

Parashat Re'eh

וְזָבַחַת מִבְּקָרְךָ וּמִצֹּאֲנֶךָ אֲשֶׁר נָתַן ה' לְךָ כְּאֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתְךָ וְאָכַלְתָּ בְּשַׁעְרֶיךָ
בְּכָל אֹתוֹת נַפְשֶׁךָ.

"You must slaughter any of your herd or flock, which G-d has given you, as I have commanded you. Only then may you eat [of them] in your gates as much as you desire."¹

In contrast to an everyday butcher, the ritual slaughterer (*shochet*) in Judaism is a position of great honor. In order to be a *shochet*, a person should ideally be of exemplary character, a Torah scholar, pious, and G-d-fearing – besides being well-versed in the laws of ritual slaughter and expert in their performance. This is because, as we will see, the act of ritual slaughter – the first stage towards the eventual consumption of the flesh by the Jew – is an intensely spiritual act, and the spiritualization of the physical flesh depends a great deal on the purity of thought and intentions of the *shochet*.

טעמי המצות, פרשת ראה

כוונת השחיטה, שאמר מורי זללה"ה להר"ר יצחק כהן ז"ל,

Ta'amei HaMitzvot, parashat Re'eh

The following are the meditations my master the Arizal of sainted memory taught to the *shochet* Rabbi Yitzchak Cohen, of blessed memory.

הלא כבר ידעת בענין כוונת האכילה האיך כל הנבראים שבעולם צריכין להתקן ולהזדכך להעלות עד החומר הראשון שהיה להם בעת יצירת העולם

As you know, regarding the mystical intentions one should have while eating, all creatures of this world need to be rectified and refined. This is in order that they reach the spiritual level of the primal matter of which they were made when the world was created.

The primordial sin, that of eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, caused a spiritual fall in the ability of material creation to sustain spiritual consciousness. Our task in life is to refine the physical world so that it can once again be receptive to this level of Divine awareness.

וכמו שהיה לחמורו של רפב"י

This level of refinement is similar to that exemplified by the donkey of Rabbi Pinchas ben Yair.

Rabbi Pinchas ben Yair was a Talmudic sage. His donkey refused to eat untithed barley.²

גם הרבה פעמים יהיו נפשות מגולגלות בבהמות ואם אותה השחיש' תהיה בכוונה מועיל להעלות אותו המגולגל מעונש ההוא שיש לו ויוכל לחזור ולבא נשמתו בגוף האדם כמו שהיה תחלה,

In addition, it happens many times that human souls are reincarnated into animals.

1. Deuteronomy 12:21.

2. Chulin 7a.

If the animal is slaughtered with the proper intentions, its helps extricate the reincarnated soul from the punishment it is undergoing. It can then re-enter a human body the next time it enters this world, as it was meant to originally.

There are thus two basic objectives of ritual slaughter: to elevate the spiritual nature of the material animal flesh, and to help the reincarnated soul finish its process of rectification.

וסוד השחיט' כדי למתק כל הדינים

The mystical purpose of ritual slaughter, then, is to sweeten all the judgements.

Both the descent (i.e., de-spiritualization) of material reality and the rectification process of the reincarnated soul are manifestations of G-d's attribute of judgement (which, of course, was invoked in the first place by the sin or wrongdoing of man). Counteracting this attribute by spiritualizing reality is called "sweetening" the judgement.

The first step of ritual slaughtering is preparing the knife. The knife must be perfectly smooth and free of any nicks. The *shochet* must check the knife by running it gently over his thumbnail before proceeding with the ritual slaughtering.

וכשתבדוק הסכין ותשחיהו במשחזות תכוין להסיר כל פג"ם שהוא גי' ג' שמות שהם פשוט ומילוי ומילוי המילוי דאהי"ה דיודי"ן ויש בהם א"ם אותיות וכן א"ם באהי"ה דאלפי"ן וכן א"ם באהי"ה דההי"ן הרי ג' א"ם כמנין פגם

When you inspect the knife and sharpen it on the stone, your intention should be to remove all its defects, i.e., nicks. The numerical value of the word for "defect" (*pagam*, *pei-gimel-mem*) is 123, equivalent to three times the number of letters in the Divine Name *Ekyeh* when it is spelled in its simple form and two iterations of its spelling-out. When it is spelled out thusly, using the letter *yud*, there are 41 letters. When it is spelled out in the same way using the letter *alef*, there are again 41 letters. When it is spelled out in the same way using the letter *hei*, there are again 41 letters. This gives a total of 123 letters, the numerical value of the word for "defect."

Ekyeh spelled with the letter yud

alef	alef	alef
		lamed
		pei
	lamed	lamed
		mem
		dalet
	pei	pei
		alef
hei	hei	hei
		yud
	yud	yud
		vav
		dalet
yud	yud	yud
		vav
		dalet
	vav	vav
		yud
		vav
	dalet	dalet
		lamed
		tav
hei	hei	hei
		yud
	yud	yud
		vav
		dalet

Ekyeh spelled with the letter alef

alef	alef	alef
		lamed
		pei
	lamed	lamed
		mem
		dalet
	pei	pei
		alef
hei	hei	hei
		alef
	alef	alef
		lamed
		pei
yud	yud	yud
		vav
		dalet
	vav	vav
		alef
		vav
	dalet	dalet
		lamed
		tav
hei	hei	hei
		alef
	alef	alef
		lamed
		pei

Ekyeh spelled with the letter hei

alef	alef	alef
		lamed
		pei
	lamed	lamed
		mem
		dalet
	pei	pei
		alef
hei	hei	hei
		hei
	hei	hei
		hei
yud	yud	yud
		vav
		dalet
	vav	vav
		alef
		vav
	dalet	dalet
		lamed
		tav
hei	hei	hei
		hei
	hei	hei
		hei

The problem here is, as is readily seen, that when the Name *Ekyeh* is spelled out with the letter *hei*, only 39 letters are used. The Arizal himself states this explicitly elsewhere.³

כי אלו הם דינים ותכונין למתקן

These iterations of the Name *Ekyeh* are thus all manifestations of the attribute of judgement; you should intend to sweeten them.

The Divine Name *Ekyeh* is associated with the *sefirah* of *binah*. Whereas *chochmah* is the pristine experience of transcendent insight, *binah* is the analysis of the insight and its integration into the pre-existing mental structures of the mind. The mental process of *chochmah* is an experience of wonder and openness, while that of *binah* is an experience of evaluation and judgement. Thus, the Name *Ekyeh* is associated with judgement.

It is instructive to note that the only time this Name is used in the Bible is in the exchange between G-d and Moses at the burning bush. Moses asks G-d what he should tell the Jewish people G-d's Name is. G-d answers: "I shall be who I shall be." Rashi explains that G-d was telling Moses to reassure the Jewish people that G-d will be with them in future exiles, just as He was with them in the Egyptian exile. Thus, even the basic meaning of the Name *Ekyeh* is associated with exile, a manifestation of the Divine attribute of judgement.

3. Eitz Chaim 14:8.

ולעשותם בסוד מ"ב במקום א"ם והוא מ"ב דפשוט ומילוי ומילוי המילוי

The way this is done is by raising the number 41 to the number 42. Forty-two is the number of letters in the Divine Name *Havayah* when it is spelled in its simple form and two iterations of its spelling-out.

The Divine Name *Havayah* is associated with G-d's attribute of mercy. As we have explained previously, there are four standard ways in which this Name is spelled-out:

***Havayah* spelled with the letter *yud*
numerical value: 72**

<i>yud</i>	<i>yud</i>	<i>yud</i>
		<i>vav</i>
		<i>dalet</i>
	<i>vav</i>	<i>vav</i>
		<i>yud</i>
		<i>vav</i>
		<i>dalet</i>
	<i>dalet</i>	<i>lamed</i>
		<i>tav</i>
<i>hei</i>		
<i>yud</i>		
<i>hei</i>	<i>hei</i>	<i>yud</i>
		<i>vav</i>
	<i>yud</i>	<i>dalet</i>
		<i>vav</i>
		<i>yud</i>
<i>vav</i>	<i>vav</i>	<i>vav</i>
		<i>yud</i>
		<i>vav</i>
	<i>yud</i>	<i>yud</i>
		<i>vav</i>
		<i>dalet</i>
	<i>vav</i>	<i>vav</i>
		<i>yud</i>
<i>hei</i>	<i>hei</i>	<i>hei</i>
		<i>yud</i>
	<i>yud</i>	<i>yud</i>
		<i>vav</i>
		<i>vav</i>
		<i>dalet</i>

**the mixed spelling of
Havayah
numerical value: 63**

<i>yud</i>	<i>yud</i>	<i>yud</i>
		<i>vav</i>
		<i>dalet</i>
	<i>vav</i>	<i>vav</i>
		<i>yud</i>
		<i>vav</i>
		<i>dalet</i>
	<i>dalet</i>	<i>lamed</i>
		<i>tav</i>
<i>hei</i>		
<i>yud</i>		
<i>hei</i>	<i>hei</i>	<i>yud</i>
		<i>vav</i>
	<i>yud</i>	<i>dalet</i>
		<i>vav</i>
		<i>yud</i>
<i>vav</i>	<i>vav</i>	<i>vav</i>
		<i>yud</i>
		<i>vav</i>
	<i>alef</i>	<i>alef</i>
		<i>lamed</i>
		<i>pei</i>
	<i>vav</i>	<i>vav</i>
		<i>yud</i>
<i>hei</i>	<i>hei</i>	<i>hei</i>
		<i>yud</i>
	<i>yud</i>	<i>yud</i>
		<i>vav</i>
		<i>vav</i>
		<i>dalet</i>

**Havayah spelled with the letter alef
numerical value: 45**

yud	yud	yud
		vav
		dalet
	vav	vav
		yud
		vav
	dalet	dalet
		lamed
		tav
hei	hei	hei
		yud
	alef	alef
		lamed
		pei
vav	vav	vav
		yud
		vav
	alef	alef
		lamed
		pei
hei	vav	vav
		yud
		vav
	hei	hei
		yud
		alef
	lamed	
	pei	

**Havayah spelled with the letter hei
numerical value: 52**

yud	yud	yud
		vav
		dalet
	vav	vav
		yud
		vav
	dalet	dalet
		lamed
		tav
hei	hei	hei
		yud
	hei	hei
		hei
vav	vav	vav
		yud
		vav
	vav	vav
		yud
		vav
hei	hei	hei
		yud
		hei
	hei	hei
		hei

If we consider the first three ways of spelling the Name, we note that the number of letters in the simple spelling and two iterations of spelling-out together is 42.

דהיות ע"ב ס"ג מ"ה וג' מ"ב כמנין פגם וג' אותיות פגם

You should count only the number of letters in the spellings-out of the Name *Havayah* whose numerical value are 72, 63, and 45. Three times 42 = 126, which is the numerical value of the word for "defect" (*pagam*, 123) plus one for each of the three letters that compose the word itself (*pei*, *gimel*, and *mem*).

שהם מורים רחמים דהויות חילוף מה שהיו תחלי בסוד דיני בא"ם דאהי"ה כנוכר

These Names *Havayah* indicate Divine mercy, which you have now substituted for the attribute of judgement indicated by the 41 letters of the Name *Ekyeh*, as we said.

ואמנם שם ב"ן דההין אין בו מ"ב אותיות,

The fourth spelling-out of the Name *Havayah*, whose numerical value is 52 and is spelled out using the letter *hei*, does not possess 42 letters in its simple spelling

and two iterations of spelling-out.

Therefore, it cannot “counteract” the 41 letters of the spelling out of the Name *Ekyeh* and does not figure in this meditation.

וכשישחוט תכוין כי השחיטה גי' שלי"ז שהם ג"פ יב"ק

Now, when you slaughter the animal, have in mind that the numerical value of the word for “the slaughtering” (*ha-shechitah, hei-shin-chet-yud-tet-hei*) is 337, which is three times the numerical value of the word “Yabok” (*yud-beit-kuf*, 112).

$3 \times 112 = 336$; adding 1 for the value of the word Yabok as a whole gives 337. Yabok is the name of the river next to which Jacob wrestled with the angel of Esau. Slaughtering is thus a specific case of the cosmic struggle between good and evil, Divine consciousness and gross material consciousness. Will the animal be slaughtered in order for man to satisfy his craving for meat, to aggrandize his animal nature? Or will it be slaughtered in order to heighten the awareness of G-d's magnificence in creating the taste and satiation that accompany eating, and by utilizing the energy gained from eating to augment the world's consciousness of G-d through Torah study and observance of the commandments?

שהם הוי"ה אלהי"ם והם בגרון ששם מקום השחיטה

112 is also the combined numerical value of the Names *Havayah* (26) and *Elokim* (86). These two Names are situated in the throat, which is where the animal is slaughtered.

This will be explained presently. Whereas during the sharpening of the knife, the negativity of the Name *Ekyeh* was sweetened by the Name *Havayah*, during the slaughtering itself, the negativity of the Name *Elokim* will be sweetened by the Name *Havayah*.

ותכוין גרון גי' גי' אלהים

Have in mind that the numerical value of the word for “throat” (*garon, gimel-reish-vav-nun*, 259) is three times that of the Name *Elokim*.

$86 \times 3 = 258$; adding 1 for the value of the Name *Elokim* as a whole gives 259.

שהם גי' מוחין דקטנות היורדין שם כנודע

These three Names *Elokim* are the three immature “brains” which descend there i.e., to the throat, as part of the development process of *Z'eir Anpin*, as is known.

As we have explained previously, *Z'eir Anpin* passes through three stage of consciousness in the course of its development as a *partzuf*. These are fetal consciousness, suckling consciousness, and mature consciousness. Mature consciousness is characterized by the mature influence of the intellect over the emotions. In other words, the consciousness of the intellect must, so to speak, descend into the realm of the emotions.

Now, the conscious powers of the soul are all associated with corresponding locations of the body. Intellect, of course, is “in” the head, while the emotions are “in” the heart or torso. Between the head and the torso is the neck, which is of much smaller diameter than either the head or the torso. Thus, we may envision the ideas and consciousness of the intellect having to contract in order to pass through the neck on the way to the heart, where they can expand again to inform and permeate the emotions. This contraction is of course necessary, since intellect and emotion are two different

worlds, and were the consciousness of the intellect to attempt to influence the emotions without any quantum leap of level (*tzimtzum*), the emotions would not be able to “relate to” or internalize any of the intellect’s level of awareness. This neck-stage is thus crucial for *Z’eir Anpin*’s (and by extension, every human being’s, who is a projection and manifestation of *Z’eir Anpin*) emotional maturation.

So, first, the three brains (*chochmah*, *binah*, and *da’at*) descend into the neck region on their way to the heart. But, as we said, these are mentalities of constricted consciousness, created by the power of contraction of the Name *Elokim*. This Name indicates G-d’s power and strength of restraint. In order for these levels of consciousness to be able to influence the heart properly, they must be influenced here, before descending any further, by the Name *Havayah*, G-d’s mercy.

ואז בהיותם שם הם דינים גמורין לכן תכוין להוריד שם גי הויות דמוחין דגדלות ויעשו ג"פ הוי"ה אלהים כמנין השחיטה

At this point, these Names are manifestations solely of G-d’s judgement. Therefore have in mind to elicit three Names *Havayah*, indicating mature consciousness. Combining the Names *Havayah* and *Elokim* thus will give three times *Havayah-Elokim*, which as we said, is the numerical value of the word for “the slaughtering.”

ע"י הסרת אותה הדם והדין ויאירו גי הויות דמוחין דגדלות באותו המגולגל ובוה יתוקן,

By removing the blood which embodies the attribute of judgement, you allow the three Names *Havayah* that embody mature consciousness to shine into the soul incarnated into the animal. This rectifies him.

Blood is red, the color of severity and judgement (*gevurah*).

ותכוין אח"כ כי בגרון יש ב' סימנים וסימן גי אהי"ה דידויין

After this, meditate on the fact that there are two channels in the throat, i.e., the trachea and the esophagus. The numerical value of the word used here for “channel” (*siman*, *samech-yud-men-nun*, 160) is the same as that of the Name *Ekyeh* when spelled-out with the letter *yud*.

The numerical value of the first iteration of the spelling out of the Name *Ekyeh* using the letter *yud* is 161. So this equivalence requires adding 1 for the value of the word for “channel” as a whole.

וקנה גי אהי"ה דהיי"ן עם ד' אותיות למתקם:

The numerical value of the word for “trachea” (*kaneh*, *kuf-nun-hei*, 155) is the same that of the Name *Ekyeh* when spelled out with the letter *hei*, plus 4 for sweetening each of the four base-letters of this Name.

The numerical value of the first iteration of the spelling out of the Name *Ekyeh* using the letter *hei* is 151.

הושט גי ז"פ אדם שהם בסוד הש"ך דינים שכולם בסוד הדם של הגרון שהוא דינים

The numerical value of the word for “esophagus” (*veshet*, *vav-shin-tet*, 315) is seven times the numerical value of the word for “man” (*adam*, *alef-dalet-mem*, 45). This number (315) is also related to the 320 states of severity associated with the blood

of the throat, which is also a manifestation of severity.

We are to picture the mentality of the brain figuratively descending through the two channels of the throat into the torso. The act of ritual slaughtering, which empties these vessels of their blood, neutralizes the negative forces that threaten to thwart the safe passage of Divine consciousness from head to heart.

Seven is the number of emotions that compose *Z'eir Anpin*, who is the archetypal man-figure, as we have noted. It is these seven emotions whose rectification depends upon the successful transference of mind-consciousness through ritual slaughter. Thus, the seven man-emotions are rectified via the esophagus.

The number 320 is derived from the 288 sparks of Divine light that fell from the world of *Tohu* and became embedded as self-oriented consciousness and egocentricity in the fabric of the lower worlds, including ours. To this number is added the number 32, the number of times the Name *Elokim* – the Name signifying Divine judgement and severity – appears in the story of creation. The “320 states of severity” thus signify the negativity and egocentricity inherent in creation since the fall accompanying the primordial sin, which our task is to counteract by eliciting Divine mercy and love.

The equivalence of 315 and 320 is arrived at presumably by adding the definite article (“the,” indicated by the Hebrew letter *hei*, whose numerical value is 5) to the word for “esophagus” (*ha-veshet*).

ועתה ע"י השחיטה מתמתקים ומתבררים הסיגים שבהם,

Now, through ritual slaughter, the dross in these states of severity is sweetened and refined.

פעם אחת ביום ה' היינו יושבין לפני מורינו זללה"ה ובא עז אחד ושם ב' ידיו על השלחן והיה מורי זללה"ה מדבר עמו בלשונו ואח"כ צוה לי שאלך ואקנהו ונשחוט אותו לשבת וצוה להר"ר משה סופינו שישחוט אותו בכונה זו.... ושאלתי למורי זללה"ה על מה נענשה נפש זה שנתגלגלה בעז וא"ל על עון תשמיש המטה לאור הנר השם יצילנו אמן.

One Thursday, we were sitting before my master, and a goat came up to us and placed its two front paws on the table. My master began to converse with it in its language.⁴ He then told me to go buy this goat, and have it slaughtered for the Sabbath. He then told Rabbi Moshe Sofino to slaughter it according to the above detailed meditations.... When I later asked my teacher what this soul did that it had to be punished by being reincarnated into this goat, he said that this soul was a great scholar from Talmudic times that had engaged in marital relations with his wife by candlelight. May G-d preserve us, Amen.

Marital relations are supposed to be conducted in the dark, for reasons of modesty and intimacy. The Hebrew word for “goat” (*eiz*) also means “brash” (*az*).



כי יהיה בך אביון...לא תאמץ את לבבך ולא תקפץ את ירך מאחיך האביון.
כי פתח תפתח את ירך לו....

4. Certain Talmudic sages are also known to have known various animal languages.

*“When there will be a poor person amongst you... do not tighten your heart and do not close up your hand in front of your poor brother. Rather, open your hand to him...”*⁵

This is the commandment to give charity (*tzedakah*). Rabbi Chaim Vital, who recorded the teachings of the Arizal, tells us:

טעמי המצות, פרשת ראה

בענין הנדיבות והותרנות ראיתי למורי זללה"ה שלא היה מקפיד במלבושיו שיהיו מכובדים ביותר ובאכילה היה אוכל מעט מזער ובענין הוצאה של צרכי אשתו היה מוציא כרצונה וצדקה היה נותן מורי זללה"ה בשמחה גדולה ובטוב לב וידו פשוטה ולפעמים לא היה מסתכל אם הי' נשאר בידו או לאו.

Ta'amei HaMitzvot, parashat Re'eh

As for philanthropy and generosity, I observed that my master was not particular that his own clothes be terribly fancy, that he only ate a very little, and—with regards to his wife's expenses—that he would dispense funds according to her wish. In contrast, my master would give charity with great joy and good-heartedness, open-handedly, and sometimes he would not even look to see if there would be any money left for himself or not.

אמר מורי זללה"ה, כי כל מצוה ומצוה יש לה אות מכ"ב אותיות וכשאדם עושה מצוה מאיר במצחו אותו אות של אותה מצוה והאות של מצוה ראשונה מסתלק וזו בזמן שעושה אותה לבד כי אח"כ נבלעת בפנים אבל אם עושה מצוה של צדקה האות שלה אינו מסתלק מהר כשאר אותיות של שאר מצות אלא מאיר במצחו כל אותו שבוע וזהו וצדקתו עומדת לעד.

My master said that every commandment is associated with one of the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet, and that when someone performs a commandment, the letter associated with that commandment shines on his forehead, replacing the letter shining on his forehead from the previous commandment he performed. The letter remains on his forehead only as long as he is performing the commandment with which it is associated; afterwards it is absorbed within him. But if he performs the commandment of charity, the letter associated with it does not disappear as fast as the letters associated with other commandments, but rather continues to shine on his forehead the whole week. This is the mystical meaning of the verse, “His righteousness (*tzedakah*) endures forever.”⁶

בענין קניית הדברים של מצוה כגון לולב ואתרוג וכדומה להם ראיתי למורי זללה"ה שהיה נותן למוכרים כל מה ששאלו ממנו בפעם הראשונה ולא הי' מסרב עמהם על השאר ולפעמים הי' מניח לפניהם הכיס עם המעות והיה אומר להם שיקחו מה שירצו וא"ל שאין לסרב על שאר שכירות המצות וכן כוונת רשב"י ע"ה בפ' בא,

Regarding buying things that are used for performing the Torah's commandments, such as a *lulav* and *etrog*, I saw that my master would give the merchants all they asked for the first time they named a price, and did not try to bargain with them. Sometimes he placed his wallet before them and told them to take what they want. He told me that one should not bargain over the prices one pays to do

5. Deuteronomy 15:7-8.

6. Psalms 111:3, 112:3, 9.

mitzvot. Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai says the same thing in the *Zohar*.

והנה עתה נבאר סוד הפסוק יש מפזר ונוסף עוד שדרשוהו רז"ל על ענין הצדקה ואמנם ביאורו ג"כ בכאן הוא בענין הזה כי הלא היסוד נקרא צדיק לפי שנותן צדק' אל הנוקבא הנקרא' צדק ועשי' צדקה

We will now explain the mystical meaning of the verse, "There is one who gives generously yet ends with more,"⁷ which our sages applied to the *mitzvah* of charity.⁸ Indeed, we will also relate this verse to the same subject, for *yesod* is called the "righteous one" (*tzadik*), inasmuch as it gives "charity" (*tzedakah*) to *Nukva*, who is *a priori* termed "righteousness" (*tzedek*), but thereby becomes "charity" (*tzedakah*).

The word for "charity," *tzedakah*, is composed of the word for "righteousness" (*tzedek*, *tzadik-dalet-kuf*) plus an additional *hei*. Since the *hei* at the end of a word is a sign of the feminine gender, *tzedakah* may be considered the feminine form of *tzedek*. Thus, *yesod* transforms *Nukva* into a female.

והנה הצדיק הוא מפזר פי' כי הוא מפזר ופורר את החסדים העליונים לפירורים דקים ומתפורים ע"י ההכאה כדי ליתן אל הנוק' ומתפורים בנוקבא כענין הצדקה

Now, the verse speaks of the *tzadik*, i.e., *yesod*, as "giving generously." The literal meaning of this word (*mefazeir*) is "spreading," implying that it crumbles the supernal states of *chesed* into small crumbs, which scatter from the pulverizing blows. This is in order to give these crumbs to *Nukva*, and the crumbs spread throughout *Nukva* similar to how the coins of *tzedakah* a person distributes spread salvation throughout the world.

ולא תחשוב שיתמעטו החסדים בזעיר ויתחסרו ע"י נתינתם לצדק כי אדרבא אין זה חסרון אלא ונוסף עוד כי ע"י ההכאה נגדלים כל החסדים ומתרבה אורם לאין קץ ונגדל הז"א ע"י כמבואר אצלינו וזהו אומרו ונוסף עוד,

You should not think that these states of *chesed* are diminished by passing through *Z'eir Anpin* nor that they lack anything by being given to *tzedek*, i.e., *Nukva*. On the contrary, the result of this process is not a lack but "ends with more." For these pulverizing blows magnify all the states of *chesed*, and their light increases infinitely. *Z'eir Anpin* grows through this process, as we have explained elsewhere. This is the meaning of the phrase, "yet ends with more."

Z'eir Anpin must process its abstract experience of *chesed*, "breaking it down" or concretizing it into terms and contexts that are meaningful to the objective-oriented *partzuf* of *Nukva* in order for the latter to assimilate it. Lest one think that *Z'eir Anpin* suffers from its "marriage" to *Nukva* (for which it must "trouble itself" to contextualize its inherent abstractness, which would seem to be a regrettable descent), we are told here that it in fact matures and develops from the process. The descent into reality rebounds as a greater ability to achieve abstraction.

ואפשר לכן נקרא היסוד יוסף,

It could be that this is why *yesod* is called "Joseph."

Joseph is associated with *yesod* by virtue of his sexual purity. Here, we note that the word "Joseph"

7. Proverbs 11:24.

8. *Yalkut Shimoni ad loc.*

(yoseif) means “he will add,” alluding to the increase Joseph – i.e., holy coupling with *Nukva* – causes in *Z'eir Anpin*.

וכן יהי מי שנותן צדקה כי אדרבה יתעשרו ויתוספו נכסיו ממה שהיו,

So will it be with someone who gives charity. He will not suffer financially from this, but on the contrary, he will become wealthier, and possess more than he did beforehand.



ספר הליקוטים, פרשת ראה
עוד סוד הצדקה.

טעמי המצות, פרשת ראה
סוד הצדקה.

Ta'amei HaMitzvot and Sefer HaLikutim, parashat Re'eh

The mystical meaning of charity is as follows:

תתן הפרוטה ותכוין כי פרוטה סוד פרט ו"ה כי שרש | תתן הפרוטה, ותכוין, כי סודה פרי"ט ו"ה. כי שורש
הדינים הם רפ"ח נצוצים והכולל פרי"ט | הדינים הם רפ"ח ניצוצין, עם הכולל פרי"ט,

When you give a coin, consider the word for “coin” (*perutah*) to be made up of two letter-groups: *pei-reish-tet* and *vav-hei*. The origin of strict judgment is from the 288 sparks of *Tohu* that fell into the lower worlds when the vessels of *Tohu* shattered. When to this number the *kolel* is added, we have the numerical value of *pei-reish-tet*.

The word we are translating here as “coin” is *perutah*, which is actually a coin of a specific value, i.e., the minimal value that is considered money in Jewish law. If one gives less than this amount, it is not considered as if he gave anything, he has not fulfilled the commandment to give charity, and he has not accomplished any of the mystical unions described here. The value of the *perutah* is that of 25 mg of pure silver; the value of this in present-day money fluctuates according to the value of the currency.

The word *perutah* is spelled *pei-reish-vav-tet-hei*. This may be split into *pei-reish-tet* and *vav-hei*; the numerical value of *pei-reish-tet* is $80 + 200 + 9 = 289$.

Evil, suffering, and all varieties of occultation of the Divine presence result cosmologically from the collapse of the world of *Tohu*, in which the sparks of holiness of this world became embedded in the gross materiality (relative or actual) of the subsequently created worlds. The general number of these sparks is 288, as we have explained previously.

והדינים במלכות תתאה שהיא ה',

במ"ל ה' תתאה

These sparks are existentially ensconced within the final *hei* of the Name *Havayah*.

The final *hei*, *malchut*, is the *sefirah* of any world that descends into the next lower world in order to bring it into being and sustain it. It thus embodies the principle of descent.

וכשתחברו הוי עם הוי נמתקים הפרט של הדיני | וכשתחבר וי עם הוי, נמתקין פרי"ט של הדינים, וזה
וזה על ידי הצדקה. | ע"י הצדקה:

When we join the final *hei* with the *vav*, the individual aspects of the judgments are sweetened; this occurs through giving charity.

Joining the *vav* and the *hei* ensures that the *hei*, the means of G-d's (and our) expression, is driven by the *vav*, the rectified emotions, rather than being a vehicle for the forces of evil.

The letter-group *pei-reish-tet* spells the word for "individual aspect" (*perat*).

צדקה גי' אלהיים ואדניי ומייה ודי אותיות השם |

The numerical value of the word *tzedakah* plus the *kolel* is the same as the combined numerical values of the Names *Elokim*, *Adni*, the number 45, and 4 for the four letters of the Name *Havayah*.

Tzedakah: *tzadik-dalet-kuf-hei* = 90 + 4 + 100 + 5 = 199.

Elokim: *alef-lamed-hei-yud-mem* = 1 + 30 + 5 + 10 + 40 = 86.

Adni: *alef-dalet-nun-yud* = 1 + 4 + 50 + 10 = 65.

86 + 65 + 45 + 4 = 200.

והכוונה כי שם אלהים ואדני נמתקים ע"י הצדקה
בשם מייה. |

The meaning of this is that the Names *Elokim* and *Adni* which both signify strict judgment are sweetened by *tzedakah* performed with the 45-Name.

Generally, the 45-Name (i.e., the Name *Havayah* spelled out such that its numerical value is 45) signifies selflessness (*bitul*). Thus, we see here the importance of giving *tzedakah* selflessly.

We will now explain the mystical meaning of the phrase: "You shall surely open your hand to your brother, your poor, and your destitute of your land."⁹

פתוח תפתה את ירך לעניך יסוד, |

You shall surely open your hand to your brother... this refers to *yesod*;

בארצך נוקי תרוייהו כחדא כי ע"י הצדקה מתחבר צדק
בצדקה כנודע. |

...in your land: this refers to *Nukva*, i.e., the union of both *Z'eir Anpin* and *Nukva* together, for through *tzedakah*, *tzedek* (*yesod*), and *tzedakah* (*malchut*) unite, as is known.

As we know, "the land" is an appellation for *malchut*, the lowest *sefirah*.

3

כי יהיה בך אביון מאחד אחיך באחד שערך בארצך אשר ה' אלהיך נתן
לך לא תאמץ את לבבך ולא תקפץ את ירך מאחיך האביון. כי פתח תפתח

9. Deuteronomy 15:11.

אֶת יָדְךָ לֹא תִקְרַב וְהֵעֵבַט תִּעֲבִיטְנֵנּוּ דֵי מַחְסְרוֹ אֲשֶׁר יִחְסֵר לוֹ.

“When there will be a poor man from among your brothers in one of the gates of your land, which G-d, your G-d, is giving you, do not constrict your heart or close your hand before your poor brother. Rather, open, open your hand to him or loan him as much as he needs of what he is lacking.”¹⁰

טעמי המצות, פרשת ראה
סוד הצדקה

שער המצות, פרשת ראה
עוד כונה אחרת,

ספר הליקוטים, פרשת ראה
סוד הצדקה.

Sefer HaLikutim, Sha'ar HaMitzvot, and Ta'amei HaMitzvot, parashat Re'eh

The mystical significance of charity *tzedakah* is as follows:

The word for “charity” (*tzedakah*) is spelled *tzadik-dalet-kuf-hei*.

<p>הנה אות צ, י שלה פניה הפוכה מנון כפופה ומורה אב"א</p>	<p>דע כי אות צדי שבתבת צדקה, מורה על היות זי"ן אהור באהור, וזהו ציור אות צ: יוד ונון כפופה, הפוכות פניהם זו מזו, ועומדים אהור באהור.</p>	<p>הנה אות צ, היו"ד שלה פניה הפוכות מהנו"ן כפופה, ומראה אב"א, כזה,</p>
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The *yud* in the letter *tzadik* is faced in the opposite direction that the *yud* of the *nun* of the *tzadik*, and this indicates that *Z'eir Anpin* and *Nukva* are back-to-back.

In the scribal script used for writing Torah scrolls, *tefilin*, and *mezuzot*, the letters of the alphabet have precise forms as dictated by Jewish law. The Arizal's system is basically the same as that of Rabbi Yosef Karo,¹¹ with seven exceptions. One of these is the form of the letter *tzadik*, which is formed by writing a slightly bent-over *nun* and then attaching a *yud* on the right. According to Rabbi Karo, this *yud* is to be written “facing” the *nun*, that is, in its normal orientation. (Most letters in the Hebrew alphabet appear to be “facing” left.) According to the Arizal, however, the *yud* is to be written “facing” right. This is also the way the Sefardim write the *tzadik*.

As we know, the *partzufim* being “back to back” is the least favorable position, in which the flow of Divine beneficence is severely limited. One of the ramifications of this situation is material poverty in the physical world.

גם הדי מורה עניות, מלשון דל. | ואות ד, מורה על היות אז | גם הדי מורי עניות
הנקבה דלה וענייה.

The *dalet* the second letter of the word *tzedakah* indicates that *Nukva* is impoverished, inasmuch as the word *dalet* means “poor.”

The adjective *dal* means “poor,” so *dalet* can be seen as a feminine form of this word.

Since *Z'eir Anpin* and *Nukva* are back-to-back, *Nukva* does not receive the full flow of Divine beneficence it needs.

10. Deuteronomy 15:7-8.

11. *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 36.

<p>גם הקי אע"פ שיש לו איזה זיוג מכ"מ רגלה הארוך נוגע עד החיצונים</p>	<p>ואות קוף, מורה על היות רגלה הארוך מתפשט ויורד בקליפות, ואף כי באות קי יש בחי' זיוג גרוע, עכ"ז מורה על הנזכר,</p>	<p>גם הקי, אעפ"י שיש איזה זיוג, אמנם רגלה ארוך, נוגע עד החיצונים.</p>
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Even though the third letter, *kuf*, does indicate a certain low-grade coupling, its "leg" is long, indicating that the Divine beneficence it channels unfortunately extends to the realm of evil.

The *kuf* is formed of a slightly truncated *kaf* and a lowered *zayin*. These two letters are facing the normal way, indicating that altogether the *kuf* does indicate a measure of "coupling," but the lowered *zayin*, the "leg" of the *kuf*, extends below the line, indicating a flow into the lower realms of reality, i.e., evil.

<p>ולבסמם צריך ליתן צדקה ותמלא אות הי כי הוא זיוג אמיתי בסוד ההי.</p>	<p>ולכן צריך לתקנה בזווג העיקרי, ותחזור להיות הי של צדקה, כי אז הוראת זיוג אמיתי, ומה שהיתה די וקי וצי, נעשית הי, כנזכר בסבא דמשפטים בענין יהודה.</p>	<p>ולבסם כל זה, צריך לתת צדקה, ותמלא באות הי, כי הוא הזווג האמיתי בסוד ההי.</p>
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In order to freshen (lit., "perfume"), i.e., rectify, this situation, we must give charity, which fills in the missing elements of the first three letters as the letter *hei*, which depicts the true coupling, this being the mystical significance of the letter *hei*, as explained in the *Zohar*.¹²

The *hei* is seen as a perfectly balanced letter, in which the leg does not extend below the line as it does in the *kuf*, and there is a coupling between its two parts, unlike the *dalet*, which lacks a second "half" to couple with. As we will see, the *hei* is the rectified form of the *kuf* and the *dalet*.

<p>והנה הסוד הקי בקין התפשטות הזוהמא והי הוא סוד הי דהבל.</p>	<p>ודע כי קי של צדקה, היא בבחי קי"ן, כי שם נתפשטה זוהמת הנחש. והי של צדקה, היא בהבי"ל, וע"י נתינת הצדקה, יכוין כי התפשטות רג"ל הקוף היוצא אל הקליפות, מתעלה ועולה למעלה ונשה הי, ועי"כ אין הקליפות נאחזים בה.</p>	<p>והנה סוד הקי, הוא בקין, בהתפשטות הזוהמא, וההי, היא סוד הי של הבל.</p>
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Now, the *kuf* signifies Cain, i.e., the spreading of the impurity of evil, while the *hei* signifies Abel.

The name Cain (*Kayin*) begins with a *kuf*, while the name Abel (*Hevel*) begins with a *hei*.



Another version of this teaching:

ספר הליקוטים, פרשת ראה
עוד ענין הצדקה. כי אות קי, רומזת בקין, קינא דמסבותא, התפשטות הנחש,

12. 2:104a.

Sefer HaLikutim, parashat Re'eh

Another aspect of *tzedakah*: The letter *kuf* alludes to Cain as above, “the nest of impurity,” the spreading of the venom of the primordial snake.

והוא רגל הקי.

Specifically, this refers to the “leg” of the *kuf* as above.

ובנתנית הצדקה, יכוין שהקי תעשה ה, ושיחזור התפשטות רגל הקי לעלות למעלה, ונעשית ה, ואז אין שם אחיות קליפה.

When you give charity, intend that thereby the *kuf* will become a *hei*, as the extension of the leg of the *kuf* is withdrawn upward, producing the form of the *hei*. When this occurs, it prevents the forces of evil from latching on and deriving sustenance this way.

זה משם הרי"א פאלקון. ממורי זלה"ה.

I heard this latter idea from Rabbi Eliyahu Falcon, in my teacher's (the Arizal's) name.



ספר הליקוטים, פרשת ראה
עוד צריך לכוין מי שנותן הצדקה, כדי ליחד שם ההוי"ה, בזה האופן,

Sefer HaLikutim, parashat Re'eh

The one giving the charity should also intend to unite the letters of the Name *Havayah* in the following way:

By giving charity, we facilitate the union of the *partzufim*; this then allows the Divine beneficence to flow unrestrictedly.

כי הפרוטה שנותן לעני, היא בסוד יי של הוי"ה,

The coin he gives to the poor person manifests the *yud* of the Name *Havayah*.

The coin is the concentrated point of Divine beneficence, similar to the *yud*, the smallest of the letters, which signifies the seminal drop of insight (*chochmah*).

וחמש אצבעות הנותן, הרי ה' של הוי"ה,

The five fingers of the hand of the giver manifest the first *hei* of the Name *Havayah*.

The numerical value of the *hei* is 5.

וקנה ידו, סוד הוא"ו של הוי"ה,

His extended arm manifests the *vav* of the Name *Havayah*.

Since is straight line of the arm is visually similar to the form of the *vav*, essentially a straight line.

וחמש אצבעות העני של מקבל, הרי ה' אחרונה של הוי"ה:

The five fingers of the hand of the recipient manifest the final *hei* of the Name *Havayah*.



טעמי המצות, פרשת ראה		ספר הליקוטים, פרשת ראה
ענין צדקה ותפלה לפי שהופרד י"ה מו"ה		ענין הצדקה והתפילה, היא ליחדא את שם י"ה, הנפרד מן ו"ה.

Sefer HaLikutim and Ta'amei HaMitzvot, parashat Re'eh

The purpose of giving charity before prayer is to unify the first two letters of the Name *Havayah*, *yud-hei*, that are separated from the final two letters, *vav-hei*.

The first two letters of the Name *Havayah* indicate *chochmah* and *binah*, i.e., the intellect. The second two letters indicate the emotions and their expression. Before prayer, the intellect is divorced from emotion and expression, and through prayer, we join our Divine consciousness with our emotions and means of expression, so that they, too, should be G-d-oriented.

The surest way to ensure that this is successful is by performing an act of charity or other good deed before prayer. This indicates that our intentions are good, and that we are giving concrete expression to our desire that *all* our emotions and deeds follow these good intentions.

וצריך קודם שיעשה המצוה או הצדקה, צריך שיאמר		וצריך שיעשה הצדקה או תפלה ליחדא שמא דקב"ה
ליחדא קוב"ה ושכינתיה, בדחילו ורחימו בשם כל		ושכינתיה בדחילו ורחימו בשם כל ישראל לחבר י"ה
ישראל, ויחבר שם י"ה עם ו"ה:		עם ו"ה.

Before performing the good deed or giving the charity, however, it is necessary to say, "I am doing this in order to unify the Holy One, blessed be He, and His *Shechinah*, in love and fear of G-d, in the name of all Israel." In this way, he will connect the *yud-hei* with the *vav-hei*.

"The Holy One, blessed be He," is usually an appellation for *Z'eir Anpin*, indicated by the *vav* of the Name *Havayah*, while the *Shechinah* ("Divine Presence" or "Indwelling") is an appellation for *Nukva*, indicated by the final *hei* of the Name *Havayah*.

In this context, however, it appears that "The Holy One, blessed be He" denotes the *yud-hei* and the *Shechinah* denotes the *vav-hei*. Or, perhaps, the union of the *vav* and final *hei* leads to the larger, more general union of the *yud-hei* and the *vav-hei*.



וְעִשִּׂיתָ פֶּסַח לַה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ... לְמַעַן תִּזְכֹּר אֶת יוֹם יְצִאתְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם כָּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ.

"Offer the Passover sacrifice to G-d, your G-d... in order that you remember the day you went out of the Land of Egypt all the days of your life."¹³

13. Deuteronomy 16:1-3.

שער המצות, פרשת ראה

טעם זכירת יצי"מ מכל שאר הגליות: בבל, ומדי, ויון.

Sha'ar HaMitzvot, parashat Re'eh

The reason we are enjoined to remember the Exodus from Egypt, as opposed to all the other exiles—Babylonia, Media, and Greece—is as follows.

There is a fourth exile, Rome, but we are still considered to be in its exile, so there is no supposition that we should remember our redemption from it yet.

נודע, כי ארץ מצרים טמאה מכל ארצות ח"ל, ונקראת ערות הארץ.

It is known that Egypt is more defiled than any of the other countries outside the Land of Israel, and is therefore known as “the nakedness of the world.”

The term “nakedness” (*ervah*) in the Torah is used to refer to the sexual organs, and “uncovering the nakedness” of someone is a euphemism for engaging in sexual relations with that person.

The idiom “nakedness of the land” as used in the Torah¹⁴ means “the exposed, vulnerable part of a land” through which it can be conquered, i.e., entered and “defiled” by an invading army. Despite its general sense, the term is tellingly used only with reference to Egypt.

In Rabbinic literature, this idiom is associated specifically with Egypt, which is seen as the most degenerate and debased civilization in the world with regard to sexual licentiousness and lechery.¹⁵

ושכינה גלתה עמהם במצרים, כמ"ש אנוכי ארד עמך מצרימה. ונודע מ"ש בזהר פרשת בא, כמה מיני קטרי"ן וכשפים עשו המצריים, ע"י כוחות הטומאה, לשעבדם שלא יוכל אפילו עבד אי לצאת משם.

The Divine presence went into exile with the Jews when they went to Egypt, as it written, “I will descend with you into Egypt.”¹⁶ It is known what is written in the *Zohar*,¹⁷ namely, that the Egyptians made use of various types of spells and magic, which they accessed by manipulating the powers of impurity, in order to enslave the Jews so severely that even a single slave could not escape from there.

גם נודע מה שנתבאר אצלינו, בטעם שכינה בגלות מה עניינו, כי הנה הסיבה היא שע"י חטא אדה"ר, עירב טוב ברע, וכל הנשמות של קדושה נפלו לתוך הקליפות, ואין בהם כח לצאת משם, לולא רחמיו יתברך, שבכל צרתם לו צר, ושכינת עוזו הולכת עם ישראל בגלות תוך הקליפות, וכיון שנכנסת במקומם, ומלקטת אותם הנשמות משם, והנה הקליפות הם שבעים, כנגד ע' אומות, וצריכין ישראל לגלות בין כלם,

It is also known what we have explained concerning the meaning of the exile of the Divine presence, namely, that the ultimate reason for this Divine exile is because Adam's primordial sin mixed good and evil together and caused all the souls from the realm of holiness to fall into the realm of evil. They remain powerless to extricate themselves from it, except with the help of G-d's mercy. He feels their pain, inasmuch as His presence goes with the Jewish people into its exile in the realm of evil. When it enters with them into their place, it gathers

14. Genesis 42:9, 12.

15. See Isaiah 20:4; *Kohelet Rabbah* 1:4 (end); Leviticus 18:3; *Sifra, Acharei* 18; *Vayikra Rabbah* 23:7; *Tana d'vei Eliahu Rabbah* 7; *Sha'ar HaYichud VehaEmunah*, introduction.

16. Genesis 46:4.

17. 2:37b.

these souls from there.

The Divine presence (the *Shechinah*) follows the Jewish people into exile in order to extricate it from there.

כדי ללקט הנשמות שנפלו בתוך כל קת בין כלם, כדי ללקט הנשמות שנפלו בתוך כל קליפה שבהם, וכאשר יגמר לקיטת כל הנשמות, מן ע' אומות, אז הוא זמן דמטו רגלין ברגלין, הנזכר בפרשת פקודי, ואז יתקיים מקרא דכתיב בלע המות לנצח כו'.

There are seventy aspects of evil, corresponding to the seventy gentile nations, and the Jews must be exiled through all of them in order gather all the souls from their number that fell into each particular form of evil. When they will finish gathering all the souls from amongst the seventy nations, it will be the time when “feet touch feet,” mentioned in the *Zohar*,¹⁸ and then the verse, “Death will be swallowed up forever”¹⁹ will be fulfilled.

Each nation, or civilization/culture, represents a different perversion of the truth of the Torah, either partial or complete. The Jews, the bearers of the Divine message, must traverse all these perversions in order to rectify them in the light of the truth they possess (in the form of the Torah). This rectification process may occur directly, as the Jews are honored as the bearers of Divine light to a culture that willingly looks to them for guidance, or, as has usually been the case, indirectly, as ideas and concepts from the Torah “leak” into the host culture via its contact with the Jews.

As will be explained further on, the “feet” are the lowest part of the “body” of the “man of evil” and the “man of holiness.” That is, the lowest, most depraved (and therefore most powerful) forms of evil, and the lowest and weakest manifestations of holiness. The exile of the Jewish people will continue until the lowest meets the lowest, that is, until the weakest elements of holiness overcome the strongest elements of evil.

וז"ס כי בדי רוחות השמים כו', כי הוצרכו ישראל לילך בגלות. בכל ד' רוחות השמים, בכל ע' אומות, ואין צורך שכולם יחד יגלו בין כל אומה ואומה, אמנם כיון שאיש אי' מישראל לבדו, גלה באיזה אומה, נחשב כאילו כל ישראל גלו,

This is the mystical meaning of the verse, “For as the four directions of heaven I have spread you out, says G-d.”²⁰ The Jewish people had to go into exile, in all four directions and through all seventy nations. But it is not necessary for all of them to be exiled together to each and every nation. Rather, as long as one single Jew is exiled to a specific nation, it is considered as if all Jews participated in that exile.

וכמו שאדה"ר פגם בכל העולמות, לכן כשנפלו ממנו הנשמות הכלולות בו אל הקליפות, נתערבו בדי רוחות העולם, אשר מכולם נטל עפרו כנוודע.

Adam caused a blemish in all the worlds through his sin, and therefore, when the souls he comprised fell into the realm of evil, they were spread through the world in all four directions—since the dirt from which he was made was gathered from all four directions, as is known.

18. 2:258a.

19. Isaiah 25:8.

20. Zechariah 2:10.

When G-d created Adam, He gathered the earth He used to form him from all parts of the earth, so that wherever one of his descendants would die, the earth would accept the corpse and decompose it.²¹ Since Adam was formed out of dirt from all over the world, when he fell, all aspects of him fell, and his soul fragmented into “pieces” (sub-souls) that scattered into all aspects of reality. All Jewish souls are derived from Adam’s soul.

וכל אי מעי שרים של אומות העולם, שהם כללות הקליפות כולם, כל אי לקח חלקו,

Each of the seventy angelic Princes of the seventy nations of the world—who collectively constitute the realm of evil in its entirety—absorbed its respective aspect of Adam’s fragmented soul.

Each of the seventy archetypal nations (listed in Genesis 10), from which all the other nations of the world derive, is “presided over” in heaven by its “Prince,” which is the spiritual essence of that nation/culture/civilization.

ואותם הנשמות אין כח בהם לצאת משם, אךה בכח מצות ותפילות ישראל, והם מבררין אותם מתוך הקליפה, ומוצאים אותם משם, ומעלים אותם למעלה בבחי' מ"ן כנודע. וכל זה ע"י תפלתם של ישראל.

The souls present in each aspect of exile are not capable of extricating themselves. Only commandments performed by the Jewish people and the prayers they recite possess the power to separate them from the realm of evil and remove them from there, elevating them in the form of “feminine waters,” as is known. All this occurs through the Jewish people’s prayers.

וכיוצא בזה ג"כ עושים הצדיקים בעת פטירתם, כי אין לך כל צדיק וצדיק שאינו מוכרח ליכנס לגיהנם, שהוא מדור הקליפה כנודע, ואינו נכנס ליענש שם חייו, כי אדרבה בהכנסו שם מצננין לו גיהנם, ואינו יכול לשלוט בו. אבל סיבת כניסתם לשם הוא, ללקט משם נשמות הנתונות בין קליפה אשר בגיהנם, ומעלין אותם משם למעלה עמהם, ונכנסין בסוד מ"ן, ונתקנין שם ע"י המיד, ואז באות לעוה"ז בגופות התחתונים, כשאר נשמות ישראל.

A similar thing is accomplished when righteous people die. For every single righteous person must enter Purgatory (*gehinom*), which is the abode of evil, as is known. He does not enter it in order to be punished, G-d forbid, for on the contrary, when he enters Purgatory it is cooled off for his sake, so that it doesn’t affect him. Rather, the reason he must enter Purgatory is in order to gather souls held captive by the forces of evil present there and elevate them together with him. They enter the higher realms as “feminine waters” and are rectified by the “masculine waters,” and then they can enter this world in corporeal bodies, like the rest of the Jewish souls.

“Feminine” and “masculine waters” are the Kabbalistic terms for initiative taken by created beings and the Divine response to it, respectively.

ונמצא שהצדיקים בחייהם ובמיתתם, הם עושים פעולה זו לברר את הנשמות מבין הקליפות בהיותם גולים בין האומות.

Thus, the righteous, both in life and in death, extricate souls that have gone into exile amongst the nations.

21. *Midrash Tanchuma, Pekudei 3*; Rashi on Genesis 2:7.

וזהו סוד, עת אשר שלט האדם באדם לרע לו, ר"ל: אשר שלט האדם דקליפה באדם דקדושה, שהם הנשמות

This is the mystical meaning of the verse, "There is a time in which man rules man to his detriment,"²² i.e., that the "man of evil" rules the "man of holiness," that is, the souls.

All the souls of holiness constitute a complete "body" of holiness, termed "the man of holiness." The same applies to the forces of evil.

כי הם לרע לו, לאדם דקליפה, כי שליטת הקליפות על ישראל בעת הגלות, הוא לרע להם, כי עיי"כ מוציאם מתוכם נשמות הטהורות, ולרע להם היתה שליטתם.

This is to the detriment of the "man of evil" for the rule of evil over the Jewish people during their exile is to evil's detriment, inasmuch as through this the holy souls are redeemed from within it. Thus, their rule over them eventually harms them.

וא"ת ומה אכפת להם בכך, דע כי הקליפות הם מתים, ואין להם חיות מצד עצמן כלל, ולכן הנקבה נקרא מו"ת, והדכורא צלמות, הנזכר בפרשת פקודי. ולא עוד, אלה שהרשעים בחייהם נקראים מתים, לפי שנשמתם הקדושה מצד אלהים חיים, נסתלקה מהם ע"י חטאם.

If you ask, "what do they care," know that evil is a dead thing, and possesses no life force of its own whatsoever. This is why the feminine aspect of evil is called "death" and the male aspect "the shadow of death," as taught in the Zohar.²³ Moreover, "the wicked are considered dead even while alive,"²⁴ for their holy soul derived from the living G-d had departed from them due to their sins.

ונודע כי נשמתם נמשכה דרך היסוד, הנקרא א"ל ח"י, ואז נכנסה בהם נפש של הקליפה הנקראת מות או צלמות, ולכן נקראים בחייהם מתים,

It is known that the soul descends into the body via the *sefirah* of *yesod*, which is called "the living G-d" (*Kel chai*), but when they sin a soul of evil—called "death" or "the shadow of death"—enters them, and that is why they are called "dead" even while alive.

ולכן כל תאוות הקליפות והיצה"ר הוא לרדוף אחר האדם ולהחטירו לתועלתם, כי אוחזין בנשמות הקדושה הנקראת חיים, וניזונין מהם, ועל ידיהם הם חיים, והנשמות בתוך הקליפות, עומדות כנשמה בגוף המחיה אותו ממש, ולכן רודפים כל החיצונים ונדבקים בכל מקום שיש קדושה, כנודע כי הדבק בהם נדבק בחיים, והפורש מהם כפורש מחיים.

Therefore, the only desire of evil and the evil inclination is to pursue man and entice him to sin, for their benefit, for they grab hold of the holy soul, called "life," and derive sustenance from it, and through it they live. The souls held captive by evil function exactly like a soul inside a body, enlivening it. Therefore all the forces of evil pursue holiness and cling to anything that possesses any holiness. For it is known that whatever clings to holiness clings to life, and

22. Ecclesiastes 8:9.

23. 1:160b.

24. *Berachot* 18b.

whatever separates itself from holiness separates itself from life.

ובזה אל תתמה, איך הקליפות רודפים כיכ להחטיא את בני האדם, ולהכעיס לבוראם, אבל הם מוכרחים לתועלת עצמם, להתקיים ולחיות.

It is now not surprising to you that the forces of evil pursue people so much in order to entice them to sin and anger their Creator. They must do so for their own benefit, in order to survive and live.

ובזה תבין סיבת עונש הרשע בעת שחוטא, כמה וכמה ראוי ליענש, כיון שחילל והכניס הקדש בחול, ומחיה הקליפה, וממית את הקדושה, בהכנסה תוך המות.

With this you can understand why a wicked person is punished when he sins, and how much he deserves to be punished, in that he defiles holiness and profanes it, enlivens evil and “kills” the forces of holiness by causing it to enter “death.”

גם בזה תבין, איך עיי חטא אדה"ר, גרם כל הגליות עד ימות המשיח.

With this you can also understand how Adam, through his sin, caused all the exiles the Jewish people will have suffered until the Messiah comes.

ועתה צריכין אנו לבאר, למה לא נזכרו רק די גליות: בבל, ומדן, ויון, ואדום, כיון שגלו ישראל בכל עי אומות כנודע.

Now we must address the question: why do we speak of only four major exiles—Babylonia, Media, Greece, and Rome—while in fact the Jewish people were exiled amongst all seventy nations, as is known?

גם נבאר, למה, באלו הדי גליות גלו כל ישראל, אך בשאר האומות לא גלו כולם, אלה כיון שגלה שם אחד מישראל, נחשב כאלו כולם גלו כני"ל.

We must also explain why the entire Jewish people were subjected only to these four exiles, while not all of them were exiled to the other countries, but rather, as long as even one of them was exiled there, it was considered as if they had all been exiled there, as we said.

והענין הוא, דע, כי כמו שבקדושה, יש די אותיות ההוי"ה, שהם השרשים, אשר מהם מתפשטים עייב הוי"ת, ועייב שמהן שהם ענפי השרשים הנזכר. והם הם די נהרות הגן, כנודע.

The explanation is that in the realm of holiness, there are four letters in the Name *Havayah*, which are the source from which the 72 Names *Havayah* are manifest, as well as the 72 other Divine Names, which are branches from these roots. These four letters are the four rivers of the Garden of Eden, as is known.

כן בקליפות, יש די נהרות, פישון וגיחון כוי, שהם השרשים, ומתחלקים לעי אומות. וכמייש רז"ל שם האחד פישון, זו מלכות בבל. ושם הב' גיחון, זו מלכות מדי כוי.

Similarly, in the realm of evil, there are four rivers—known by the same names:

the Pishon, the Gichon, the Tigris, and the Euphrates²⁵—which are the roots, which divide into seventy nations. As our sages say: “The name of the first was Pishon’—this refers to the Babylonian empire; ‘The name of the second was Gichon’—this refers to the Medean empire,” etc.²⁶

ולהיות כי כל הע' כלולים בדי' נהרות האלו, ולכן כל ישראל גלו בכל אומה מאלו הד', שהם בבל ומדי כו'. אבל שאר ע' אומות, הם פרטיים וענפים, וכל אומה מהם לקחה חלק פרטי מן הנשמות, ולכן אין כל ישראל צריכין לילך בגלות שם, זולתי אותם בני אדם אשר נפלו ניצוצות נשמותיהם באומה ההיא, הם הצריכין לגלות שם, כדי לברר ולהוציא משם ניצוצותיהם שנפלו שם.

Since all seventy nations are included within these four “rivers,” therefore the entire Jewish people were exiled to each of these four archetypal nations—Babylonia, Medea, Greece, and Rome. But the other seventy nations are just particulars and branches of these, and each of these lesser nations took only one type of soul, and therefore the entire Jewish people does not need to be exiled to these nations. Only those individuals the sparks of whose souls fell into that nation need to be exiled there, in order to extricate their sparks that fell there.

ובזה תבין ענין גלות מצרים, שקדם לכולם, לפי שהוא רמוז בנהר הראשון העליון שבהם.

With all this, you can understand the significance of the Egyptian exile, which preceded all others inasmuch as it is alluded to by the first river, the highest of them.

We are told that “a river issued from Eden to water the garden; from there it split and became four head[-river]s. The name of the first was Pishon...”²⁷ Thus, there was a general river of which the four primordial rivers were branches. The four rivers signify the four archetypal exiles, and the preceding general river signifies the super-archetypal exile of Egypt.

ובתחלה יורדת השכינה, ומתלבשת תוך הקליפה הנקראת ראש, והולכת ונכנסה מדרגה אחר מדרגה, עד סיום הרגלים. וכד מטי ברגלים, כדין כתיב, ועמדו רגליו ביום ההוא גוי, כנזכר פרשת פקודי דף רנ"ח.

The Divine presence first descends and is clothed inside the form of evil known as the “head,” and then descends and enters level after level, until the lowest level, the “feet.” When it reaches the “feet,” the verse “And His feet will stand on that day on the Mount of Olives...”²⁸ will be fulfilled, as is explained in the *Zohar*.²⁹

This verse describes the future, messianic redemption.

ולכן בגלות מצרים ובגלות בבל, גלו כל ישראל כולם, להיות כי מצרים היא הראש, גם בבל כתיב בה, אנת הוא רישא די דהבא.

Therefore the entire Jewish people were exiled into Egypt and Babylonia, for

25. Genesis 2:10-14.

26. *Bereishit Rabbah* 16:4.

27. Genesis 2:10.

28. Zechariah 14:4.

29. 2:258.

Egypt was the “head” relative to the other exiles, and Babylonia is also called a “head,” as it is written, “You are the head of gold.”³⁰

The Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar had a dream vision of a strange statue. Daniel interpreted the various parts of the statue as referring to the various empires that would rule the world.

אבל בגלות יון ואדום, לא גלו עשרת השבטים. כי כבר הגלם סנחריב כנודע, ואינם מכלל הראש הכולל כל ישראל. אמנם שם נתפזרו ונתערבו ניצוצות אותם ב' שבטים וחצי, שגלו ביניהם, ומכ"ש שאר האומות שאינם רק ענפים ובחי' פרטיים, ומי שצריך גולה שם הוא לבדו, והדברים מבוארים.

But the ten northern tribes did not go into the exiles of Greece and Rome, for Sennacherib, the king of Assyria had already exiled them, as is known, and Greece and Rome are not included in the head, which includes all Jewish souls. Rather, the sparks from the remaining two-and-a-half tribes were scattered and mingled into these nations when they were exiled to them. All the more does this apply to the other nations that are only branches and derivatives of the main four. Whoever needs to be exiled there by himself. This explains everything.

In fact, the Assyrians deported the ten tribes of the northern kingdom, Israel, *before* the Babylonians ascended to power and conquered (and exiled) the southern kingdom, Judah. So it would appear that the entire Jewish people participated only in the Egyptian exile, while only the Judean remnant were subject to the subsequent exiles – including the Babylonian exile.

True, as Rabbi Chaim Yosef David Azulai points out,³¹ the prophet Jeremiah brought some members of the ten exiled tribes back to Judah. These refugees intermingled with the southern tribes, and therefore there are members of all the tribes among us to this day. It may therefore be said that at least representatives of the whole Jewish nation did undergo all the exiles. But then, this applies to all four exiles, not just the Babylonian. He therefore proposes that the Arizal only stated that the entire Jewish people underwent the Egyptian exile, and that the four subsequent, archetypal exiles were experienced by only the southern tribes (with representatives from the other ten). Relative to each other, the Babylonian exile was the “head” of these four, but it was not a “head” in the same overarching sense that the Egyptian exile was a “head.”

ועתה נבאר ענין גלות מצרים, למה נזכר יותר משאר הגליות, והטעם הוא, כי במצרים היו ניצוצות הראש של כל ישראל מעורבין בהם, ולא נגאלו משמעד שיצאו ונתבררו מתוכם כל הנשמות, וז"ס וינצלו את מצרים, שעשאוה כמצולה שאין בה דגים, שהם ישראל הנרמזים בדגים, וידגו לרוב, או כמצודה שאין בה דגן, הם ישראל הנרמזים כדגן, כמשי"ה קודש ישראל לה' ראשית תבואתו, וכת"ב אוכלי עמי אכלו לחם וכו'.

We can now explain the Egyptian exile, and why it is mentioned more than the others. This is because all the sparks of the collective “head” of the Jewish people were present in Egypt, and the people were not redeemed from Egypt until they had extricated all these sparks from within it. This is the meaning of the verse, “and they emptied out Egypt.”³² As the sages put it, “they left it like a net with no fish”³³—meaning Jews, who are likened to fish, as in the verse, “and they will multiply like fish.”³⁴ Or, as the sages said, they left it “like a silo with no

30. Daniel 2:38.

31. *Midbar Kedemot* 7.

32. Exodus 12:36.

33. *Berachot* 9b.

34. Genesis 48:16.

grain”—also meaning Jews, who are likened to grain, as it is written, “Israel is holy to G-d, the first of His produce,”³⁵ and “Those who devour My people like those who eat bread.”³⁶

משאי"כ בכל השלושה גאולות, של בבל ומדי ויון, שלא נגאלו לגמרי מתוכם, ונשארו בחי' קצת נשמות שלא נתבררו לגמרי. וכדוגמתה נשארו ישראל למטה תחת יד בבל ומדי, ולא עלו בבנין בית שני כנודע, כדי לברר הנשאר שם.

In contrast, in the subsequent three redemptions—from the Babylonian, Medean, and Greek exiles—they were not entirely redeemed from them, and some aspects of the Jews' souls remained in them, not having been extricated entirely. Accordingly, some of the Jews remained under the rule of Babylonia and Medea and did not return to the Land of Israel to build the second Temple, as is known, in order to redeem the sparks that remained there.

האמנם כללות ישראל יצאו מן גלותם, ולכן נקרא גאולות, אבל אינם שלימות כגאולת מצרים.

Nonetheless, the Jewish people as a whole did return from these exiles, and therefore these returns are termed “redemptions.” But they were not as complete as was the redemption from Egypt.

וזהו טעם איסור לא תוסיפו לראותם כו',

This is also the reason why the prohibition of “you shall not see them again”³⁷ is so strong.

It is forbidden for Jews to live in Egypt, based on this verse (and others).³⁸

כי כיון שכבר נתברר כל הנשמות מתוך קליפה ההיא, מחלל הקדושה והשכינה ללא צורך, ומכניעה תחת יד קליפה.

For since all the souls have already been extricated from this evil i.e., Egypt, whoever returns there and thereby submits himself to that evil profanes holiness and the Divine presence for no reason, and subjugates it to the power of evil.

ובזה יתבאר טעם חומר הזכרת זכירת מצרים, מכל שאר הגליות, כי היא לבדה גאולה שלימה אמיתית.

And now we can understand the importance of mentioning the Exodus from Egypt, as opposed to all other exiles, for it was the only true and complete exile.

ואמנם הגאולה העתידה גדולה אף מגאולת מצרים. והטעם הוא, כי הנה בגאולת מצרים, אעפ"י שלא נשאר בה בעצמה שום ניצוץ של קדושה, כי הכל נתברר כנזכר, עכ"ז עדיין בכל הארצות כולם זולת מצרים, לא נתבררו חלקם, אשר נתערבו בתוכם מזמן חטא אדה"ר.

But the future redemption will be even greater than the redemption from Egypt. The reason is that in the case of the redemption from Egypt, even though no spark

35. Jeremiah 2:3.

36. Psalms 14:4, 53:5.

37. Exodus 14:13.

38. *Mishneh Torah, Melachim 5:7.*

of holiness remained in it, for everything was extricated, as we said, nonetheless, in all countries other than Egypt, the portion of holiness that was embedded in them from the time of Adam's sin was not redeemed.

ובזה יתבאר טעם, למה גאולת מצרים היה אחריה הפסק, וחזרו ישראל לגלות בין העמים, כדי לברר שאר הנשמות בשאר האומות.

This also explains why after the redemption from Egypt there was a disruption in the redeemed state and the Jewish people could be exiled again amongst the nations. This was in order to extricate the other souls in these other lands.

אבל הגאולה העתידה, ואין אחריה הפסק עוד גלות אחר, לפי שאין בן דוד בא, עד שיכלו כל הנשמות להתברר מכל האומות כולם, בסוד ושב וקבצך מכל העמים אשר הפיצך גוי. ולכן לא יאמר עוד חי ה' אשר העלה את ישראל ממצרים, כי אם חי ה' אשר העלה גוי מארץ צפונה ומכל הארצות אשר הדחתים שם גוי, והיא גאולה כוללת בכל העי שרים שבקליפות.

But in the case of the future redemption, there will not be after it any disruption in the form of another exile, for the Messiah will not come until all the souls will be redeemed from all the other nations. This is the meaning of the verse, "And He will return and gather you from all the nations to which He scattered you."³⁹ And therefore, "a time is coming, declares G-d, when it shall no more be said, 'As G-d lives who brought the Israelites out of the land of Egypt,' but rather, 'As G-d lives who brought the Israelites out of the northland, and out of all the lands to which He had banished them.'"⁴⁰ This redemption will include redemption from all the seventy Princes of evil.

גם בזה יתבאר טעם, משי"ה ועת צרה היא ליעקב גוי, וכתוב כי יבא כנהר צר גוי, ובא לציון גואל גוי, ונודע ומפורסם בדברי רז"ל, תוקף הצרות העצומות שיהיו לישראל בחבלי המשיח, והטעם הוא, כי אז סיום ברירת הקדושה אשר ברגלין דאדם דקליפה, ושם תגבורת החיצונים, וחלישות הקדושה המועטת אשר שם, וכאשר יושלמו רגלין להתברר, כדין כתיב בלע המות לנצח, כמבואר במקומו.

This also explains why it is said, "And the future will be a time of trouble for Jacob..."⁴¹ and "From the west, they shall fear the Name of G-d, and from the east, His presence. For He shall come like a narrow stream that the wind of G-d drives on. A redeemer shall come to Zion, to those in Jacob who turn back from sin."⁴² It is known through the words of our sages how intense will be the great suffering the Jewish people will endure as the "birth pangs" of the Messiah's coming. The reason for this suffering is that it will accompany the end of the process of extricating holiness from the "feet" of the "man of evil," and it is there in evil's "feet" that evil is most powerful and holiness weakest. When the "feet" will be completely purged of holiness, it is written, "death will be swallowed up forever,"⁴³ as is explained elsewhere.

39. Deuteronomy 30:3.

40. Jeremiah 16:14-15.

41. Jeremiah 30:7.

42. Isaiah 59:19-20.

43. Isaiah 25:8.

וגם בזה יתבאר, ענין כל הגאולות שעברו, שבכלם לא נתבטלה האומה ההיא ששיעבדה בישראל, כי בהיותם משועבדים להם, כדין זנבא שליט, שהם הקליפה ההיא השולטת על הקדושה, וכל השפע כולו נמשך אליה, וממנה נמשך לשאר האומות חלקם.

This also explains why, in all the other redemptions that have occurred, the oppressing nation was not annihilated by having the holiness removed from it, as will occur in the future redemption. For while they were subject to it, "like a tail ruling,"⁴⁴ they embodied the evil that was then ruling over holiness, and all the Divine beneficence that was extended to the world flowed through it, and from it was extended to the other nations, each taking its appropriate portion.

The *Zohar's* image of the "tail ruling" is that if the nations of the world are likened to a snake, then the Jewish people are the head of the snake, and the other nations its tail. When the head is on the ground, the tail rises up and swats everyone in its way. The tail can rise only because the head is down, but even so, the head leads the tail and watches over it. Similarly, when the Jews are in exile, the gentile nations are in ascendancy, but even so, the world is nourished in the merit of the Jews and the Jews still function as the ones who are to lead the other nations in the proper direction.

וזה סוד אומרם ז"ל, כל המיצר לישראל נעשה ראש, כי מצרים נקרא בית עבדים, ובגלות ישראל במצרים, מלכו בכיפה. ואחר שיצאו ישראל מתוכם, וניטלה חיותם מתוכם, נשפלו, כמ"ש מן הממלכות תהיה שפלה וגוי. אבל לא נתבטלה האומה ההיא לגמרי, כי עדיין שורש הקליפה שבע' אומות קיימת, ונשמות הקדושה בתוכם, והם נותנין למצרים חלק שפע, ומצרים טפלים אליהם.

This is the meaning of our sages' statement that "whoever distresses Israel becomes a head."⁴⁵ See, Egypt was "a house of slaves," yet when the Jews were in exile in Egypt, Egypt ruled the world. But after the Jews left Egypt, the Egyptians' life force was taken from them, and they fell from greatness. As it is written, "Egypt shall be the lowliest of all the kingdoms, and shall not rule over the nations again. I will reduce the Egyptians, so that they shall have no dominion over the nations."⁴⁶ Still, that nation did not cease to be entirely, for the root of the evil expressed in the seventy nations existed, together with the souls held captive with them, and they give Egypt its portion of the Divine beneficence, Egypt remaining subject to them.

ועדיין בבל ומדי ויון, כתיב הן הארץ כשדים זה העם לא הי',

The same is true of Babylonia, Medea, and Greece. It is written, "Behold the land of Chaldea: This is the people that has ceased to be."⁴⁷

Chaldea is a synonym for Babylonia.

ובגלות ישראל בתוכם מלכו בכיפה, ובצאת ישראל מתוכם, חזרו לשפלותם, ולא נתבטלו.

When the Jewish people were captive amongst them, they ruled the world, but when the Jews left them, they returned to their former low state, although they

44. *Zohar* 3:119b.

45. *Sanhedrin* 104b.

46. *Ezekiel* 29:15.

47. *Isaiah* 23:13.

did not cease to be altogether, for the reasons we have given.

ועד"ז בכל אומה, בזמן שליטתה על ישראל. ואח"כ נשפלת.

The same applies to all nations: when they rule over the Jews they rule the world, but after this they fall from power.

אבל לעתיד לבא, שכל הקדושה תתברר מתוך כל העי שרים, יסתלק כל חיותם, ואין להם שום יניקה ושום חיות כלל, ואז יתבטלו הקליפות הנקראים מות לגמרי, כמ"ש בלע המות לנצה וגו', לא יהיה גלות אחריה לעולם.

But in the future, when all holiness will be fully extricated from all the seventy Princes, all their life force will depart from them, and they will have no sustenance whatsoever, and the forces of evil, termed "death," will cease to be, as it is written, "death will be swallowed up forever." And there will be no other exile after this redemption, ever.