

Discourse 11

*“VaYihyu Chayei Sarah... -
Sarah’s lifetime was...”*

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Chayei Sarah,
Shabbat Mevarchim Kislev, 5725⁶¹⁵
By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states,⁶¹⁶ “Sarah’s lifetime was one hundred years, twenty years, and seven years; the years of Sarah’s life.” Now, it states in Zohar,⁶¹⁷ “The lifetime referred to is all Above. The one-hundred years are Above, the twenty years are Above, and the seven years are Above.”

Now, we must understand the meaning of this teaching in Zohar, that “Sarah’s lifetime is Above.” We also must understand the statement at the end of the verse, “the years of Sarah’s life.” at first glance, what is added by this to what was said before, “Sarah’s lifetime was etc.,” especially considering the Zohar’s words, that even [the words] “Sarah’s lifetime” is “Above.” This being so, what is added by stating, “the years of Sarah’s life”?

⁶¹⁵ Based on Likkutei Sichot Vol. 5, p. 348 and on.

⁶¹⁶ Genesis 23:1

⁶¹⁷ Zohar I 122b

2.

Now, this is explained in two discourses of his honorable holiness, the Rebbe Rashab, whose soul is in Eden, in the discourses entitled “*Vayihyu Chayei Sarah*” of the year 5675 and of the year 5679, which at first glance, seem to contradict each other.

In the discourse of the year 5675 it is explained⁶¹⁸ that “Sarah’s lifetime” refers to the vitality of the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut* of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), and that her vitality is from the aspect of the “one hundred years,” this being the aspect of the Crown-*Keter*, “twenty years,” this being the aspects of Wisdom-*Chochmah* and Understanding-*Binah*, “and seven years,” this being the aspect of *Zeir Anpin*.

She receives from the aspect of “one hundred years **Above**,” which is the essential light (*Ohr HaAtzmi*), and the same with the “twenty years Above” etc. That is, [she receives] from the drawing down of the Essential Self of *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, that is drawn down in them. (As a general rule, this is what the Zohar means when it says the word “Above-*LeEila*-לעילא.”) However, all this refers to the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut* as she is in the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*). The verse then states, “the years of Sarah’s life,” referring to the drawing of the light down into the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Asiyah*).

Now, the discourse of the year 5679 explains⁶¹⁹ the matter of “the years of Sarah’s life” and discusses the matter of

⁶¹⁸ *Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 2, p. 739.

⁶¹⁹ *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5679 p. 96 and om.

a sensed “somethingness” (*Yesh*) and the exaltedness and elevation of Kingship-*Malchut*, which is not in a way of a sense of self and ego (*Yeshut*) (but on the contrary, it is the aspect of essential nullification (*Bittul b’Etzem*)). Nonetheless, Kingship-*Malchut* is the matter of elevation and exaltedness, but is not sensed.

This is like a king of flesh and blood, that because of the nature of kingship (rather than the elevation of his intellect etc.) he is exalted and elevated. Now, even though the exaltedness and elevation comes in a sensed way, this is not a sense of ego (*Yeshut*).

By way of example from greatly righteous Tzaddikim, such as our teacher Moshe (when he was on the mountain), he was sustained by the ray of the *Shechinah*. (In other words, he needed to be sustained, but the sustainment was from the ray of the *Shechinah*.)⁶²⁰ That is, the ray of the *Shechinah* came into his body in a tangible way (to the point that his body was sustained by it), but this was not sensed etc. This is similar to how bodies will be in the coming future. They will be physical bodies, but will be in the ultimate state of refinement and will be sustained by the ray of the *Shechinah*.⁶²¹

Now, at first glance, the two explanations seem to be at odds with each other. That is, according to the first explanation,

⁶²⁰ Midrash Shemot Rabba 47:5, 47:7; Likkutei Torah, Drushei Shabbat Shuvah 66a (see the opinions regarding this in Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 4, p. 1,037).

⁶²¹ As per the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory (Talmud Bavli, Brachot 17a), “In the coming world there is no eating and no drinking etc., and they are sustained by the ray of the *Shechinah*,” which “refers to the time of the resurrection of the dead, at which time, man will be in a body, but even so, there will be no eating” (Likkutei Torah, Tzav 15c; Drushei Shabbat Shuva there). The matter of the refinement of the bodies in the coming future is explained at length in the discourse entitled “*v’Kachah*” 5637, Ch. 91, and “*Lechol Tichleh*” 5659, and elsewhere.

“the years of Sarah’s life” refer to the descent to the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*). However, according to the second explanation, “the years of Sarah’s life” refer to that which transcends even the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*).

This is because from the perspective of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) two opposites cannot bond, (that there can simultaneously be a sense of tangible pleasure in *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Godliness and an ultimate state of nullification (*Bittul*)). In other words, from the perspective of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) it can [only] be in one of two ways, (either this way or that way), whereas the bonding [of the two] stems from the limitless light of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, who transcends the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*).

3.

Now, we can align the two above explanations by prefacing with the explanation of the Tzemach Tzeddek in his notes on Tehillim, to Psalm 105,⁶²² (the Psalm connected to the Rebbe Rashab, whose soul is in Eden, which begins being recited on his birthday of this year),⁶²³ on the verse,⁶²⁴ “He remembered His covenant forever, the word He commanded for a thousand generations.”

⁶²² Ohr HaTorah, Yahal Ohr, p. 409.

⁶²³ See the introduction to the discourse entitled “*Smuchim La’ad*” 5680 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5680 p. 356 and on).

⁶²⁴ Psalms 105:8

He brings the words of the Midrash,⁶²⁵ “It arose in the [Supernal] thought to create one-thousand generations. How many of them were wiped out? Nine-hundred and seventy-four generations. What is the reasoning? ‘The word He commanded for a thousand generations’ – this is the Torah (as the verse states [about the Torah],⁶²⁶ “If not for My covenant day and night”).” In other words, the Torah was given to our teacher Moshe who was twenty-six generations from Adam, the first man, and together with the 974 generations that were wiped out, this is a **thousand** generations. Another opinion [there] states “nine-hundred and eighty generations. What is the reasoning? ‘The word that He commanded for a thousand generations’ – This is the circumcision,” which was given to Avraham who was twenty generations from Adam, the first man.

Both opinions, (as to whether the thousand generations refer to Moshe or to Avraham) align with the two views regarding the verse,⁶²⁷ “One man in a thousand I have found.” The first view is that this refers to Avraham, and the second view is that this refers to Moshe.⁶²⁸

Now, the Tzemach Tzedek explains that the word “thousand” (*Eleph*-אלף) refers to the aspect of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*). (This is also understood from the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory,⁶²⁹ “One thousand people enter the study Scripture, but of them only one emerges to issue instructional rulings,” and as known, “Scripture-*Mikra*-מקרא” is

⁶²⁵ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 28:4

⁶²⁶ Jeremiah 33:25

⁶²⁷ Ecclesiastes 7:28

⁶²⁸ Midrash Kohelet Rabba to Ecclesiastes 7:28 *ibid*.

⁶²⁹ Midrash Kohelet Rabba *ibid*.

in the world of Action (*Asiyah*) etc., whereas instructional rulings (*Hora'ah*) are in the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*). This aligns with both explanations, being that both Avraham and Moshe were souls of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*).⁶³⁰

With the above in mind, we can understand the conclusion of the verse, “but a woman amongst them I have not found, ““but a woman-*Ishah*-אשה’ – this refers to Sarah,”⁶³¹ and “I have not found” – [refers to] higher than the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) (“one thousand-*Eleph*-אלף”).⁶³²

For, although Sarah is the matter of drawing down the matters of Avraham into the world, meaning, into the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*), [and as known,⁶³³ Avraham is the aspect of the Concealed World (*Alma d'Itkasiya*) (not only as he is called Avram-אברם (without the letter *Hey*-ה), referring to the Concealed Intellect that is Hidden from all conceptualization (*Sechel HaNe'elam MiKol Ra'ayon*),⁶³⁴ but even as he is called Avraham-אברהם (with the letter *Hey*-ה), “the father (*Av*-אב) of a many nations,”⁶³⁵ in which he still is in a state of transcendent removal from the world), whereas Sarah is the aspect of the Revealed

⁶³⁰ Based on this we may understand the bond between all of the explanations in *Kohelet Rabba* there (see *Likkutei Sichot* Vol. 3, p. 782), that according to all the explanations “one thousand-*Eleph*-אלף” refers to the aspect of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*).

⁶³¹ *Midrash Kohelet Rabba* *ibid*.

⁶³² This is as also understood from what the *Tzemach Tzedek* writes there in accordance with the explanation that the man refers to Moshe and the woman refers to Torah.

⁶³³ See the *Sichah* talk, Ch. 5-6 (*Torat Menachem*, Vol. 41, p. 268).

⁶³⁴ *Torah Ohr*, *Lech Lecha* 11a and on; *Torat Chayim*, *Lech Lecha* 80a and on; *Ohr HaTorah*, *Lech Lecha* 1,072a and on; [Also see the prior discourse of this year entitled “*Vayomer HaShem el Avram Lech Lecha*,” Discourse 9, Ch. 4.]

⁶³⁵ *Genesis* 17:5

World (*Alma d'Itgaliya*)]. Nevertheless, Sarah transcended the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) (which was the level of Avraham), in that this itself is the reason [for her capability], since the ability to draw down the aspect of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) into the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*) all the way to this world, specifically comes from an aspect that transcends the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*).⁶³⁶

With the above in mind, we can align the two above explanations about “the years of Sarah’s life.” That is, the very fact that the descent to the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*) is possible (the first explanation) comes from an aspect that transcends the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) (the second explanation).

4.

Now, the above explanation is founded on a discourse of the Mittler Rebbe in *Torat Chayim*,⁶³⁷ in which he gives two explanations of, “the years of Sarah’s life,” that seem to be at odds with each other, which he himself aligns in a way similar to the above.

⁶³⁶ An example of this is [seen] with Avraham [himself], that in order for there to be his descent to be “the father of many nations,” it was necessary for there to be the addition of the letter *Hey-ה* [to his name]. (See *Torah Ohr* 11a *ibid.*, 13b; *Torat Chayim* *ibid.* 80d and on, and beginning of *Chayei Sarah*. [Also see the previous discourse of this year entitled “*Vayomer HaShem el Avram Lech Lecha*,” Discourse 9, Ch. 4.]

⁶³⁷ See the discourse entitled “*Vayihyu Chayei Sarah*” Ch. 24 and on; Also thoroughly study *Biurei HaZohar* at the beginning of *Chayei Sarah* (13a), section beginning “*Ba Lekasher* etc.”

That is, it is explained there that “the years of Sarah’s life” is a much higher level than the “one hundred years, twenty years, and seven years.” This is because the “one hundred years etc.,” correspond to the ten hidden *Sefirot* (*Eser Sefirot HaGenuzot*) which are much more concealed than the ten revealed *Sefirot*, as in the words of the Zohar, “they are all Above.” However, the matter of “the years of Sarah’s life” is even higher than the ten hidden *Sefirot* (*Eser Sefirot HaGenuzot*). This is why it simply states “the years of Sarah’s life,” without mentioning a number. This is because this aspect transcends enumeration, [as it states],⁶³⁸ “Before One what do you count?”

Now, these two matters (“one hundred years, twenty years etc.,” and, “the years of Sarah’s life”) are at different times. The quality of “one hundred years etc.,” that Sarah has, is that which is currently [revealed]. In other words, through the refinements (*Birurim*) affected by Kingship-*Malchut* (the aspect of Sarah), there is caused to be the arousal and drawing down from the aspect of the ten hidden *Sefirot* (*Eser Sefirot HaGenuzot*), whereas the quality of “the years of Sarah’s life,” stated simply, will take place **after** the refinements are completed in the coming future.

The above explains why we find that Sarah was higher than Avraham, as the verse states,⁶³⁹ “Whatever Sarah tells you, heed her voice,” and as our sages, of blessed memory, stated,⁶⁴⁰

⁶³⁸ Sefer Yetzirah 1:7

⁶³⁹ Genesis 21:12

⁶⁴⁰ Talmud Bavli, Bava Batra 58a

“Avraham lays in Sarah’s arms and she examines his head.” This stems from the aspect of Sarah as it is after the refinement.

He then explains the above-mentioned teaching of our sages, of blessed memory, that it refers to the matter of refinements (*Birurim*) during the time of exile. He adds parenthetically that this does not contradict what was explained before, that Sarah’s superiority over Avraham will be in the coming world. For, on an inner level, even during exile, the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut* has the superior quality that will be revealed in her in the coming future.

To explain this, he brings the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory, on the verse,⁶⁴¹ “and be like a gazelle,” that, “Just as this gazelle, when it sleeps, one eye is open and one eye is closed etc.,” meaning that even during exile (called sleep, “[Avraham] lays”) on an inner level all the superior qualities that will be [revealed] in the coming future are there. (This concludes the explanation cited from Torat Chayim, as it relates to our subject here.)

Based on the above, we can better understand the alignment of the two explanations in the discourses of the Rebbe Rashab, whose soul is in Eden. That is, not only is it that the descent of Kingship-*Malchut* to the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*) - (for the sake of refining the sparks, in that as known, the matter of refinements (*Birurim*) specifically is in the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*) since about

⁶⁴¹ Song of Songs 8:12 [8:14] and Midrash Shir HaShirim Rabba [8:13] there, cited in Tosefot entitled “v’*Harei Tzvi*” in Talmud Bavli, Chullin 59b.

the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) [the verse states],⁶⁴² “Evil shall not dwell with You”) - stems from the granting of empowerment from an aspect that transcends the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) (as explained in chapter two), but more so, through the refinements (*Birurim*) we come to the level that transcends the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), and beyond this, the elevation brought about through the refinements (*Birurim*) is even present now in an inner way (*b’Pnimiyut*), though it will only be revealed in the coming future.

5.

With the above in mind, we can explain the words, “the years of Sarah’s life,” which includes all her years as one, without dividing them into different categories, (as it does at the beginning of the verse, “one hundred,” “twenty,” and “seven”). This is because in this matter there is no division.

The explanation is that since this refers to that which transcends the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), to the point that it even transcends the ten hidden *Sefirot* (*Eser Sefirot HaGenuzot*), therefore the lack of division here is because this matter transcends form.

According to the explanation that this refers to the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*), the lack of division stems from the fact that there is no revelation of light (*Ohr*) in any of these worlds. That is, it is specifically in the matter of revelations (*Gilyim*) that there is

⁶⁴² Psalms 5:5; Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar 3c and on; [Also see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 54]

the matter of the division of a higher light or a lower light. In contrast, when we are in a motion of descent and all that remains is actual deed, then (both from the perspective of the descent, as well as from the fact that it specifically is this aspect that is bound to the essence that transcends division) there is no matter of division.

The same applies to our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. That is, in regard to service of Him stemming from the inner manifest powers, such as the intellect (*Sechel*) and emotions (*Midot*), there is division. In contrast, in regard to accepting the yoke of His Kingship, (whether because in accepting His yoke there are no revelations, or whether because acceptance of His yoke is bound to the essential self of the soul), there are no divisions.

More specifically, in regard to the matter of the “one hundred years, twenty years etc.,” there are divisions. This is why they are divided into three different categories, except that due to the matter of the inter-inclusions of the *Sefirot*, they are inter-included one with the other. However, this is not a matter of oneness, but is rather the matter of three things that are inter-included one with the other. In contrast, “the years of Sarah’s life” is a matter in which there is no division in the first place.

With the above in mind, we can understand why about the words, “one hundred years etc.,” Rashi explains, “At the age of one hundred, she was like twenty, and at the age of twenty [she was] like seven,” whereas about the words “the years of Sarah’s life” he explains “they all were equally good.”

The explanation is that they are three different matters, only that due to their inter-inclusions, they are compared to one

another. This is the meaning of “At the age of one hundred, she was like the age twenty, and at the age of twenty like seven,” in which it specifies, “she was **like** the age-*K’Bat*-כַּבֶּת” with the prefix *Khaf*-כַּ, indicating similarity (*Khaf HaDimyon*). In contrast, in regard to “the years of Sarah’s life,” “they all are equal,” in that there is no division in them.⁶⁴³

⁶⁴³ For the conclusion of the matter see the Sichah talk that followed the discourse, Ch. 20 and on (Torat Menachem ibid. p. 277 and on).