to see that there is action in nature, this allows Bilhah to give birth and not only that, but to also raise the feminine waters in her mistress in Rachel. The first son Bilhah gives birth to is Dan. She [Rachel] says, *דנני אלוקים*, meaning "God has judged me." Dan is a sense of judgment, it comes out of the consciousness that is aware of the plurality in nature. All plurality, division, is defined as judgment. It is the power of Elokim, which equals nature.

Dan: birth out of meditation on God's wonders in nature

Let's see something about these words, *דנני א-להים*. We said that Bilhah is Rachel's backside (the particular) while Rachel is the frontside (the general principle). When Elokim is written in its backside form, it equals 200, the letter *ר*. *א-ל-א-ל-א-ל-ה-א-ל-ה-י-א-ל-ה-י-ם* = 200. There are four levels before you come to the full Name. These four levels must equal 114, the value of *דנני* in the words, *דנני אלהים*. The judgment (*דנני*) here is the backside part of the backside derivation of Elokim. So all that is related to the tribe of Dan (including Samson) stems from meditation upon the wonders of nature.

The difference between secrets and wonders

Another point: we spoke of surrounding and filling light of God. *סובב ממלא*. Each of these words has one letter that is repeated twice. So the question is what happens when

we combine the repeated letters: from סובב we get סוד "secret." When we combine ממלא we get פלא "wonder." Wonder is higher than secret. What is the wonder of the filling light? The idea here is that God contracts His infinite light so that it can fill, it can enter our mind, our understanding. The sages say that if someone sees an elephant in his dream it is a wonder, especially if he sees an elephant passing through the eye of a needle. Wonder is about something big entering something small. Leah is always looking for an essential understanding of reality, but Bilhah is looking at the wonder in nature, not necessarily understanding why it is the way it is, just that it is so full of God. That is the beauty of Rachel. She is wondrous, while Leah is secretive. She is so secretive, that even Yaakov doesn't understand her secret. The secret is again his "mother's" private parts. This is God's surrounding light that is constantly sustaining creation, not God's speech.

Naftali: the mundane fertilizing the supernal

Bilhah's second son is Naftali, and Rachel says, נפתולי אלקים נפתלתי עם אחותי גם יכולתי. Meaning that she was able to defeat her sister, Leah. The idea here is that there is something that the higher (that which is supernal) receives from that which is lower. This means that the meditation upon the wonders of nature, first of all it causes a connection, between the particular and the general (Bilhah with Rachel), but it also affects the higher, meaning Leah. The wonder of nature adds something to the secret of Leah's meditation upon the Divine essence.

The pleasure inherent in Naftali and Asher

There is another explanation to Naftali's name. Naftali also means "pleasure" (נופת לי). There is another tribe, Asher who is connected with pleasure. A week ago we spoke about the word, נא, "please," and "now." The initials of Naftali and Asher (נפתלי אשר) is נא. So to ask for נא, Now from Hashem is to ask for pleasure now. Asher and Naftali are in the same camp and they correspond to the months of Shevat and Asher. נפתלי אשר together equal 1071 = 51 times 21. The initials equal 51 (נא) and the rest of the letters equal 20 times 51. The idea is that there is a special pleasure in the second and final son of the two maidservants, in particular. We need to explain why this is. The pleasure in Bilhah's comes after the דנני אלקים, after an understanding of God in the particular phenomenon in nature.

Gad: drawing down

Leah sees that it's a good idea to give her maidservant. She gives Zilpah to Yaakov and then it just says that Zilpah gives birth to Gad, about whom Leah says בא גר (but it's written as בגר, without the aleph). Gad means "drawing down" (המשכה).

Leah and Zilpah

Leah's meditation is about elevation, trying to return the effect into its source in the cause. Like we said earlier about the light of the crown that is dark, because it is constantly ascending, trying to return to its source. The Ba'al Shem Tov explains that where a person's thought is, that is where he really is. This is learnt from the Seraphim, about whom it says, שרפים עומדים ממעל לו. In another place it is said that the BST said that

where a person's will is, that is where he really is. In any case, both refer to Arich. He is really there, not like *לא ידע*, the highest level that is actually null and non-existent with the source, with God. Rather, it is one with Hashem, but still in existence. Both variants of thought and will refer to the two aspects of Arich. Thought refers to *מרוח סתימאה*, and will refers to *גלגליתא*. This is an important addition to what we explained earlier.

Who is Zilpah? Zal means to pour down, like a liquid. A few years ago when we taught about Leah, Rachel and their maidservants, we said that Bilhah is natural sciences, while Zilpah is psychology. This is like what Rebbe Hillel says that in every meditation upon Hashem, we should have to parables, which we explain are one from natural science and one from psychology. Zilpah is the recognition that since I can't know you Hashem, all I can see and know is how You run the world. Bilhah is not looking for how God runs things (*הנהגה*), she just sees God through the particular phenomena she is looking at. Bilhah sees how God lowers Himself in order to enter our world. Zilpah is Leah's maidservant: Leah wants to know God, but she's already come to the conclusion that God cannot be fully known (because she is after Levi). So what can she know? She can know God's ways. There are Kabbalists in the Ashkenazic world who say that God forbid that one should think and meditate upon God Himself—that is the worst thing. All one is allowed to learn and meditate upon is God's Providence, how God runs the world (*הנהגות*). This type of thinking is actually Zilpah without Leah. This is what would have been with Zilpah had Leah not married Yaakov. But, now that she's married to Yaakov, then Zilpah too reaches this higher level. Why is this psychology? Because the descent here is how God is running the world, and this is related to the midot, the measures of the heart. She gives birth to her first son, Gad, whose name means "drawing down," because she is drawing God down. Why is Gad written without an aleph? Because the inner aspect, the aleph, which is Leah is no longer here. Leah says that there was an insincerity here, since she cannot ascend any higher. Then comes Asher. He is Zilpah's second son. Again, his name is connected with pleasure. She says, *כי אשרוני בנות*. The "daughters" here are the vessels in the lower worlds. It causes joy, because *אשר* Asher is like a verification of a contract (*אישור*). The vessels of reality verify God's Providence.

The 4 knots

In the Zohar, it says that the 4 sons of the maidservants are like knots, two and two, knotted together. If we add the values of Adar (*אדר*) and Shevat (*שבט*), the two months that correspond with Natfali and Asher, we get 3 times 529, or the value of "pleasure" (*תענוג*) meaning that the main pleasure is the completeness of the backside; recall that these four children that came from the maidservants represent Rachel and Leah's backside (the relationship that each has with her maidservant as we said is front to back). When King Solomon built the Temple he also built a pool which stood upon 12 copper oxen. About these oxen it says, *כל אחוריהם ביתה*, all their backsides face the inside (the oxen stood so that their hinds would all be facing the center point around which they were standing). Thus, even the backside is related here with the inner essence.

9. The final four children: Yissachar, Zevulun, Yosef, and Binyamin

Now, Leah has no more children. First of all, what we've seen is that the birth of the tribes follows a 4-4-4 pattern. The final four are Yissachar Zevulun and Yosef and Binyamin, they come from Leah and Rachel. What then is the connection? As we said earlier, Yosef cannot be born without Yissachar and Zevulun, they are like a necessary prerequisite for the opening of Rachel's womb.

Returning, how did Leah give birth to a 5th child. The idea is that the feminine waters have to come from a new place, a lower place, specifically unifications in lower worlds give birth to new feminine waters. Reuven who was Leah's love, went out to the field and found mandrakes (in the Torah it is verse after verse), which the Zohar writes represent the young men, the two angels מטט and סגדל, the unification of the two angels of the world of Yetzirah (formation) and Assiyah (action). Just as there are דודים, beloved in the higher worlds, Emanation and Creation, there are דודאים (mandrakes) in the worlds of Action and Formation. Someone who marries young, his couplehood is described as mandrakes. When we hear wisdom from a young child, it is a wonder (like the Magid's parable of a talking bird). If we would hear the same idea from an adult, it wouldn't be so wondrous. This revelation of wisdom in a young child is described as א. This aleph has so much power that with it you can renew Leah's fertility. But, since Leah sells the right to her sister, Rachel gets the external merit of these mandrakes, but not the inner. So these last four tribes are one group.

Who then is Yissachar, who was born in merit of the ascent of the aleph of דודאים. Yissachar is Torah. Until now we've had Levi, the crown of priesthood, then Yehudah, the crown of kingdom and now Yissachar the crown of Torah. Yissachar is special because he is the first time that the concept of Torah is mentioned. He is Leah's son. Until now she could only bring love, fear, clinging to God. After she reaches the conclusion that we cannot know, she can now bring the will of Hashem into reality. Rachel is not Hashem's will, she is the measure of equanimity (מדת הדשתות). After Yissachar and Torah has come down to reality, only then can Yosef be born. Yosef is like Yaakov, his whole purpose is to reveal Hashem in reality. Yosef is the revelation of the source of light, not just the light. Up till now, all the tribes were either the light or the vessel. Reuven Shimon and Levi were all lights, Yehudah is a vessel. All the connections between the children of the maidservants were vessels. Then Yissachar is the light (of Torah) and Zevulun is the vessel. Once they are in reality, the very essence of Hashem can be revealed in reality Yosef is higher than even the Patriarchs. They are in Atzilut and Yosef is in Adam Kadmon. The one who has a talent for revealing the source is Yosef and then Binyamin is the striving from below (Binyamin is initially within Yehudah, he is the point in malchut, the point of Zion) to raise feminine waters.

So we had 3 series of 4 tribes each. If you add their names in each group ראובן שמעון לוי יהודה, then גד נפתלי גד אשר, and then יוסף בנימין. These three numbers form a quadratic series with only 7 positive numbers. Calculate it and you will see wonders, Gal Einai and I will see wonders from Your Torah.