

THE BOOK OF
VOWELS

A Translation into English of

Sefer HaNikkud

By

Our Master and Teacher
The Holy and Godly Tzaddik

Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla

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Warning

The Holy Torah, the living words of the Living God, commands us,¹ “You shall not desecrate My Holy Name.” In explaining the true unity and service of *HaShem*, blessed is He, this book necessarily and unavoidably makes use of His Holy Name. It therefore is holy and sacred and great care should be taken not to desecrate it in any way, shape or form.²

Now that we have entered the era of the true and complete redemption, it is our mitzvah and obligation to learn and disseminate the teachings of the knowledge of *HaShem*,³ “So that all the peoples of the earth may know that *HaShem*, He is God, there is none else.” Nevertheless, it behooves us to do so with the utmost reverence and care to sanctify His Great and Awesome Name. Therefore, wherever His Divine names are found in this book we have placed quotation marks between the letters, thus assuring that they are not the actual Divine names themselves.

In addition, it should be noted that the ineffable name of *HaShem* is **not to be pronounced** whatsoever. This is as stated in the prophecy of Amos,⁴ “He shall say: ‘Silence-שָׁמָה, for we must not (orally) make mention with the Name *HaShem*!’”⁵ Rather, one must toil only to **know** *HaShem* and thereby know His Name, as stated,⁶

¹ Leviticus 22:32

² Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 115a

³ Kings I 8:60

⁴ Amos 6:10

⁵ That is, it is forbidden to orally mention His Name *HaShem*-ה'יהוה. Therefore, when we pray or read the Torah, we must be silent-שָׁמָה-65, by saying His title Lord-*Adonay*-אדוני-65 instead. However, since His title Lord-*Adonay* is also holy, therefore, in regular conversation, we say *HaShem*, which means “The Name.” See *Ginat Egoz* by Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated under the title *HaShem is One*, Vol. 1.

⁶ Psalms 91:14

“For he has loved Me, therefore I shall deliver him; I will set him on high, because he knows My Name.” The verse specifies, “because he *knows* My Name,” and not because, “he says My Name,” or because, “he uses My Name.” As known, the Ten Commandments warn us, that the only sin *HaShem* does not forgive, is the sin of bearing His Holy Name in vain.⁷ It is thus of critical importance that we alert you to this.

Therefore, because the focus of this book is solely on the unity and service of *HaShem*, blessed is He, great care must be taken to treat it with the utmost respect. Be aware that it should not be defaced, destroyed or taken into any impure place, such as the toilet or bathroom.

If, for whatever reason, you need to dispose of this book, do not discard it in the trash. Instead, drop it off at your local Orthodox Jewish Synagogue, where it can be enjoyed by someone who will appreciate its value (or, if it is tattered beyond repair from much use, will be respectfully disposed of, according to the manner prescribed by Torah law.)

On the other hand, whosoever studies this work and contemplates its great depth, is assured abundant blessings from *HaShem*, blessed is He and blessed is His Name. This is as stated,⁸ “Whosoever lengthens their contemplation of His Oneness shall be rewarded with length of days and years.”

It is our sincere hope and prayer that our humble offering will find favor before *HaShem*, blessed is He, and that the dissemination of these teachings will be the final act that ushers in the true and complete redemption. May we fully realize the time,⁹ “When there will be neither famine nor war, envy nor competition, for goodness will flow in abundance and all delights will be as freely available as dust. The occupation of the **entire** world will be

⁷ Exodus 20:6

⁸ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 13b

⁹ Mishneh Torah, Melachim u’Milchamot 12:5

solely to know *HaShem*. Therefore, the Jews will be great sages¹⁰ and know the hidden matters, grasping the knowledge of their Creator according to the full extent of human potential, as Isaiah (11:9) states, ‘The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of *HaShem* as the waters cover the ocean floor.’”

5th of Menachem-Av, 5784

ה' מנחם-אב שנת תשפ"ד, שנת בח"ר יהו"ה בציון או"ה למוש"ב

The Translators

¹⁰ Who will teach the entire world about *HaShem*, for all the nations will be thirsty for this knowledge and will greatly desire it.

Authors introduction

Friend of my soul, I have seen fit to open the gates of understanding for you, so that you may enter and behold the inner chambers of Torah, hidden with many locks, chamber within chamber, this being the matter of the vowels (*Nikkud*).

Friend of my soul, know that though we already have informed you of many great levels in the matter of the *Sefirot* and the Supernal Chariots (*Merkavot*), we now must inform you that just as a body, whether dead or alive, is moved by a power that moves it, the dead being like a quill which moves by the hand of the living person, and the living, being like the human body which is moved by the power of the living soul within him, so likewise in regard to the letters of the Torah, there are those of the twenty-two letters that are called *Chashmal*-לחשמל, through which the other letters are moved, just as the soul moves the body.

Amongst them are letters called Living-*Chayot*-חיות, and they too move the other letters, but unlike the motion of the *Chashmal*-לחשמל letters, when they move the other letters they too are moved with them. We thus find two different motions which come together as one. Amongst them are [also] letters called Cycles-*Ophanim*-אופנים, which do not move in and of themselves, except if they are moved by the letters called *Chashmal*-לחשמל or the letters called *Chayot*-חיות, by one of the kinds of motion unique to each of them.

Accordingly, we must expand the explanation of this for you and say that just as the intellectual soul moves the body, but itself does not move at all, so likewise, in the

mystery of His Great Name, blessed is He, there is an order of motion that comes to all the worlds. That is, the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, moves everything, but is separately transcendent from what He moves.

Just as He, blessed is He, moves everything, but remains transcendentally removed from that which He moves, so likewise, His Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, moves all the letters (*Otiyot*), but remains separately transcendent and hidden from them when He moves them. This is to indicate the greatness of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and that He is unified with this name.

Now that we have awakened you to this, we shall begin informing you of the great elevation of the vowels (*Nekudot*) and their orders and arrangements, these above these, for they all are, “a higher one protected by a higher one.”¹¹

¹¹ Ecclesiastes 5:7

The *Cholem* vowel

The first of all vowels and all rungs of all ladders, is the vowel called ***Cholem-חלם***. This is a simple foundational vowel and is the Holy of Holies, positioned at the head of the mystery of all levels.

I will now explain. Know that the [letter] *Yod-י* is the most refined and inner of all the letters, as you already know. This is the first letter of the Name *HaShem-יהו"ה*, may He be blessed and elevated. It hints at the mystery of the *Sefirah* of Wisdom-*Chochmah* as it is in its truest essence, and its [upper] thorn hints at the Crown-*Keter*.

Now, the *Cholem-חלם* moves the letter *Yod-יוד* and is above it. It thus is totally the mystery of the [upper] thorn [of the *Yod-יוד*]. This being so, if the *Yod-יוד-10* is called holy (*Kodesh-קדש*), as the verse states,¹² “The tenth shall be holy (*Kodesh-קדש*) to *HaShem-יהו"ה*,” we therefore find that the *Cholem-חלם*, which is above it, is the Holy of Holies (*Kodesh HaKodashim-קדש הקדשים*).

Now, the *Cholem-חלם* above the *Yod-יוד* is like the soul relative to the heart. Additionally, you will not find any of the twenty-two letters being moved by the motion of the *Cholem-חלם* except for two letters, which are the secret of the tens, these being the letter *Yod-יוד-10* and the letter *Kof-קוף-100*, (these being the mystery of the thorn (*Kotz-קוצ* which has the appearance of a *Cholem-חלם*).

The mystery of the *Cholem-חלם* is the mystery of [He who is] “exalted and elevated.”¹³ This is as our sages, of

¹² Leviticus 27:32

¹³ Isaiah 57:15

blessed memory, stated,¹⁴ “Come and see that the attribute [of the Holy One, blessed is He] is not like the attribute of flesh and blood. For [a person of] flesh and blood, stands below and that which he bears is upon him. In contrast, this is not so of the Holy One, blessed is He, in that He is above and that which He bears is below him, as the verse states,¹⁵ ‘Thus said the exalted and elevated one.’”

This is the secret of why He is called “The Place-*Makom*-מקום,”¹⁶ in that “He is the place of the world,” meaning that He bears the world, just as a place (*Makom*-מקום) bears the one who dwells upon it. However, the Holy One, blessed is He, bears the world, but the load He bears is below Him.

About this [our sages, of blessed memory] stated,¹⁷ “The Holy Ark carried its bearers,” in regard to the matter of [crossing of] the Jordan river.¹⁸ This likewise is the meaning of the verse,¹⁹ “*HaShem*-ה' יהו' became angry at Uzza, and God-*Elohi*”מ-אלהי struck him there for the blunder.” Thus, in this way you will discover that the *Cholem*-חלם vowel is above the letter *Yod*-יוד, and that relative to all the other letters, the letter *Yod*-יוד is holy (*Kodesh*-שקדש).

Know now, that just as the body cannot move without a mover, so likewise, not a single letter (*Ot*) moves without a vowel (*Nekudah*). That is, you will not find any letters that move without one of the five vowels (*Nekudot*) that bear all

¹⁴ Midrash Tehillim 18

¹⁵ Isaiah 57:15

¹⁶ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 68:9

¹⁷ Talmud Bavli, Sotah 35a

¹⁸ Joshua 4:18 and Rashi there; Talmud Bavli, Sotah 35a *ibid*.

¹⁹ Samuel II 6:7; Chronicles I 13:10 – “Because he laid a hand on the Ark.”

the motions of the letters, this being the secret of “**The Engravings of the Signet-Pituchei Chotam- פתוחי חתם**,”²⁰ which is the mystery of all vowelization.²¹

Know now, that all foundations (*Yesod*) in the world are called a single “stone,” whereas [the conjoining of] two stones is called a construct (*Binyan*). This is as stated in Sefer Yetzirah,²² “One stone is a foundation (*Yesod*), two are a construct (*Binyan*).” However, there are foundations (*Yesodot*) above the construct (*Binyan*), there are foundations (*Yesodot*) in the center of the construct (*Binyan*), and there are foundations (*Yesodot*) beneath their construct (*Binyan*).

All this is in the likeness of the worlds. That is, the upper world (*Olam HaElyon*) is called the world of the angels (*Olam HaMalachim*) whose foundation is above [them], as in the mystery of [He who is] “exalted and elevated,”²³ as stated above. This refers to the order of the yearning of the angelic beings, [who yearn] to grasp *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and to grasp the bestowal and emanation from Him, blessed is He. This is the secret of the *Cholem*-חלם vowel which is above, whereas the letter it moves is below it.

In this way, contemplate the mystery of the matter of the *Cholem*-חלם vowel as it is used in the Holy Language (*Lashon HaKodesh*). You will discover that it neither is activated nor turned in any way. Rather, you will find it in the

²⁰ Exodus 28:36 – “You shall make a Headplate of pure gold, and you shall engrave upon it, engravings of the signet (*Pituchei Chotam*-פתוחי חתם), ‘Holy to *HaShem-Kodesh LaHaShem*-קדש ליהו"ה.”

²¹ That is, all five primary vowels are included in the words, “*Pituchei Chotam*-פתוחי חתם.”

²² See Sefer Yetzirah 4:12

²³ Isaiah 57:15

order of the proper and essential name of all things that have a name, such as “Light-*Ohr*-אור,”²⁴ “Day-*Yom*-יום,”²⁵ “Good-*Tov*-טוב,”²⁶ and all other names.

You also will find it used in a way of action and dominion, such as, “He acts-*Po’el*-פועל,” “He says-*Omer*-אמר,” “He sits-*Yoshev*-יושב,” “He does-*Oseh*-עושה,” or alternately, [the command] “Do-*Pe’ol*-פעול,” “Say-*Emor*-אמר,” “Think-*Cheshov*-חשוב,” and the like.

If you find it in other matters, such as [the words], “He is contemplating-*Mitbonen*-מתבונן,” “He is rising-*Mitkomem*-מתקומם,” “He is acting-*Mitpo’el*-מתפועל,” He is rolling-*Mitgollel*-מתגולל,” do not think that it is of the vowels that are activated. For, if you remove the two [prefix] letters, which are letters of activation, you will find that it “remains seated over his reign.” To conclude, amongst all the vowels (*Nekudot*), no vowel is higher than the *Cholem*-חלם vowel.

Do not allow your mind to be deceived by those who contrive arguments that are contrary to what we have said here. Likewise, if you find any other matters that arise in your mind to question my words, [know] that it is not so. Rather, if you understand the matters according to their truth, you will discover that all my words are proper and correct to those who have understanding, are upright, and find knowledge.

Know that the *Cholem*-חלם vowel is the soul of souls, and hints at the Crown-*Keter*. Additionally, the three letters of [the name] *Cholem*-חלם are the mystery that hints at all speech, in that they are the mystery of the order of its

²⁴ Genesis 1:3

²⁵ Genesis 1:5

²⁶ Genesis 1:4

emergence according to the makeup of creation. This is because its letter *Chet*-ת"ח is of the first letters that emerge from the throat (*Garon*). Its *Lamed*-למ"ד is of the letters of the tongue (*Lashon*) which is in the middle, and its *Mem*-מ"ם is of the letters of the lips (*Sefatayim*) at the end. It thus includes the beginning and end of all language, and thus is also called "the full mouth-*Malephum*-ם"מלאפוי."

The second foundational (*Yesod*) vowel, under the *Cholem*-חלם vowel, is the ***Shoorook***-שרק vowel. It too is a simple and solitary refined point (*Nekudah*), but is unlike the elevated level of the *Cholem*-חלם. This is because the *Cholem*-חלם vowel is solitary and is above the letter. In contrast, the *Shoorook*-שרק vowel is in the middle of the letter, and has a point that is above it, which is the *Cholem*-חלם.

Know, now, that the *Shoorook*-שרק vowel always is a letter *Vav*-ו, and always is in the center of the *Vav*-ו, as in the [words], "They said-*Amroo*-אמרו," "They guarded-*Shamroo*-שמרו," "They did-*Asoo*-עשו," and all other such [words]. This is the mystery of the creation of the world of the celestial spheres, [that is], the heavens and their hosts.

Know that the foundation (*Yesod*) of every sphere (*Galgal*) is its center, and you never will find any sphere (*Galgal*) without a central point (*Nekudah*), which is the beginning of the creation of the sphere (*Galgal*). This is clear proof that, by the very makeup of their foundations, the celestial spheres (*Galgalim*) have a mover outside and above them. This is because the foundation of every sphere (*Galgal*) is at its center, and there necessarily is a point that is higher than the center, from which bestowal comes to the center, and

there is no sphere (*Galgal*) that continually revolves, except around its central point.

Now, all the celestial spheres (*Galgalim*) revolve, and their [central] point (*Nekudah*) constantly revolves to grasp [He who is] “exalted and elevated,” and rules over them all. Through this, all effects are found in the worlds. Through the medium of the revolution of the sphere (*Galgal*) the [various] forms and times are brought into being in the lower world. For, if not for this, no form would be renewed or sustained in the lowly world. You thus learn that with the yearning of the central point at the center of the celestial spheres (*Galgalim*) to grasp the upper point that is above them, they are sustained in the lowly world, this being the secret of the lower point (*Nekudah*), as will be explained with the help of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

Know now, and contemplate, that the point called the *Shoorook*-שרק is the secret of the bond-*Kesher*-קשר between the lower and the upper. It ascends above and descends below, [as the verse states],²⁷ “the wind goes round and round.” It is by the order of the motion of the *Shoorook*-שרק that all effects are sustained according to their kind, and the bestowal of creation comes to them from the Creator, may He be blessed and elevated.

This is the mystery of the astronomical [motions] of the heavens, and the stars and constellations, all of which are moved through the secret of the *Shoorook*-שרק vowel. Through the medium of their motion to grasp the beneficence from *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, they bestow all powers to

²⁷ Ecclesiastes 1:6

the earth according to their kind. This is the mystery [of the verse],²⁸ “And God set them in the firmament of the heavens,” and,²⁹ “Raise your eyes on high and see Who created these.” Indeed, “raise your eyes,” refers to the mystery of the *Cholem*-חֵלֶם vowel, “who brings forth their legion by number etc.”³⁰ Contemplate this now with deep understanding.

Know that just as the heavens exist between the upper world (*Olam HaElyon*) and the lowly world (*Olam HaShafel*), likewise, their foundation is in their middle, as explained above. That is, the foundation (*Yesod*) of the upper world (*Olam HaElyon*) is above it, the foundation (*Yesod*) of the intermediate world (*Olam HaEmtza'ee*) is at its center, and the [foundation (*Yesod*)] of the lowly world (*Olam HaTachton*) is at its base.

Now that you know this, know that the *Shoorook*-שׂרֵק, which is a solitary point that literally is in the center of the letter *Vav*-וּ, is the mystery of **The Middle Line-Kav** *HaEmtza'ee*-הַאֲמִצְעֵי-קוֹ,³¹ which ascends above and descends below. It receives beneficence from the Crown-*Keter* and bestows to Kingship-*Malchut*, without any multiplicity or separation, but certainly in a way of literal oneness and unity.

We now must awaken you to why the *Shoorook*-שׂרֵק is sometimes a solitary point within the letter *Vav*-וּ, and is sometimes three points, one above the other (*Shoorook*-שׂרֵקֵי). This is a clear proof to what we have explained. That is, we

²⁸ Genesis 1:17

²⁹ Isaiah 40:26

³⁰ Isaiah 40:26 *ibid*.

have already informed you that the *Shoorook*-שרק vowel is in the center, and that there is a point below. When it is positioned in the letter *Vav*-ו, it is a solitary point within the letter *Vav*-ו, and the letter *Vav*-ו is what hints at above, below, and center.

However, when it is not positioned in the letter *Vav*-ו, it then is in the [form] of three points one above the other. This is to inform us that there is a point (*Nekudah*) above it, this being the *Cholem*-חלם, and [a point] below it, this being the *Cheereek*-הרק vowel. This is because the *Cheereek*-הרק always yearns and lusts to adhere to the *Shoorook*-שרק. You thus will find the *Shoorook*-שרק within the letter *Vav*-ו, this being the secret of true bond and adhesion, and complete union.

The third foundational (*Yesod*) vowel is [also] in the secret of a solitary point (*Nekudah*) and is called the ***Cheereek***-הרק vowel. It is the mystery of the lowly world (*Olam HaTachton*), called earth-*Eretz*-ארץ. Just as you will never find a building (*Binyan*) the foundation of which is not under it, so likewise, you only will find the *Cheereek*-הרק vowel under the letter that it moves. So likewise, in the world of the earth, which is the lowly world, its foundation is under it, as explained above.

You thus have learned, that according to the names of the worlds, are the names of their foundations (*Yesodot*). That is, the foundation (*Yesod*) of the upper world (*Olam HaElyon*) is above it, the foundation (*Yesod*) of the middle world (*Olam HaEmtza'ee*) is at its center, and the foundation (*Yesod*) of the

³¹ See Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light,

lowly world is under it. This then, is the way of the three solitary vowel points, the *Cholem*-הלם, the *Shoorook*-שרק, and the *Cheereek*-חרק. All three attest to the order of the worlds and levels, and they also are founded [and positioned] above, below, and in the center of the letters.

After having informed you of this great principle in the order of the quality of levels and worlds, we now must inform you of more inner principles. That is, the *Cholem*-הלם, *Shoorook*-שרק, and *Cheereek*-חרק are the secrets of [the names] *Eheye*"ה-אהייה, *HaShem*"ה-יהויה, and *Adona*"ג-אדני, these being the secret of the Crown-*Keter* above, Splendor-*Tiferet* in the middle, and *Adona*"ג-אדני below.³²

The Crown-*Keter* is the secret of the *Cholem*-הלם. Splendor-*Tiferet* is the secret of the *Shoorook*-שרק in the middle, which is the secret of the *Vav*-ו that ascends above and adheres to the Crown-*Keter* and descends below and adheres to Kingship-*Malchut* through the [quality of] Foundation-*Yesod*.

Thus, the redemption is entirely dependent on the *Shoorook*-שרק, being that it is the secret of the middle line (*Kav HaEmtza'ee*) that adheres to Kingship-*Malchut*, and Kingship-*Malchut* adheres to the Jewish people. Through the middle line (*Kav HaEmtza'ee*), which is a line (*Tikvah*-תקוה) [as in the verse,³³ "this line-*Tikvat*-תקות of scarlet thread,"] the Jewish people have hope (*Tikvah*-תקוה) to return to their place.

Gate Five (*Tiferet*), section on "The Middle Line-*Kav HaEmtza'ee*-קו האמצעי."

³² See Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light, Gate Ten (*Keter*), Gate Five (*Tiferet*), and Gate One (*Malchut*).

³³ Joshua 2:18

The verse thus states,³⁴ “There is hope (*Tikvah*-תקוה) for your end – the word of *HaShem*-יהו"ה – and your children will return to their borders.”

This comes about through the middle line (*Kav HaEmtza'ee*) which is the line (*Tikvah*-תקוה) that adheres to Kingship-*Malchut*, this being the Indwelling Presence of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, the *Shechinah*, called “the end-*Achareet*-אחרית,” and the *Shechinah* adheres to Israel [and brings her] to return to her borders, as it states, “There is hope (*Tikvah*-תקוה) for your end (*Achareetecha*-אחריתך) – the word of *HaShem*-יהו"ה – and your children will return to their borders.” It similarly is written,³⁵ “I will whistle (*Eshrekah*-אשרקה) to them and gather them, for I have redeemed them.” For, when the *Shoorook*-שרק dwells in Kingship-*Malchut*, the scattered of Israel are gathered.

Now, all the above is so when it dwells from above. However, at the time of the destruction, when the *Shoorook*-שרק was separated from the *Cheereek*-חרק, the Holy Temple was destroyed and the Jewish people are exiled, it is written about the nations,³⁶ “They whistle (*Sharkoo*-שרקו) and gnash (*v'Yachreku*-ויחרקו) their teeth, saying, ‘We have devoured her.’” That is, the *Shoorook*-שרק has become separated from the *Cheereek*-חרק, [and they therefore continue], “This is the day we longed for; we have found it, we have seen it.” For at first,³⁷ “the kings of the earth did not believe, nor did any of the inhabitants of the world, that the oppressor and enemy could enter the gates of Yerushalayim.” Know now, and

³⁴ Jeremiah 31:16

³⁵ Zachariah 10:8

³⁶ Lamentations 2:16

contemplate that all life and all goodness depend on the *Cholem*-הולם, and the verse therefore states,³⁸ “You heal me (*VaTachleemeini*-וְתַחֲלִימֵנִי) and revive me.”

Know that if it was not so that in dreams (*Chalomot*-חלומות) there is an admixture of physical dross, dreams would be very great for mankind. For, the name “dreamer-*Cholem*-חולם” hints to a person grasping more than what is grasped by [coarse physical] substance. This itself is the matter of dreams (*Chalomot*-חלומות). This is why prophetic dreams are rare, even when some allegorical matters are in it. Similarly, were it not for the admixture of straw and chaff in them, they would be a very great matter.

About this our sages, of blessed memory, said,³⁹ “Just as it is impossible for the kernel [to grow] without chaff, so too it is impossible for a dream to be without idle matters.” They thus informed us that if not for the idle matters that are mixed into the dream, even a mundane dream is “one sixtieth of prophecy,”⁴⁰ and that one who grasps more than what the body grasps, is called a “dreamer-*Cholem*-חולם.” For example, [the verse states],⁴¹ “Pharaoh was dreaming (*Cholem*-חולם) and behold, he was standing at the river etc.” Yosef thus told him,⁴² “What God is about to do He has shown Pharaoh.”

Contemplate the very refined matters that I am telling you, and you will discover that the name “*Cholem*-הולם” hints

³⁷ Lamentations 4:12

³⁸ Isaiah 38:16

³⁹ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 55a

⁴⁰ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 57b and elsewhere.

⁴¹ Genesis 41:1

⁴² Genesis 41:28

at man's grasp in this lowly world when they ascend to grasp a much loftier level than what their bodies grasp. If the dreams are not whole and perfect, the lack is due solely to the great admixture [of dross], and to that degree there will be deficiency in the dream (*Chalom*-חלום).

It is to this end that the prophet said,⁴³ “The prophet with a dream tells [his] dream, but the one with My word speaks My word of truth. How can the chaff compare to the kernel? – the word of *HaShem*-יהו"ה.” The explanation of the verse is as follows: “The prophet with a dream” will sometimes see matters in a dream without intending to prophecy, and that which he beheld in the vision of the dream is not a vision of prophecy. “Will tell his dream,” means that he will say that it merely is a dream, and that it thus is not possible for it not to be mingled with idle matters. However, the prophet “who speaks My word,” even though it too is in a dream, it is entirely true, being that the word of a prophet does not deceive even in a single point. The verse thus concludes, “How can the chaff compare to the kernel? – the word of *HaShem*-יהו"ה.” That is, just as it is impossible for the kernel [to grow] without chaff, so too it is impossible to dream a dream that is not prophetic, without it containing idle matters. Understand this very well.

Now, in regard to what our sages, of blessed memory, stated,⁴⁴ “The words of a dream neither bring up nor take down [that is, they should not be taken into consideration],” this was only stated in regard to extracting money in [a court

⁴³ Jeremiah 23:28

⁴⁴ Talmud Bavli, Gittin 52a

of] judgment by virtue of a dream, and this was stated about such a matter.

However, when it comes to other matters, dreams are taken into consideration. For, as you very well know and see how strict Shabbat [observance] is, and to what extent we are duty bound to delight in it, as the verse states,⁴⁵ “And you shall call Shabbat a delight.” This being so, why did our sages, of blessed memory, state⁴⁶ that [to neutralize] a bad dream we [even] fast on Shabbat, if it was not so that there is a matter of great importance to [dreams]?

It only is that, as explained, a dream cannot be entirely true, however some of it is necessarily true. This is as our sages, of blessed memory, stated in Perek HaRo’eh,⁴⁷ “A good dream is not entirely fulfilled, nor is a bad dream entirely not fulfilled.” They also stated there, “A bad dream is worse than lashes, as the verse states,⁴⁸ ‘God has so made it that men should fear Him.’”

From all our words you thus have learned that when lowly man grasps more than his [physical] substance grasps, this grasp is called a “dream-*Chalom*-חלום,” which is of the root “*Cholem*-חלם.” This is because from the *Cholem*-חלם vowel millions of luminous flashes issue forth, and this person merited a small revelation of some of the luminous flashes that issue forth from the *Cholem*-חלם vowel.

Therefore, it is from the power of the luminary that flashes in the person who sees the dream which emanates from the *Cholem*-חלם vowel, that such will be the truth of his dream

⁴⁵ Isaiah 58:13

⁴⁶ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 11a

⁴⁷ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 55a

(*Chalom*-חלום). If the flash is small in him, only a small part of his dream will be sustained, and if it is great, a greater part of his dream will be sustained.

To conclude, it is the degree of the flash [of illumination] that determines the measure of the sustainment of the dream. One who knows the hidden secrets concealed in the matter of the ***Cholem***-חלם, will know the secret of grasping dreams (*Chalomot*-חלומות) and will know that “when one sleeps, his soul speaks to the Cherub, and the Cherub [speaks] to an angel etc.”⁴⁹ Contemplate all this well and you will see the secret of the superiority of the *Cholem*-חלם vowel over and above the other vowels (*Nekudot*).

At this juncture we already have informed you of the secret of dreams (*Chalomot*-חלומות) and how they depend on the *Cholem*-חלם, which is the mystery of the uppermost vowel. According to the bestowal from it, the various kinds of grasp come, each according to its kind, whether it is the grasp of prophecy or other matters.

We also have informed you of the secret of the order and makeup of the three worlds and their foundations (*Yesodot*) according to the order of the makeup of the ***Cholem***-חלם, the ***Shoorook***-שרק, and the ***Cheereek***-חרק. We have informed you of the secret of the *Shoorook*-שרק, that it sometimes is found as a solitary point and sometimes as three points, [one above the other (*Shoorook*-שרק)] and that this is because it is according to their motion, in which it is in the center. We also have informed you that

⁴⁸ Ecclesiastes 3:14

⁴⁹ See Midrash Vayikra Rabba 32:2; Midrash Kohelet 10:7

these three vowels are the secret of [the *Sefirot* of] the **Crown-Keter, Splendor-Tiferet, and Kingship-Malchut.**

If you are meritorious, from the above hints we have written, you will further understand the secret of the *Nefesh* [level of the soul] which adheres to the *Ru'ach*, and the *Ru'ach* to the *Neshamah*, and the way that dreams are grasped, as well as other comprehensions, whether by prophetic vision or through other paths.

After having informed you of these primary principles by way of the primary foundation (*Yesod*), we now must return to the other vowels (*Nekudot*), which are the secret of construct (*Binyan*), [and explain them] with the help of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

Now, the vowels of construct (*Nekudot HaBinyan*) also indicate the compositions (*Merkavot*) according to their kinds, and the heads of all vowels attest to all the levels of simplicity (*Pshutot*). Now then, set your heart to [understand] and contemplate. Know that there is no being in all the creations, be they upper [creations] or lower [creations], that is utterly simple and without composition, except for *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, the Singular Simple One who is utterly pure [of all admixture] in that in Him, there is no multiplicity whatsoever. However, in all other beings that exist in the world, including the Supernal Separate Intellects (*Sichliyim Nivdalim*) called angels, not a single one is of the utmost simplicity, without [any admixture] of multiplicity.

Now, although the philosophers called the angels “separate intellects” (*Sichliyim Nivdalim*) and “separate forms” (*Tzurot Nifradot*), and though they indeed are separate from substance (*Chomer*) such as our substance, they

nevertheless possess a more inner simple substance of simple spiritual intellect, of which there is no comparison in our [physical] substance. Nonetheless, they indeed possess a kind of [refined] simple substance that is more inner. This matter is expressed in various places in Talmud,⁵⁰ such as [the statement that the angel] Michael is water and [the angel] Gavriel is fire, and similarly, Scripture proclaims and states,⁵¹ “He makes the winds His messengers, the flaming fire His attendants.”

Now, let it not arise in your mind [that what we are referring to here] is as explained by Rambam⁵² and others like him, that because *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, uses the foundational elements (*Yesodot*) as His emissaries, therefore the foundational elements (*Yesodot*) are also called “angels” (*Malachim*-מלאכים). For, in truth, all things in the world that fulfill a mission (*Shlichut*-שליחות), whether they are of the upper or lower [beings], are called an “angel-*Malach*-מלאך” while they are fulfilling their mission, which even applies to snakes, scorpions and weasels and the like. However, this is not our intention here.

Rather, [our intention] is to say that certainly all the supernal angels are founded on the [spiritual] supernal substance of refined and inner intellect, which is not in the same category as our [physical] substance.

Now, the angels are novel creatures just as we are [novel creatures] and they too are beings of construct (*Binyan*). However, their construct (*Binyan*) is unlike our

⁵⁰ See Talmud Bavli, Pesachim 118a; Midrash Bereishit Rabba 12:8; Shir HaShirim Rabba 3:11; Tanchuma, Vayigash 6, and elsewhere.

⁵¹ Psalms 104:4

[construct]. Instead, their construct (*Binyan*) is simple construct (*Binyan Pashut*) rather than complex construct (*Binyan Murkav*).

Know that there are three kinds of construct (*Binyan*). There is simple construct (*Binyan Pashut*), there is complex construct (*Binyan Murkav*), and there is circular construct (*Binyan Agul*). Simple construct (*Binyan Pashut*) is close to being entirely foundational (*Yesod*). However, since from the side it is a construct (*Binyan*), it thus is called a “construct” (*Binyan*) relative to the side, but is called entirely foundational (*Yesod*) relative to the height. How so? If you take two stones and position them one to the side of the other, on an equal plane, as in the following form:

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The two stones are not a construct, in that they are not one upon the other. Rather, they both are foundational (*Yesod*). Only when others are placed upon them, they are called a construct (*Binyan*). However, they also are not called a true foundation (*Yesod*). They only are called a true construct (*Binyan*) when you place two stones one upon the other, as in the following form:

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⁵² See Moreh Nevuchim, Part II, Ch. 6

Now that you know this, know that just as the *Cholem*-הולם vowel is the true upper foundation - the foundation of all foundations and the soul of all souls – and is above, whereas its building and construct (*Binyan*) is below it, this likewise is so of the [category of] construct (*Binyan*) that stems from the class of the *Cholem*-הולם, this being the vowel (*Nikud*) called *Tzeirei*-צֵרֵי, which is a simple construct (*Binyan Pashut*) and is the mystery of the construct (*Binyan*) of the angels, which has the following form:



Now, the *Cholem*-הולם vowel and the *Tzeirei*-צֵרֵי vowel are the most primary of all vowels of the construct (*Binyan*), this one with one [point], and this one with two [points]. The great secret is (יִרְיִי יוֹד הֵא וְאִי הֵא), the *Cholem*-הולם and the *Tzeirei*-צֵרֵי.

Know that the Supernal Crown-*Keter*, blessed is He, is likened to the *Cholem*-הולם, whereas the two *Sefirot* below the Crown-*Keter*, [that are positioned] in equal [alignment to each other], these being Wisdom-*Chochmah* and Understanding-*Binah*, are likened to the *Tzeirei*-צֵרֵי.

Now, Heaven forbid that you should think that there is any construct there, nor any bonding or separation, but solely the truest and most absolutely perfect unity. Nonetheless, each of the two points of the *Tzeirei*-צֵרֵי hints at the secret of

the two *Sefirot* that adhere to the Crown-*Keter*, these being the secret of Wisdom-*Chochmah* and Understanding-*Binah*.

Additionally, when you arrange the secret of [the Name] *HaShem*-יהו"ה, may He be blessed and elevated, according to the secret of the vowelization of those two letters according to their names,⁵³ you will discover that the essence of the letters [themselves] attests to the essence of these *Sefirot*, and that the essence of the vowelization (*Nikud*) indicates the mystery of their matters and inner aspects, in that the secret of the *Cholem*-חל"ם is above, and Wisdom-*Chochmah* and Understanding-*Binah* are below.

Now, the letters (*Otiyot*-אותיות) and vowels (*Nikud*-ניקוד) indicate many supernal forms and many levels of goodness. Whosoever enters into the secrets of these hidden matters will see many great chambers hanging upon the strand of a hair. He will behold the concealed matters of the world that will be given into his hands.

Now then, contemplate the principles we explained to you in [the book] *Shaarei Tzeddek* about the secret of the three upper *Sefirot*, and you will see inner mysteries openly revealed to you in the vowels (*Nikud*). Both the *Cholem*-חל"ם and the *Tzeirei*-צִרֵי are at the height of all vowels (*Nekudot*), and they indicate the secret of the quality and makeup of the world of angels, which are simple construct (*Binyan Pashut*), and that they yearn for the upper foundation (*Yesod HaElyon*) above them, this being the mystery of [the words],⁵⁴ "They

⁵³ *Yod*-יוד and *Hey*-הי.

⁵⁴ In the *Yotzer* blessing of the *Shema* recital.

rise, facing them, and offer praise and say,” and the secret of [He who is] “exalted and elevated.”⁵⁵

Know that the foundation of fire-*Aish*-אש, [the nature of] which is to ascend above, is composed on the foundation of the *Cholem*-חל"ם and *Tzeirei*-צֵרִי. Whosoever comes to know this matter will know the secret of light-*Ohr*-אור and the secret of fire-*Aish*-אש. The matter of light-*Ohr*-אור is when fire-*Aish*-אש burns within him, and when it does not illuminate, it is called “fire-*Aish*-אש” and is called “darkness-*Choshech*-חשך.” This is as stated,⁵⁶ “God separated between the light-*Ohr*-אור and the darkness-*Choshech*-חשך,” after it first stated,⁵⁷ “And darkness-*Choshech*-חשך upon the surface of the deep,” and after stating, “The spirit (*Ru'ach*-רוח) of God hovered,” it then continues, “God said, ‘let there be light (*Yehiy Ohr*-יהי אור),’ and there was light (*Vayehiy Ohr*-ויהי אור),” most certainly.

Now that you know this, contemplate every place throughout the Holy Language (*Lashon HaKodesh*) that you come across the *Tzeirei*-צֵרִי vowel, [and note] that its conduct is slow. This is because it is the secret of the world of the angels, and thus moves slowly and tranquilly. It never adheres to the *Shva*-שְׁוָא vowel, unlike other vowels that indeed bond to it. This is because the *Tzeirei*-צֵרִי is the separate intellect (*Sechel HaNifrad*), and substance neither rushes it nor restrains it from its truth, in that you will never find the *Tzeirei*-צֵרִי vowel adhering to the *Shva*-שְׁוָא vowel.

⁵⁵ Isaiah 57:15

⁵⁶ Genesis 1:4

⁵⁷ Genesis 1:2

With the help of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, you will still have more to grasp when you arrive at the secret of the *Shva*-שְׁוָא vowel. However, know that just as fire (*Aish*) and water (*Mayim*) do not bond except through air (*Ru'ach*) which hovers, so likewise the *Tzeirei*-צֵרִי and the *Shva*-שְׁוָא vowels never bond in unison under a single letter, but rather, [such a bond is affected] by the *Segol*-סֶגוֹל vowel, this being the medium that moderates between them.

This is just as the *Nefesh* [level of the soul] and the *Neshamah* [level of the soul] do not bond except through the *Ru'ach* [level of the soul] in the middle. This is the secret of [the verse],⁵⁸ “And darkness (*Choshech*-חֹשֶׁךְ) upon the surface of the deep, and the spirit (*Ru'ach*-רוּחַ) of God hovered,” after which it states, “God said, ‘let there be light (*Yehiy Ohr*-יְהִי אֹר) .”

Now that you know this, contemplate wherever in the Holy Language (*Lashon HaKodesh*) you come across the *Tzeirei*-צֵרִי vowel, and know that it is the secret of “form-*Tzurah*-צוּרָה” and “formation-*Yetzirah*-יְצִירָה,” and from it are both upper and lower emanations according to their kinds. There thus are lower forms (*Tzurot*-צוּרוֹת) and upper forms (*Tzurot*-צוּרוֹת). About the lower forms the verse states,⁵⁹ “Now, *HaShem* God-*HaShem Elohi*”מ-אלהי"ה formed (*Vayitzer*-וַיִּצֵר) out of the ground every beast of the field etc.” About the upper forms the verse states,⁶⁰ “And *HaShem* God-*HaShem Elohi*”מ-אלהי"ה formed (*Vayiytzer*-וַיִּיצֵר) the man from the dust of the ground etc.”

⁵⁸ Genesis 1:2

⁵⁹ Genesis 2:19

⁶⁰ Genesis 2:7

This being so, the matters of the *Cholem*-הֶלֶם and *Tzeirei*-צֵרִי vowels have thus been explained to you. That is, one is similar to a foundation (*Yesod*) and relative to it, the other is like a construct (*Binyan*). Thus, if in the compositions (*Merkavot*) of the creations the *Tzeirei*-צֵרִי is the secret of construct (*Binyan*), then in the mystery of the ten *Sefirot*, the *Tzeirei*-צֵרִי indicates the two *Sefirot* which are juxtaposed to the Crown-*Keter*, these being Wisdom-*Chochmah* and Understanding-*Binah*.

Now, contemplate these principles, for through them you will be capable of entering into many inner chambers to which the gates have been closed. You will find the gates of the world opened before you, and you will understand the way of the letters of our perfect Torah, and the secret of the vowels set for it. You will thus know and grasp intellect from that which you find, and you will behold the elevated level of the language of Torah, and the depth of its hidden treasures, in its letters (*Otiyot*) and vowels (*Nikud*).

The *Segol* vowel

The second of the vowels of construct (*Binyan*) is the secret of [the vowel] called the *Segol*-סֶגוּל. It is the secret of three points, two above and one below, the three being similar to a sphere with three planes, length (*Orech*-אֹרֶךְ), depth (*Omek*-עוֹמֵק), and width (*Rochav*-רוֹחַב). These three terms include all planes and spheres according to their kinds. Now above, we already informed you that the *Shoorook*-שׁוּרוּק vowel is the secret of the makeup and quality of the world of the celestial spheres (*Galgolim*). We explained that just as the

Shoorook-שרק is in the center of the letter *Vav*-ו, so likewise the foundation (*Yesod*) of every sphere (*Galgal*) is at its center.

What we now must contemplate is that there is no sphere (*Galgal*) that does not have three dimensions that extend in six directions. The first is “length-*Orech*-אורך,” the opposite of which is “shortness-*Kotzer*-קוצר.” The second is “depth-*Omek*-עומק,” the opposite of which is “height-*Govah*-גובה.” The third is “width-*Rochav*-רוחב,” the opposite of which is “narrowness-*Tzar*-צר.” These are the six directions of the world, up, down, east, west, north, and south, all of which are included in these three planes.

When you arrange them in the three planes, you will discover that they are included in the secret of the *Shoorook*-שרק which is at the center of every sphere (*Galgal*-גלגל), and you will discover the *Segol*-סגול, which is the construct (*Binyan*) of the *Shoorook*-שרק and is made of three points that are circular (*Agulot*-עגולות), like the form of the three lines present in every axis, these being the central point and the two divisions of the sphere at the center of the point. Thus, the *Segol*-סגול vowel indicates the construct (*Binyan*) of every sphere (*Galgal*-גלגל), in that it has three [points] and three plains that consist of up, down, east, west, north, and south.

In the same way you will discover that this also is so of the letter *Vav*-ו-6, which is included in the form of the letters of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. That is, the letter *Vav*-ו-6 includes the six names [of the *Sefirot*], “Greatness-*Gedulah*-גדולה,” “Might-*Gevurah*-גבורה,” “Splendor-*Tiferet*-תפארת,” “Victory-*Netzach*-נצח,” “Majesty-*Hod*-הוד,” and

“Foundation-*Yesod*-יסוד.” There thus are many wondrous matters included in this order.

You thus have learned that the *Segol*-סגול vowel is the secret of the construct (*Binyan*) of all spheres (*Galgalim*). For, there is no sphere (*Galgal*-גלגל) that does not have three lines, and every sphere is divided into three. In these ways we have explained, you have learned the mystery of the *Segol*-סגול vowel, and it is clearly explained before you that it is the construct (*Binyan*) of the vowel called the *Shoorook*-שרק. That is, one is the foundation (*Yesod*), whereas the other is the construct (*Binyan*).

The *Shva* vowel

The third of the vowels of construct (*Binyan*) is called the *Shva*-שׁוּא. This vowel indicates the construct of the world of lowly beings, called earth. Its compositions are composed into being and then decompose and are lost, and they revolve within the four foundational elements [fire, air, water, earth].

Now, compositions that are composed of the four foundational elements revolve and are overturned. They are not sustained eternally like the heavens and the stars, which are sustained continually. Rather, the lower [beings] come into being and then are lost. The likeness to them is the *Shva*-שׁוּא vowel, which consists of two points one upon the other, in the following form:

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These beings are not sustained (in a constant way), but are temporarily, like a chair with only one leg, which cannot continue to stand. The same is so of the children of the earth. This is similar to the *Shva*-שְׁוָא vowel, which is incapable of standing on its own, without being conjoined to one of the other vowels. The same is so below in the [creatures of] the lowly world. They are incapable of being sustained for even a single hour, without being upheld and sustained by the upper powers as they [manifest and bestow to] the lowly world. Remember this great principle, for it is a foundation upon which much inner wisdom depends. About this the verse states,⁶¹ “Do you know the laws of heaven; did you set its enforcement-*Mishtaro*-משטרו upon the earth?” in which the verse specifies terms indicating an enforcer-*Shoter*-שוטר and a ruler-*Moshel*-משל.

This is why in the Torah you never will find a single word [standing] on its own, vowelized with only a *Shva*-שְׁוָא vowel. This is unlike other words such as “Light-*Ohr*,” “If-*Eem*,” “The-*Et*.” That is, with every other vowel, there is a word that is vowelized with it, by itself. However, you will never find the *Shva*-שְׁוָא vowel on its own. It rather must be conjoined with one of the other vowels, such as in the words, “My son-*Beneh*,” “My name-*Shmee*,” “Listen-*Shma*,” “Forgive-*Slach*.” However, you will never find it in any word by itself. It thus is similar to the earthly creatures who have no sustainment or standing except through the celestial spheres and stars, or through the supernal powers

⁶¹ Job 38:33

of the [separate] intellects, and through all the miracles and wonders.

After having explained this great principle to you, contemplate that the *Shva*-שְׁוָא vowel is always like a pauper who depends on the tables of others, in that he himself has no table, nor any house of his own. About him the verse states,⁶² “The prayer of the pauper, when he swoons.” His life thus hangs on others, and about this the verse states,⁶³ “Your life will hang in the balance before you.”

Now then, open your eyes and behold wonders. For, after having informed you about the composition of the lower beings, we now must inform you of concealed and hidden matters. Know that just as the *Cholem*-חֹלֶם vowel is the Crown-*Keter*,⁶⁴ and Wisdom-*Chochmah* and Understanding-*Binah* are included in the mystery of the *Cholem*-חֹלֶם and *Tzeirei*-צֵירֵי vowels, so likewise the *Shoorook*-שְׁרוּק and *Segol*-סְגוֹל vowels are the mystery of Greatness-*Gedulah*, Might-*Gevurah*, and Splendor-*Tiferet*, even though they also include the mystery of the Crown-*Keter*, Splendor-*Tiferet* and Kingship-*Malchut*, in the way of three points, one over the other (*Shoorook*-שְׁרוּק). Additionally, the *Segol*-סְגוֹל includes Victory-*Netzach*, Majesty-*Hod*, and Foundation-*Yesod*. However, the *Cheereek*-חֵרֵק and the *Shva*-שְׁוָא are the secret of Foundation-*Yesod* and Kingship-*Malchut*. Kingship-*Malchut* is the secret of the *Cheereek*-חֵרֵק vowel as it is, in and of itself, under the ten *Sefirot*, and the *Shva*-שְׁוָא is Foundation-*Yesod*.

⁶² Psalms 102:1

⁶³ Deuteronomy 28:66

⁶⁴ It seems that there is an error in the manuscript or its redaction here which was corrected in this translation to be reflective of and consistent with what was stated earlier.

Thus, together Foundation-*Yesod* and Kingship-*Malchut* are two points, one upon the other, in the following form:

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If not for Foundation-*Yesod* supporting Kingship-*Malchut* with the mysteries of Victory-*Netzach* and Majesty-*Hod*, these being the *Tzeirei*-צַרִי and *Segol*-סְגוּלָה, and through Foundation-*Yesod*, the [*Sefirah*] of Kingship-*Malchut* thereby becoming bound to the other *Sefirot* – then it almost would have fallen, as in the mystery of the *Shva*-שְׁוָא. This is the secret of the verse,⁶⁵ “[On that day] I will raise up the fallen Sukkah of Dovid-דָּוִד,” and,⁶⁶ “*HaShem*-ה' supports all the fallen.”

Whosoever understands these principles will enter into many chambers with the secret of the *Shva*-שְׁוָא. For whoever understands the secret of the *Shva*-שְׁוָא, [understands] that it is the secret of the command to sustain the matter. The verse thus states,⁶⁷ “The *Shvah*-שְׁבָה is with me.” This is why there is the mystery of the exiles and the falls, as the verse states,⁶⁸ “The crown of our head has fallen.” It also is written,⁶⁹ “Arise! Shine! For your light has arrived,” without which the moon is considered as not having any light of her own. Understand this very well.

⁶⁵ Amos 9:11

⁶⁶ Psalms 145:14

⁶⁷ Genesis 29:19 – “שְׁבָה עִמָּדִי” (The literal translation is “remain with me,” but in this context it is intended to mean “the *Shvah*-שְׁבָה is with me.”)

⁶⁸ Lamentations 5:16

⁶⁹ Isaiah 60:1

This is why it is called the “dry land-*Yabashah*-יבשה,” in that the upper waters are not bestowed [to it]. The verse therefore states,⁷⁰ “Let the dry land-*Yabashah*-יבשה appear,” and,⁷¹ “Grass dries up-*Yaveish*-יבש,” and,⁷² “The pastures of the wilderness dried up-*Yavshu*-יבשו.” In this way the quality of Kingship-*Malchut* is always dependent on the deeds of the lower beings, to either pour the upper waters into her, or to break the conduits [of bestowal].

However, it is appropriate for her to be supported in this way, as the verse states,⁷³ “Support me with flagons, spread apples about me etc.” It is for this reason that it is fitting to support⁷⁴ Prayer-*Tefillah* with Redemption-*Ge’ulah*.⁷⁵ This is because Kingship-*Malchut* requires support, and her support is Redemption-*Ge’ulah*. Our sages, of blessed memory, thus stated,⁷⁶ “Immediately [following] Redemption-*Ge’ulah* is Prayer-*Tefillah*.”

Now, you already know that Redemption-*Ge’ulah*-גאולה and Prayer-*Tefillah*-תפלה are Foundation-*Yesod* and Kingship-*Malchut*.⁷⁷ The verse thus states,⁷⁸ “*HaShem*-יהוה” supports all the fallen,” and,⁷⁹ “[On that day] I will raise up

⁷⁰ Genesis 1:9

⁷¹ Isaiah 40:7

⁷² Jeremiah 23:10

⁷³ Song of Songs 2:5

⁷⁴ The word for “support” is “*Lismoch*-לסמוך” which means “to juxtapose [the blessing of Redemption-*Ge’ulah* to the Amidah prayer],” On the inner level, it refers to the support of Prayer-*Tefillah* which refers to the *Sefirah* of Kingship-*Malchut*, by Redemption-*Ge’ulah* which refers to the *Sefirah* of Foundation-*Yesod*.

⁷⁵ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 4b, 9b, 10b, 26a, 30a

⁷⁶ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 42a; Talmud Yerushalmi, Brachot 1:1

⁷⁷ See Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light, Gate One (*Malchut*), Gate Two (*Yesod*), and Gate Eight (*Binah*).

⁷⁸ Psalms 145:14

⁷⁹ Amos 9:11

the fallen Sukkah of Dovid-דויד,” and it is written,⁸⁰ “These are the generations of Peretz-פרץ,” and it is written,⁸¹ “And it was as he drew back his hand” and continues, “With what strength you asserted yourself-*Partzta Alecha Peretz*-פרצת עליך” and it is written,⁸² “Afterwards his brother upon whose hand was the crimson thread came out, and he called his name Zerach-זרח,” and,⁸³ “The sun rose-*Zarach*-זרח for him,” and,⁸⁴ “Nations will walk by your light and kings by the brilliance of your rising-*Nogah Zarcheich*-נוגה זרחך,” and it is written,⁸⁵ “Who roused righteousness-*Tzeddek*-צדק from the east-*Mizrach*-מזרח,” and it is written,⁸⁶ “From the east-*Mizrach*-מזרח I will bring your offspring, and from the west-*Ma'arav*-מערב I will gather you.”

All these hidden mysteries are concealed and secreted in the *Shva*-שְׁוָא vowel, which is the secret of Kingship-*Malchut*, which requires support. For, if the *Shva*-שְׁוָא has no support, it does not stand on its own, unless it is juxtaposed to another of the vowels. Remember this very important principle.

One who understands this secret will understand the matter [of the verse],⁸⁷ “O’ God, give Your judgments to the king and Your righteousness to the king’s son,” and in the same Psalm it is written,⁸⁸ “And he will live, and will give him

⁸⁰ Ruth 4:18

⁸¹ Genesis 38:29

⁸² Genesis 38:30

⁸³ Genesis 32:32

⁸⁴ Isaiah 60:3

⁸⁵ Isaiah 41:2

⁸⁶ Isaiah 43:5

⁸⁷ Psalms 72:1

⁸⁸ Psalms 72:15

the gold of *Shva*-אָשׁוּב etc.,” in which the verse specifies “the gold of *Shva*-אָשׁוּב,” rather than any other gold. He thus will certainly live (*VaYechi*-ויחי), as written,⁸⁹ “The spirit of their father Yaakov was revived (*VaTechi*-ותחי).” For, when this gold is given into the *Shva*-אָשׁוּב, she then becomes united with the *Sefirah* called Life-*Chayim*-חיים.⁹⁰ Guard these important principles included in the vowels (*Nikud*), and you will see that all the worlds are included and founded upon the secret of the vowels (*Nikud*).

I thus have informed you of the reason for the juxtaposition and support (*Smichah*-סמיכה) of Redemption-*Ge'ulah* to Prayer-*Tefillah*, and the reason that “*HaShem*-יהוה supports all the fallen, and straightens all the bent,”⁹¹ and why the *Shva*-אָשׁוּב is the mystery of the lowly world, as well as the mystery of their compositions (*Harkavah*), which are not sustained except by support (*Smichah*-סמיכה) from the upper beings. While explaining all this, we also informed you of the more inner mystery of the *Shva*-אָשׁוּב vowel, which is the secret of Kingship-*Malchut*, and that she requires support (*Smichah*-סמיכה), and that He supports her.

The verse likewise states,⁹² “Remember, *HaShem*-יהוה, for the offspring of Edom, the day of Yerushalayim; for those who say, ‘Destroy! Destroy! To her very foundation-*Yesod*.’” That is, their intention was to contest the lower construct (*Binyan*) in order to separate Foundation-*Yesod* from Kingship-*Malchut* above.

⁸⁹ Genesis 45:27

⁹⁰ The *Sefirah* of Understanding-*Binah*. See Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light, Gate Eight (*Binah*).

⁹¹ Psalms 145:14

⁹² Psalms 137:7

Do not delude yourself in your mind to foolishly think to yourself, “From where would the children of Edom know of these things, that they should have such an intention?” Know that in those times, many of the inner wisdoms were known even by the nations, [those wisdoms] which because of our sins are now even sealed from the Jewish people.

It is not for nothing that the nations of the world made decrees against the Jewish people’s adhesion to Torah, and attempted to obstruct them from fulfilling the *mitzvot*. It only is because they knew that when the Jewish people fulfill the *mitzvot* they will succeed, overcome them, and prevail. Understand this very well, for it is very necessary.

From the *Shva*-אָֿֿֿ vowel and its support, understand the secret of the moon, which has no light of her own, and that at times she is breached,⁹³ and all her light is solely from the sun. If you contemplate the *Shva*-אָֿֿֿ vowel, all will be clear to you. Contemplate it very well, for it is very necessary.

After having informed you of these six levels in the three kinds of vowels, in that the mystery of the three foundational vowels (*Yesodot*) indicates the foundations of the three worlds, these being the world of the angels, the world of the celestial spheres, and the lowly world, these being the mystery of the *Cholem*-הֶלֶם, the *Shoorook*-שׂוּרוּק, and the *Cheereek*-חֶרֶק, we then informed you how these hint at the mystery of the **Crown-Keter**, **Splendor-Tiferet**, and **Kingship-Malchut**.

⁹³ Sefer HaBahir 197 and elsewhere.

We likewise informed you about the secret of the *Tzeirei*-צִירֵי, [the *Segol*-סֶגוֹל],⁹⁴ and the *Shva*-שְׁוָא, and that they indicate the mystery of the construct (*Binyan*) of the three worlds, these being the world of the angels, the world of the celestial spheres, and the lowly world. We informed you how these indicate the secret of the qualities of the *Sefirot*, not that they are in a way of actual construct (*Binyan*), Heaven forbid to think so, but it rather is according to the order of their qualities and the mystery of their derivation [of vitality and beneficence] by way of the conduits that are drawn down by them from one to the other.

We now must awaken you to an extremely important principle regarding the two remaining vowels. These are the *Komatz*-קֹמֵץ and *Patach*-פְּתַח vowels, and their mystery is that of opening (*Pote'ach*-פּוֹתַח) and closing (*Ne'ilah*-נִעִילָה). This is because these two vowels indicate the opening of the Gates of Righteousness (*Shaarei Tzeddek*)⁹⁵ and the closing of the gates, this being the secret of the “open-*Patach*-פְּתַח” [vowel] and the “clenched-*Komatz*-קֹמֵץ” [vowel]. You therefore will always find the *Shva*-שְׁוָא vowel juxtaposed to the *Patach*-פְּתַח vowel, as in the word, “last ones-*Acharonim*-אַחֲרֹנִים,”⁹⁶ [and the word] “when they came up-*Ka'alot*-כַּעֲלוֹת,”⁹⁷ and other such words.

Now, whenever you find the *Shva*-שְׁוָא vowel juxtaposed to the *Komatz*-קֹמֵץ, such as in the verse,⁹⁸ “And I

⁹⁴ This appears to be missing from the text and is thus corrected in the brackets in this translation.

⁹⁵ Psalms 118:19

⁹⁶ Genesis 33:2 and elsewhere.

⁹⁷ Joshua 4:18 and elsewhere.

⁹⁸ Exodus 3:17

have said, ‘I shall bring you up from the affliction-*Oni*-עֲוֵי of Egypt,’” and other such verses, you will notice that in their pronunciation, they are read similar to the pronunciation of the *Cholem*-חֹלֶם vowel. That is, the sphere of levels has revolved to adhere to the Crown-*Keter*. This is as stated in Sefer Yetzirah,⁹⁹ “Ten *Sefirot Blimah*, their beginning is bound to their end and their end is wedged in their beginning.” This is the secret of the true and complete union (*Yichud*) [of *HaShem*-יהו"ה] may His Name be blessed and the mention of Him be elevated.

We thus have explained the order of the vowels to you according to all their kinds, and not a single one remains that has not been placed in order before you. Based on what we have explained, you will see why the *Cholem*-חֹלֶם vowel is always above and is a singular point, and why the *Shoorook*-שׁוּרוּק vowel is in the center and is a singular point, and why the *Cheereek*-חֵרֵק is below and is a singular point.

You also will understand why the *Tzeirei*-צֵירֵי has two points and is below, and does not become conjoined to the *Shva*-שְׁוָא, and why its motion is slow. Moreover, you will grasp why the *Segol*-סֶגוּל has three points and becomes conjoined to the *Shva*-שְׁוָא, which itself consists of two points, one above the other, and never stands on its own, has no house of its own, and has no support unless it is supported by other vowels.

You also will grasp why the *Patach*-פְּתַח and *Komatz*-קֹמַץ vowels both join with the *Shva*-שְׁוָא. It all has been explained and openly revealed, whether in regard to the

⁹⁹ Sefer Yetzirah 1:7

quality and makeup of the worlds and their foundations (*Yesodot*) and construct (*Binyan*), or whether in hinting to the secrets of the Supernal Chariot (*Merkavah*) and the arrangement of the *Sefirot*.

Thus, having explained all these primary principles to you, we now shall enter into the remaining mysteries, namely, that all vowels, each according to its kind, depend on the four letters of the Singular Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, may He be blessed and elevated, and let us say "Amen!"

In the book *Shaarei Tzeddek*, I already have informed you how all of Torah is woven on the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, the Creator of everything and the One who sustains everything. Without Him there is nothing. All are in need Him but He needs no other.

We explained there how all other holy names and titles, each according to their kind, depend on His Singular Name, and He manifests within them according to the matter over which His dominion is extended and according to the guidance of His Kingship, and it thus is called *Splendor-Tiferet*, as we have explained.

We also added an extensive explanation [there] of the Chariot (*Merkavah*) prophecy of Yechezkel on this matter. Once you have thoroughly delved into those places, and these matters have become clear to you, you then should come and delve into what we are beginning to explain here. You then will see how all worlds, all beings in existence, all languages, all letters, and all vowels, depend on the Singular Name (*Shem HaMeyuchad*), this being the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה.

We have already explained to you how all levels and all motions are sealed with the signet of this name. We

already have told you that the first ten letters [of the *Aleph-Beit*], which are:

א ב ג ד ה ו ז ח ט י

When arranged in their ten levels according to the mystery of:

א"ט ב"ח ג"ז ד"ו י"ה

You will discover that [the concluding signet] of all the levels is *Ya''H-יה''* [and that they consist of *Yod-י-10* (letters) and *Hey-ה-5* (constructs)]. If you contemplate the mystery of [the order of] *א"ט ב"ח* very well, you will see that each level has dominion over all the other levels to the degree that it is distanced from *HaShem-יהו"ה*, blessed is He, as in the mystery of the verse,¹⁰⁰ “For there is One higher than high who watches.” In the same manner you will discover the order of the motions (*Tenu'ah*), which are the secret of *י"ה י"א*, these being the mystery of these ten letters in the following arrangement:

א"י ב"ט ג"ח ד"ז ה"ו

You thus will discover that the concluding signet of all the motions is *ה"ו*. You thus see that the mystery of *HaShem-יהו"ה* is the signet of everything. Now that you know this, and

¹⁰⁰ Ecclesiastes 5:7

have contemplated it in conjunction with all the important principles we explained above, as well as in the other books, you now should open your eyes to all that we will set before you now, in this gate. For it is a very great gateway through which your eyes will be illuminated, and you will see and succeed.

Know that the four letters of the Singular Name, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, stand in place of every kind of vowel. They thus move all the letters in the world in all directions of motion, the [letters] being incapable of motion [on their own]. We therefore will state what you already know, that not a single letter in the world can be pronounced without making use of one of the five motions called the **“The Engravings of the Signet-Pituchei Chotam-פְּתוּחֵי חֹתָם.”**¹⁰¹

Now, contemplate that the first letter of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, which is the letter *Yod*-י,¹⁰² stands in place of two vowels. That is, it stands in place of the *Cheereek*-חֶרֶק vowel and in place of the *Tzeirei*-צֵרִי or *Segol*-סְגוּל vowels.¹⁰³ How is this so? If you were to say “my son-*Bnee*,” “My name-*Shmee*,” “Myself-*Atzmi*,” “My saying-*Omree*,” the primary root of these words are “son-*Ben*,” “name-*Shem*,” “self-*Etzem*,” and “say-*Omer*.” We thus see that the *Yod*-י comes in place of the *Cheereek*-חֶרֶק

¹⁰¹ That is, all five primary vowels are included in the words, “*Pituchei Chotam*-פְּתוּחֵי חֹתָם.”

¹⁰² There appears to be an error in the transcript of the manuscript here which includes the letter *Hey*-ה"א as well, but should possibly instead be “*Hoo*-הוּא.” It was corrected in the translation.

¹⁰³ The *Segol*-סְגוּל vowel is secondary to the *Tzeirei*-צֵרִי vowel, as explained before. Also see *Ginat Egoz* of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Volume 4 (The Vowels of Creation).

vowel. Similarly, if you say the words, “those who say-*Omrei*-אמרֵי” or “those who guard-*Shomrei*,” the primary word is “say-*Omer*-אמר” and “guard-*Shomer*,” and you thus see that the *Yod*-י takes the place of the *Tzeirei*-צֵרֵי or *Segol*-סְגוֹל vowels.

Similarly, the letter *Hey*-ה of the Singular Name *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, stands in place of the *Patach*-פְּתַח and *Komatz*-קֹמֶץ vowels. For example, if you say “She said-*Amrah*-אמרה” or “She guarded-*Shamrah*,” you see that the *Hey*-ה stands in place of the *Komatz*-קֹמֶץ and *Patach*-פְּתַח. For, the primary word is “say-*Omer*-אמר” and “guard-*Shomer*-שמר.”

Similarly, the letter *Vav*-ו of the Singular Name *HaShem*-יהוה stands in place of the *Cholem*-חֹלֶם and the *Shoorook*-שְׂרוּק. For example, when you say “His name-*Shmo*-שמו,” or “Himself-*Atzmo*,” or “His image-*Tzalmo*,” the *Vav*-ו takes the place of the *Cholem*-חֹלֶם vowel. For, the primary word is “name-*Shem*-שם,” “self-*Etzem*,” and “image-*Tzelem*.” Likewise, when you say, “They said-*Amroo*,” “They overcame-*Gavroo*,” “They stood-*Amdoo*,” the *Vav*-ו takes the place of the *Shoorook*-שְׂרוּק vowel. For, the primary word is “said-*Amar*,” “overcame-*Gavar*,” and “stood-*Amad*.”

It thus is explained in what we have taught you here, that these three letters יהו include all vowels in the world. The letter *Yod*-י includes the *Cheereek*-חֵרֵק, *Tzeirei*-צֵרֵי, and *Segol*-סְגוֹל vowels. The letter *Hey*-ה includes the *Komatz*-קֹמֶץ and *Patach*-פְּתַח vowels. And the letter *Vav*-ו includes the *Cholem*-חֹלֶם and *Shoorook*-שְׂרוּק vowels. This being so, not

a single vowel in the world is not included in these three letters of the Singular Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה.

Now that you know this, know too, that whenever any letter moves any of the other letters, it remains separate from them and different from them. How so? When you say the word "My name-*Shmee*-שמי," the primary word is "name-*Shem*-שם," but when you say "My name-*Shmee*-שמי," you are not mentioning the name of the letter *Yod*-י. It rather moves [the word] but is concealed. The same is so when you say the words, "my son-*Bnee*-בני," "My saying-*Omree*-אמרי," "His name-*Shmo*-שמו," "They guarded-*Shamroo*-שמרו," "She said-*Amrah*-אמרה," "They said-*Amroo*-אמרו," in all those motions. That is, you will find that you do not say a single one of the letters of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה at the time that you are moving the other letters with them. Rather, they move the other letters but are hidden in their pronunciation. About this the verse states,¹⁰⁴ "The concealed are for *HaShem*-יהו"ה our God," may He be blessed and may the mention of Him be elevated.

You likewise will find that they are separate from the letters that they move, in that they are not mingled with the root of the word that they move. For example, when you say, "They are guarding-*Shomreem*-שומרים," the letters *Vav*-ו and *Yod*-י of the word "*Shomreem*-שומרים" are not included in the root of the word at all, nor are they recalled at the time that it is pronounced, since the root of the word is "guard-*Shomer*-שמר."

¹⁰⁴ Deuteronomy 29:28

You thus have discovered and learned that the letters of [the Name] *HaShem*-יהו"ה move all the other letters, and are concealed in their pronunciation, and also are separate from the root at the time that they move them, just as *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, moves the whole world and all its parts and components, but He is concealed from all. In the same way, the letters of [the Name] *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, move all the letters but are concealed and separate from them. Remember this important principle that we have given you, and through it, you will enter into various hidden treasures to which the gates have been locked.

You thus will discover that all three worlds are revealed to us through the makeup of the letters (*Otiyot*) and vowels (*Nikud*), and that the makeup of all the worlds depends on the makeup of the letters, and this is the order of all its motions and matters.

Now, you already know what our sages, of blessed memory, stated in Tractate Menachot,¹⁰⁵ on the verse,¹⁰⁶ “These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created-*b’Heebaram*-בהבראם.” They said, “This world was created with the [letter] *Hey*-ה and the coming world was created with the [letter] *Yod*-י.”

If you have merited entering [the chambers] of what they stated in Sefer Yetzirah on the matter of the letters א,מ,ש, you will have discovered that the mysteries of fire-*Aish*-אש, water-*Mayim*-מים and wind-*Ru’ach*-רוח [or air-*Avir*-אוויר] depend on these [three] letters א,מ,ש. You likewise will have discovered that the [seven] letters בגדכפרת correspond to the

¹⁰⁵ Talmud Bavli, Menachot 29b

¹⁰⁶ Genesis 2:4

seven celestial spheres (*Galgalim*) of the seven planetary bodies, which are שצ"ם הנכ"ל.¹⁰⁷ You also will have found that the [twelve letters] הו"ז הט"י לנ"ס עצ"ק correspond to the sphere of the twelve constellations (*Mazalot*).

Thus, the form of all the worlds, each according to its kind, depends on the three, the seven, and the twelve, and it is here that the form of the twenty-two letters of the *Aleph-Beit* concludes. We thus find that all the worlds depend on the twenty-two letters.

Whosoever contemplates the mystery of the combinations (*Tziruf*) of the *Aleph-Beit* should contemplate the cycle of all the creations in their ascent and descent according to the mystery of the qualities of the letters. Whoever merits to understand, will understand many hidden matters and many levels that are concealed from the eyes of the creatures, and will thus understand and know the greatness of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and how everything is made from the true reality of His Great Name, and how everything depends on His Name, and that He [himself] has no need for another.

This is the path that our forefather Avraham, peace be upon him, entered to know and grasp the secret that *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, creates the world and sustains and is the provider of all. He would teach people to know the true reality of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and would declare and speak "in the Name of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the eternal God of the

¹⁰⁷ They are: 1.) Saturn-*Shabtai*-שבתאי, 2.) Jupiter-*Tzedek*-צדק, 3.) Mars-*Ma'adim*-מאדים, 4.) The Sun-*Chamah*-חמה, 5.) Venus-*Nogah*-נוגה, 6.) Mercury-*Kochav*-כוכב, 7.) The Moon-*Levanah*-לבנה. See at greater length in Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 2, The Letters of Creation, Part 1.

world-*E"l Olam* עולם-אל,"¹⁰⁸ this itself being the secret of the creation of the world.

For, the word "God-*E"l*" א"ל-ל" is the beginning of the Emanation,¹⁰⁹ and when He manifested within the five levels that are included in the ten *Sefirot*, these being the secret of י"ה-55, which are the secret of the verse,¹¹⁰ "These-*Hein*-ה"ן-55 are to *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God, the heavens and the highest heavens, the earth and everything therein," a person can then enter and contemplate how the levels are called "the sea-ים-ה"י-55," and that the foundation of the construct (*Binyan*) is called "God-*E"l*" א"ל-ל."

When "God-*E"l*" א"ל-ל" is joined with "the sea-ים-ה"י-55," this is the primary foundation and level called "God-*Elohi*" מ-אלהי"ם." This is the title that was newly brought forth by *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, upon the creation of the world, and is the first of the first.¹¹¹ It is for this reason that He began the act of creation saying, "In the beginning God-*Elohi*" מ-אלהי"ם created."

However, even though "God-*Elohi*" מ-אלהי"ם-86" is His primary title-*Kinuy*-כנוי-86, and it is upon this title that many creations depend, both through the mystery of "God-*E"l*" א"ל-ל" and the mystery of "the sea-*HaYam*-ים-ה"י," nonetheless, it itself depends on the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה,

¹⁰⁸ Genesis 21:33

¹⁰⁹ That is to say, it is the first construct of the *Aleph-Beit*. See at greater length and explanation in *Ginat Egoz* of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 2, *The Letters of Creation*, Part 1, Section entitled "The drawing forth of action from the letters to *Elohi*" מ-אלהי"ם."

¹¹⁰ Deuteronomy 10:14 – "ה"ן ליהויה אלהי"ך השמים ושמי השמים הארץ וכל אשר בה"

¹¹¹ See *Ginat Egoz* of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 1, *The Gate of Intrinsic Being (Shaar HaHavayah)* and *The Gate of His Title (Shaar HaKinuy)*.

blessed is He. This is because *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is the soul and sustainment of the name God-*Elohi*"m-אלהי"ם. The verse thus states,¹¹² "On the day that *HaShem* God-*HaShem Elohi*"m-אלהי"ם יהו"ה made earth and heaven," and it states,¹¹³ "Who makes one mute-*Eelem*-אלם? Is it not I, *HaShem*-יהו"ה," may He be blessed and elevated.

For, when *HaShem*-יהו"ה removes the name *Ya*"H-יה"ה from the title-*Kinuy*-כנוי-86 called "God-*Elohi*"m-אלהי"ם-86," all that remains of "God-*Elohi*"m-אלהי"ם" is "mute-*Eelem*-אלם." This is the secret of the verse,¹¹⁴ "All the rivers flow to the sea-*El HaYam*-אל הים, but the sea-*HaYam*-הים is not full-*Maleh*-מלא." When you know this, contemplate that every formation and speech comes forth by the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

After having informed you of this, know that just as *HaShem*-יהו"ה moves [the creations], but is separately transcendent and concealed from the creations, so likewise, His Great Name indicates the order and makeup of the Holy Language to us, which is the mystery of the makeup of the whole world and its creation.

Now, if you question this saying, "Did you not state that the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, moves and is concealed? But is it not written,¹¹⁵ 'His grandsons-*Bnei Banav*-בני בְנָי, wherein the letter *Yod*-י and the letter *Vav*-ו from the letters of His Name are not concealed?" Know that this is not so. For, in this place, the letter *Yod*-י does not move

¹¹² Genesis 2:4

¹¹³ Exodus 4:11

¹¹⁴ Ecclesiastes 1:7

¹¹⁵ Genesis 46:7 and elsewhere

[the word], being that the letter *Yod*-י only moves [the word] when vowelized with the *Cheereek*-הַרְקֵה, the *Segol*-סֶגֶל or *Tzeirei*-צֵרֵי. However, with the *Komatz*-קָמֵץ and *Patach*-פְּתַח vowels, it does not move [the word] and is therefore read, and this likewise is the rule in regard to the [word] “*Banav*-בְּנָיו.” Thus, when we state that it is hidden and concealed, this is while it is moving [the word] with the motion that is appropriate to it. However, when it is not moving [a word], it then is like all the other letters (*Otiyot*).

How is this so? By way of analogy, the letters of His Name, blessed is He, which are the letters יהוה, are forbidden to be erased when they are in order. However, if a person wrote the words,¹¹⁶ “It will be-*VeHayah*-וְהָיָה that if you listen etc.,” he indeed can erase the word “It will be-*VeHayah*-וְהָיָה,” even though they are the letters of His Name. The reason is because they are not positioned in the order of the composition of His Name.

The same is so of all matters in the world, that a person must contemplate the intention of each particular thing according to the place, form [and context] that it appears in. The verse thus states,¹¹⁷ “God has heard the cry of the lad according to where he is (*BaAsher Hoo Sham*-בְּאֲשֶׁר הוּא שָׁם),” and similarly, our sages, of blessed memory, stated,¹¹⁸ “A person is only judged according to his deeds at the time.” Know that in this verse, a great matter is revealed to us about this, in that this verse mentions the lad and mentions the place he was in, and therefore he was paid heed from heaven.

¹¹⁶ Deuteronomy 11:13

¹¹⁷ Genesis 21:17

¹¹⁸ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 16b

Know that the entire Torah is considered in this way, including all the questions and queries of the Talmud. Likewise, if you pay attention to all places in our words in this composition, [you will notice] that there are letters that are movers, hidden, and separate. Our intention is to state that they are concealed and separate in the very same place that they are movers. Remember this important principle.

Now, we must transmit [another] important principle to you. Know, that all the letters, when they are joined together in the composition of the words of language, sometimes all become mingled with each other, whether they are letters that are movers or whether they are letters that move. Likewise, they all often become the root of a word. An example [of this] is if you say [the word] “living-*Chai*-חי.” In this [word] the letter *Yod*-י, which is one of the letters of His Name, becomes [part of] the root of the word and does not move it. Likewise, when you say [the word] “from them-*Meihem*-מהם,” the letter *Hey*-ה is of the root of the word. Likewise, if you say, “I will hurry-*Emaher*-אמהר,” “He will hurry-*Yemaher*-ימהר,” “You will hurry-*Temaher*-תמהר,” the letter *Hey*-ה is part of the root. Similarly, the letter *Vav*-ו is also sometimes part of the root of a word, such as if you say, “I will hope-*Ekaveh*-אקוה,” “He will hope-*Yekaveh*-יקוה,” “You will hope-*Tekaveh*-תקוה.” The same applies to all the letters.

However, what you must contemplate is places where there are letters that are movers, which remain in their place and move [the words], but at the very same time, are movers that are hidden and separate. However, at the times that they do not move [the words] in which they become mingled with

the other letters, as we explained about the matter of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, which is a Holy Name that is not erased, when these letters are not positioned in their places, such as if you say "And it will be-*VaHayah*-והיה," they can be erased. Remember this important principle well, for through it, you will enter into various chambers of all kinds of wisdom, and you will be saved from many questions, for this indeed is an important principle.

The Order of the Motions

After having informed you of these important principles, and that all vowels depend on the Singular Name of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, we now must inform you how the kinds of motions have two paths. It is in these two paths that all motions in the world are found, in all the kinds of creatures according to their kinds, whether they are upper or lower. When you understand this, you then will enter to see that which is hidden in that which is revealed.

However, we first must awaken you to the fact that the letters of the Torah are twenty-two in total, and are divided into three matters. The first matter, is letters that move with an upper supernal motion, and are called the letters of the *Chashmal*-חשמל. The second matter, is letters that move with a bodily motion, and are called the letters of the *Chayot*-חיות. The third matter, is letters that are moved by the power of those that move, but in and of themselves, do not

move, nor do they move others outside of themselves, and are called the **Ophanim-אופנים**.

The letters called *Chashmal*-ל"השמ are the four letters of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, which both are "silent-*Chashot*-השות" and "speak-*Memalelot*-ממללות." This is because through the vowels they move all the other letters, but they themselves are hidden, separate and unseen. They therefore are called "*Chashmal*-השמל," because they are hidden and they speak.¹¹⁹

The letters are called *Chayot*-חיות are the letters called "My Name is delightful to write-*Shmee Na'eh Lichtov*-שמי נאה לכתוב." Some grammarians called them "Whose craft is Understanding-*SheMelachto Binah*-שמלאכתו בינה." These are those letters that move with bodily motion, but not with intellectual motion. This is because they do not move other letters without themselves also moving together with them.

The letters called *Ophanim*-אופנים are called "The sprout of righteousness shall blossom and soar-*Geza Tzedek Parach Tas*-גז"ע צד"ק פרי"ה ט"ס." These are letters that do not move other letters at all, but they themselves are moved by the power of the letters called *Chashmal*-ל"השמ and the letters called *Chayot*-חיות.

After having informed you of all this, know that the Chariot (*Merkavah*) of Yechezkel is divided into three attainments of grasp. That is, there is the first mention of "I saw-*Va'eire*-וארא,"¹²⁰ there is the second mention of "I saw-*Va'eire*-וארא,"¹²¹ and there is the third mention of "I saw-

¹¹⁹ Also see Talmud Bavli, Chagigah 13b

¹²⁰ Ezekiel 1:4

¹²¹ Ezekiel 1:15

Va'eire-וארא.”¹²² The first mention of “I saw-*Va'eire*-וארא” is about the matter of the *Chayot*-חיות. The second mention of “I saw-*Va'eire*-וארא” is about the matter of the *Ophanim*-אופנים. The third mention of “I saw-*Va'eire*-וארא” is about the matter of the *Chashmal*-ל-השמ.

We thus must inform you of the order of the letters (*Otiyot*) in regard this matter, that is, in regard to the mystery of the those that move with an intellectual motion, those that move with a bodily motion, or those that are moved but do not move others. We already have informed you in the order of the Chariots (*Merkavot*-מרכבות), of the secret of the *Chayot*-חיות, the secret of the *Ophanim*-אופנים, and the secret of the *Chashmal*-ל-השמ. When you understand their secrets, their hidden matters, and their elevated levels, and you compare them to the order of the Compositions (*Merkavot*-מרכבות) of the letters, you then will understand desirable words and understand the compositions (*Merkavot*-מרכבות) of the letters (*Otiyot*) through the other compositions (*Merkavot*-מרכבות) we have explained to you.

Having awakened you to these important principles, we now must inform and awaken you to the order of the letters called *Chashmal*-ל-השמ or the letters called *Chayot*-חיות and *Ophanim*-אופנים, and the reason that they are called by names that are different from each other.

About the letters called *Chashmal*-ל-השמ, know that just as the *Chashmal*-ל-השמ refers to the secret of the upper angels who guard the entrance to the sanctuary of *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, that there is a *Chashmal*-ל-השמ as we have

¹²² Ezekiel 1:27

informed you, and there is an outer *Chashmal*-ל"השמ which inspects those who delve into the Chariot (*Merkavah*).

This is a crucible that tests all, on account of its refinement and speed, and it is third in [elevation in] the order of the upper inner comprehension of the workings of the Chariot (*Merkavah*) of Yechezkel.¹²³ This is as our sages, of blessed memory, already explained in Tractate Chagigah, in Perek Ein Dorshin.¹²⁴

Thus, just as the *Chashmal*-ל"השמ is the secret of the upper inner comprehension of the act of the Chariot (*Merkavah*), so likewise, the letters of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, are the secret of the innermost upper letters of all twenty-two letters. This is because all the letters are bodily, physical, and revealed when read, and are not concealed, except for the letters of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, may He be elevated, which are concealed at the time they conduct and move [the other letters].

For example, if you say "Me-*Ani*-אני," "My name-*Shmee*-שמי," or "I-*Anochi*-אנכי," the *Yod*-י is concealed and hidden, but moves [the word]. Similarly, [if you say] "His name-*Shmo*-שמו," "Himself-*Atzmo*-עצמו," "His son-*Bno*-בנו," the letter *Vav*-ו is also hidden, but moves [the word]. However, in regard to all the other letters, you will never find a letter that moves [the word] and is concealed, except for these.

This is because the other letters are conducted and publicized in the world at the time that they are read, such as if you say "He learned-*Lamad*-למד," "He finished-*Gamar*-גמר,"

¹²³ Ezekiel Ch. 1

¹²⁴ Talmud Bavli, Chagigah 11b and on.

“He passed-*Avar*-עבר.” The same applies to all the letters except for the letters of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. About this the verse states,¹²⁵ “The concealed are for *HaShem*-יהו"ה our God etc.”

The letters that move [the others] are the secret of “*HaShem* our God-*HaShem Elohei*”נו-אלהינו.” [In contrast], “the revealed,”¹²⁶ which are all the other letters that are openly expressed and revealed when read, “are for us and for our children,” meaning that they are for our use and need. However, the letters of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, are letters of “being-*Havayah*-הו"י,” that are not used throughout all of Torah, when they are bound to a revealed matter, but are solely for the matter of sustaining and upholding their “being-*Havayah*-הו"י.”

Moreover, when it comes to all other letters that are bound together in the Torah, there is a reversal [of the meaning with the reversal of the letters], except for the letters of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, which undergo no change by being reversed, as we already have informed you in the book *Shaarei Tzedek*.

However, when it comes to [all other] letters, including even His chief title, “God-*E*”ל-*L*,” it undergoes reversal and change, such as in the verse,¹²⁷ “They have provoked me with a non-god-*b’Lo El*-אל-בלא,” and,¹²⁸ “They have denied *HaShem*-יהו"ה and have said ‘is He not-*Lo Hoo*-הוא-לא.” Similarly, it is written,¹²⁹ “They have provoked Me with a

¹²⁵ Deuteronomy 29:28

¹²⁶ Deuteronomy 29:28 *ibid*.

¹²⁷ Deuteronomy 32:21

¹²⁸ Jeremiah 5:12

¹²⁹ Deuteronomy 32:21 *ibid*.

non-god-*B'Lo El* אל-בלא... therefore I shall provoke them with a non-people-*B'Lo Am* עם-בלא.”¹³⁰ However, in a way of comfort the verse also states,¹³¹ “In place of it being said to them, ‘You are not My people-*Lo Ami Atem* אתם-לא עמי,’ it will be said to them, ‘Children of the Living God-*Bnei El Chai* אל חי-בני.’” That is, in the same quality that they were disgraced, they are praised.

This is the meaning of the verse,¹³² “From there you will seek *HaShem* יהו"ה your God, and you will find Him, if you search for Him with all your heart and with all your soul.” What does the next verse say? “For, *HaShem* יהו"ה your God, is a merciful God-*E'l Rachum* א"ל רחום-*E'l Rachum* [He will not abandon you-*Lo Yarpecha* ירפך-לא].” Remember the important principle about this reversal. For, the word “no-*Lo*” bonds with the word “abandon you-*Yarpecha*,” and the quality then becomes the good quality of “He will not abandon you-*Lo Yarpecha*,” so that He does not say, “You are not My people-*Lo Ami Atem*,” and He does not say, “I shall provoke them with a non-people-*Lo Am*.” Remember these important principles.

You thus have learned that the letters of *HaShem* יהו"ה, blessed is He, all are letters [that are perceived] conceptually (*Muskalot*) and are not letters that are felt sensually (*Murgashot*), and that they indicate the existence and being-

¹³⁰ That is, with all other words, when their letters are reversed, their meaning changes. For example, the word “*E'l*” means “God,” but when its letters are reversed, they mean “No-*Lo*.” This applies to all words except the Name *HaShem* יהו"ה, which always means Being, regardless of the configuration of the letters. See Ginat Egoz, by Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 1, The Gate of Intrinsic Being (*Shaar HaHavayah*), p. 139.

¹³¹ Hosea 2:1

¹³² Deuteronomy 4:29

Havayah-הויה of all being-*Havayah*-הויה that exists in the world. This is the secret of the verse,¹³³ “But you who adhere to *HaShem*-יהוה your God, are all alive today.” That is, you who adhere to the letters of Being-*Havayah*-הויה are all sustained eternally according to the secret of [the verse],¹³⁴ “I *HaShem*-יהוה have not changed, and you, the sons of Yaakov, have not perished.”

This being so, contemplate that the letters of *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, called *Chashmal*-חשמל, are neither felt (*Murgashot*) nor bodily (*Gufaniyot*), neither a little or a lot. Rather, at the time they move [words] when read, they are hidden.

Now, if you question this and say, “But the letter *Aleph*-א is also hidden, such as in the words, ‘Created-*Bara*-ברא,’ or ‘Called-*Kara*-קרא.’” Know that the *Aleph*-א [also] is hidden, [but] does not move and is not separate from the root of the word. For, the letter *Aleph*-א does not stand in place of a motion or a vowel, and thus you find it bound to the root of the word. For, in the word “Called-*Kara*-קרא,” all three letters are of the root of the word.

This is not so of the letters of *HaShem*-יהוה. For example, in the words, “Watchmen will call out-*Karoo*-קראו” the letters “call-*Kara*-קרא” are the root (*Shoresh*), whereas the *Vav*-ו is additional to the root and moves [the word], but is hidden and separate. However, there is a great secret in the fact that the *Aleph*-א is hidden, but is not separate from the root, and does not move [the word]. This is to inform us of the elevated level of the first Emanation (*Atzilut*) that was

¹³³ Deuteronomy 4:4

¹³⁴ Malachi 3:6

emanated from *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, whose inner supernal aspect (*Panim*-פנים) and the matters therein are hidden, but is revealed through its backside (*Achorayim*-אחוריים).

Therefore, [on the one hand] the letter *Aleph*-א is concealed, such as in the words “Created-*Bara*-ברא” and “Called-*Kara*-קרא,” but [on the other hand] it is revealed, in that it is part of the root it is bound to. This is the secret of the verse,¹³⁵ “*HaShem*-יהו"ה alone is exalted,” may His Name be praised.

It is there that you may see the secret of the first emanation from *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and its great elevation. Yet, even so, be aware that it does not move any other by the essence of its own being, without the power of emanation and motion that comes to it from the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. For, He alone [possesses] the power of motion.

[This first emanation] is the secret of the name God-*Elohi*”m-אלהי"ם, [as in the verse],¹³⁶ “Or who makes one mute-*Eelem*-אלם...? Is it not I, *HaShem*-יהו"ה?” Contemplate this important principle explained about the mystery of the four letters of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, which move everything, but are hidden from everything, and separately transcendent from everything, yet are closer to everything than anything close. For, there is no motion to any of the moved without the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

This is similarly so of the matter of the letter *Aleph*-א, which is the first of the letters (*Otiyot*), but is hidden in its

¹³⁵ Isaiah 2:11

¹³⁶ Exodus 4:11

pronunciation, even though it does not move the other [letters]. Rather, it is included with the other letters as part of the root (*Shoresh*) of the word, in the same category, as we explained about the words “Created-*Bara*-ברא” and “Called-*Kara*-קרא.”

That is, the letter *Aleph*-א is also part of the root of the word, even though it is concealed in its pronunciation. This is because it indicates the existence of the first emanation from *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and its great elevation, concealment, and hiddenness. This is because of its inner aspect, which turns to face *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. Yet, even so, because of the essence of [the existence] of the emanation from *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, even that first creation is in a single category with the other creations, because of the essence of its existence and substance matter. This refers to the secret of God-*Elohi*"m-אלהי"ם, as we explained about the matter of [the verse], “Or who makes one mute-*Eelem*-אלם.”

Having awakened you to these important principles about the secret of the *Chashmal*-חשמל letters, we now must continue to inform you of what we have mentioned, with the help of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, may He be blessed and elevated.

The [next matter we must inform you of is the] secret of the letters called *Chayot*-חיות. You already have been informed of the order of what we have explained in regard to the Chariot (*Merkavah*) of Yechezkel, on the matter of the *Chashmal*-חשמל and the matter of the *Chayot*-חיות. We have [already] informed you of the order of the levels, of the external levels (*Chitzoniyut*) and the inner levels (*Pnimiyyut*). We now must continue to inform you how all levels in the

world depend on the letters (*Otiyot*). This is because the letters (*Otiyot*) are the source for all constructs and are the most primary of all foundations (*Yesodot*).

Now, of all the creations in the world, the letters are compared to a signet, through which an impression is formed in the wax. According to the impression of the signet and its forms, so will be the forms in the wax. According to this order, the world was actualized and constructed, that is, according to the forms of the letters. This is as stated in Sefer Yetzirah about the matter of [the letters] אַמ"ש, and the matter of [the letters] הַר"ז כַּפְר"ת, and the matter of [the letters] הַט"י לְנִי"ס עֲצ"ק. It states,¹³⁷ "He caused such-and-such letter to reign, and He tied a crown for it, and created such-and-such a thing with it in the year, and such-and-such a thing in the soul." For, by the form of each and every letter, three things were created in each of the forms amongst the three forms that are called world (*Olam*-עוֹלָם), year (*Shanah*-שָׁנָה), and soul (*Nefesh*-נֶפֶשׁ), as discussed in Sefer Yetzirah. All this was brought about with the form of the letters (*Otiyot*). For, the letters are like the stamp by which the form is made.

About this Shlomo said about the forms of the letters, this being the form of the inner wisdom,¹³⁸ "HaShem-יהוה made me as the beginning of His way, before His deeds of yore. I have reigned for all time, from the beginning, [from before there was the earth]. When there were no depths, I was formed... I was then His nursling-*Amon*-אֲמוֹן." About this, our sages, of blessed memory, stated,¹³⁹ "Do not only read it as

¹³⁷ See Sefer Yetzirah, Ch. 3

¹³⁸ Proverbs 8:22-23, 30

¹³⁹ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 1:1; Also see Shemot Rabba 30:9

‘nursling-*Amon*-אמן,’ but read it as ‘craftsman-*Uman*-אמן,” meaning, like a craftsman who creates something and affixes its form, so likewise the letters (*Otiyot*) are like the crafting of the world and all its forms and matters, both in the upper worlds and the lowly world.

Shlomo thus said,¹⁴⁰ “*HaShem*-יהוה founded the earth with wisdom,” in which Wisdom-*Chochmah* refers to the letter *Yod*-י. “He established the heavens with understanding-*Tevunah*,” referring to the letter *Hey*-ה. “Through knowledge-*Da’at* at the depths were cleaved,” referring to the letter *Vav*-ו. Although it is true that our sages, of blessed memory, stated,¹⁴¹ “This world was created with the letter *Hey*-ה and the coming world was created with the letter *Yod*-י,” we already have revealed hidden secrets about this to you in [the book] *Shaarei Tzeddek*, as well as in [our commentary] on the Chariot (*Merkavah*) of *Yechezkel*.

That is, there is something called “earth” (*Eretz*-ארץ) that [actually] is heaven (*Shamayim*-שמים), and there is something called “heaven” (*Shamayim*-שמים) that [actually] is earth (*Eretz*-ארץ), as in the mystery of the verse,¹⁴² “In the beginning God-*Elohi*”m-אלהים created the heavens and the earth,” and the subsequent verse,¹⁴³ “On the day that *HaShem* God-*HaShem Elohi*”m-אלהים יהוה made the earth and the heavens.”¹⁴⁴ It likewise is written,¹⁴⁵ “His glory is above earth and heaven.”

¹⁴⁰ Proverbs 3:19

¹⁴¹ Talmud Bavli, Menachot 29b

¹⁴² Genesis 1:1

¹⁴³ Genesis 2:4

¹⁴⁴ That is, we learn this from the fact that the two verses reverse the order, one saying, “the heavens and the earth” and the other saying, “the earth and the heavens.”

There are unnumerable awesomely wondrous matters contained here regarding the revelation of His glory and the greatness of His Kingship, blessed is He. [However, the principle here] is that all the worlds possess an “earth and heaven” and a “heaven and earth” within them, except that what is mostly known to us, are the created heavens and earth.

Nonetheless, according to the ways of the inner wisdom, there is a heaven of the heavens and an earth of the earth, this being an exalted and concealed mystery which is known to be in the supernal heights of the world, in the secret of the mysteries of the Chariot (*Merkavah*) and its levels and methods, and its other wondrously deep matters, known to those who have entered the inner Orchard (*Pardes*-פרדס) to gaze through the “colored lenses” (*Marot HaTzovot*- מראות הצובאות).¹⁴⁵

From here you can adequately learn and understand the verses, “until you recognize that Heaven rules.”¹⁴⁶ Thus, Shlomo cried out and said,¹⁴⁷ “May You hear from heaven, the foundation of Your abode,” about which our sages, of blessed memory, stated,¹⁴⁸ “He accepted the yoke of Heaven upon himself.” It all is hinted before you in an openly revealed way, which is known to those who enter the secrets of the Chariot (*Merkavah*).

After having informed you of this, let us return to our intention and state that the letters called *Chayot*-חיות are eleven letters that move the letters. However, although they move the letters, they too are moved with them. Thus, their

¹⁴⁵ Psalms 148:13

¹⁴⁶ Daniel 4:23

¹⁴⁷ Kings I 8:39

motion is compared to a stone in a person's hand, which does not move unless his hand moves with it. It literally is in this way that there is bodily motion to the *Chayot*-חיות, similar to the motion of the stone in one's hand, which is a motion of usage (*Shimush*) rather than a motion of the soul (*Neshamah*).

How is this so? We already have told you that the eleven letters called *Chayot*-חיות, which are the [letters] of “Whose craft is Understanding-*SheMelachto Binah*-שמלאכתו בינה,” are called the *Chayot*-חיות. They are called “living-*Chayot*-חיות” because each one has the power of life within itself, to be able to vitalize and move the word to the right, left, forward backward, upward, and downward. How is this so? By way of example, if you have the [root] word “do-*Pa'al*-פעל,” these eleven letters can come and revolve the word “do-*Pa'al*-פעל” in eleven different directions. For example, you can say:

1. “That he did-*ShePa'al*-שפעל”
2. “The doing-*Mifaal*-מפעל”
3. “To do-*Lif'ol*-לפעול”
4. “I will do-*Ef'ol*-אפעול”
5. “As he does-*K'Pe'ol*-כפעול”
6. “You will do-*Tif'al*-תפעל”
7. “And he did-*U'Pa'al*-ופפעל”
8. “When it is done-*b'Pe'ol*-בפעול”
9. “He will do-*Yifal*-יפעל”
10. “It was done-*Nif'al*-נפעל”
11. “The doer-*HaPo'el*-הפועל”

¹⁴⁸ See Talmud Bavli, Chagigah 12b; Sefer HaBahir 100

We thus see that these eleven letters revolve the word “do-*Pa'al*-פעל” in eleven opposite [motions] and revolve them in revolutions that differ from each other. From these opposites you can construct and understand the quality of the Holy Language, the quality of the Torah, and its foundations and construct, in that all actions in the world and their secrets are tied to them. Each one of these eleven revolutions is of great necessity, and if any one of them were missing, the act would be incomplete, and would be like a person who is missing an eye, a hand, a foot or any one of his limbs.

Thus, these eleven letters move the word in all directions of motion. Nonetheless, this motion is not like the motion of the letters of *Chashmal*-לשמ"ל, which are the letters of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, may He be blessed and elevated, that move all other letters by their vowels.

This is because the *Chashmal*-לשמ"ל letters are hidden, similar to the motion of the intellectual soul (*Neshamah HaSichlit*), which moves the body, but remains hidden. In the same way, the motion of the *Chashmal*-לשמ"ל letters is hidden, such that when you say “His son-*Bno*-בנו,” or “His name-*Shmo*-שמו,” in which the letter that moves the word is mentioned but is hidden, and remains separate [from the word].

In contrast, these eleven letters, called “living-*Chayot*-חיו"ת,” do not move the others unless they themselves are moved with them. Moreover, they are openly revealed and publicized at the time that they move [the letters], such as when you say, “I will do-*Ef'al*-אפעל,” the *Aleph*-א which moves the [root] word “*Pa'al*-פעל,” is itself read together with

the word that it moves. That is, without the motion of the *Aleph*-א, which moves the [root] word “*Pa'al*-פעל” when you say “I will do-*Ef'al*-אפעל,” it then is not moved or activated to that action called “I will do-*Ef'al*-אפעל.”

This is the secret of the verse,¹⁴⁹ “When the *Chayot*-חיות would go, the *Ophanim*-אופנים would go with them etc.” The same is literally so here. Contemplate this matter with great understanding-*Binah*, for it is of great necessity, and from here you will enter many inner gates that are impossible for a person to enter without the key.

Now that you know this, contemplate whenever you come across the letters called *Chayot*-חיות, and you will know and have insight as to why they are called “living-*Chayot*-חיות.” Now, if you question this, saying, “Did you not say that the letters called *Chashmal*-לשמ are the letters of *HaShem*-יהויה, blessed is He, these being the letters יהויה, and that they move [the others] with intellectual motion? This being so, why do you also count them here together with the letters called *Chayot*-חיות, which are the letters “Whose craft is Understanding-*SheMelachto Binah*-שמלאכתו בינה”? For, these letters also include the three letters of His Name, that you previously called *Chashmal*-לשמ and you now are calling *Chayot*-חיות?”

Know that we already have awakened you to this before, and we told you that the letters of *HaShem*-יהויה, blessed is He, [are called *Chashmal*-לשמ letters] when they move with the intellectual motion that is appropriate to them, as they move in place of the vowels, whereby they move [the

¹⁴⁹ Ezekiel 1:19

words] but are hidden [and separate]. However, when the letters of *HaShem*-יהו"ה are present in other places and positions, which are not known to be intellectual motions, then they too mingle with the other letters and revolve with them.

This is similar to what we explained before, that in regard to the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, when these four letters are written in the order of the Name, they then are holy and it is forbidden to erase them. Contemplate this important principle, for it is of great necessity to you in all places where you will need to enter and grasp the fundamental matter.

Know then, that [in regard to] the letters of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, even though they move [the letters] with the motion of the *Chashmal*-לחשמ"ל, they sometimes move [the letters] with the motion of the *Chayot*-חיות, and likewise, they sometimes even become *Ophanim*-אופנים [letters], depending on what is appropriate to the place, such as when you encounter them, and they too are moved by the power of the letters called *Chayot*-חיות. It all depends on the place in which they stand. This principle that I am transmitting to you here is very important, and you should remember it well, so that I need not repeat it elsewhere.

Know that the letters called *Chashmal*-לחשמ"ל, which are the letters of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, are thus found present in Torah in three matters, whereas the letters of the *Chayot*-חיות are present in two matters. How so? [Firstly], they are positioned in [the place of the] intellectual motion, such as in the words "I-*Ani*-אני," "My name-*Shmee*-שמי," "She said-*Amrah*-אמרה," "She guarded-*Shamrah*-שמרה," "They

guarded-*Shamroo*-שמרו,” and the like. This is the motion of the *Chashmal*-ל-חשמ״ל.

They sometimes are positioned in [the position of] bodily motion, such in the words, “He will pass-*Ya’avor*-יעבר,” “The one who passes-*HaOver*-העובר,” or “and he passed-*V’Avar*-ועבר.” We see that these three letters are positioned at the head of the word, to indicate the intention in the [root word] “passed-*Avar*-עבר” and to which direction it [is turned and] needed. This is the motion of the *Chayot*-חיות.

They sometimes are positioned as the form of the *Ophanim*-אופנים, which neither move with the motion of the *Chayot*-חיות, nor with the motion of the *Chashmal*-ל-חשמ״ל, such as in the words, “nation-*Goy*-גוי,” or “living-*Chai*-חי.” That is, the letter *Yod*-י in these words is only the root (*Shoresh*) of the word, and it neither moves it with the motion of the *Chashmal*-ל-חשמ״ל, nor with the motion of the *Chayot*-חיות. This being so, discover that the *Chashmal*-ל-חשמ״ל letters are used in the Torah in these three ways.

However, the letters called *Chayot*-חיות are only used in two ways. The first use is the bodily motion, such as in the root word “passed-*Avar*-עבר” in which these letters of “Whose craft is Understanding-*SheMelachto Binah*-בינה-שמלאכתו” [move the word] in a way that they affect the bodily motion.

1. “That he passed-*SheAvar*-שעבר”
2. “From passing-*MeiAvar*-מעבור”
3. “To pass-*LaAvar*-לעבור”
4. “I will pass-*E’Evor*-אעבור”
5. “As he passed-*K’Avar*-כעבור”
6. “You will pass-*Ta’avor*-תעבור”

7. “And he passed-*v’Avar*-וְעָבַר-*v*”
8. “When he passed-*b’Avor*-בְּעָבוֹר-*b*”
9. “He will pass-*Ya’avor*-יַעְבֹּר-*Ya*”
10. “We will pass-*Na’avor*-נַעְבֹּר-*Na*”
11. “He who passes-*HaOver*-הַעֹבֵר-*Ha*”

The second use is that these same letters called *Chayot*-חיות, sometimes also return and become *Ophanim*-אופנים. By way of analogy, if you say the word “king-*Melech*-מֶלֶךְ,” even though these three letters are of the letters “Whose craft is Understanding-*SheMelachto Binah*-שְׂמֵלֶאֱכֶתוּ בִּינָה,” nevertheless, all three return to being *Ophanim*-אופנים in the word “king-*Melech*-מֶלֶךְ.” Thus, to be moved they require motion from other letters besides them, such as:

1. “That he reigned-*SheMalach*-שְׂמֵלֶךְ-*She*”
2. “From his reign-*MeeMeloch*-מִמְלֹךְ-*Mee*”
3. “To reign-*LeeMeloch*-לְמֹלֹךְ-*Lee*”
4. “I will reign-*Emloch*-אֶמְלֹךְ-*Em*”
5. “As he reigns-*KeMeloch*-כְּמֹלֹךְ-*Ke*”
6. “You will reign-*Teemloch*-תִּמְלֹךְ-*Teem*”
7. “And he reigned-*U’Malach*-וּמֵלֶךְ-*U*”
8. “When he reigns-*BeMeloch*-בְּמֹלֹךְ-*Be*”
9. “He will reign-*Yeemloch*-יַמְלֹךְ-*Yeem*”
10. “We will reign-*Neemloch*-נַמְלֹךְ-*Neem*”
11. “The one who reigns-*HaMolech*-הַמֹּלֵךְ-*Ha*”

We thus see that even the *Chayot*-חיות letters are moved by the power of the letters of “Whose craft is Understanding-*SheMelachto Binah*-שְׂמֵלֶאֱכֶתוּ בִּינָה.” We

likewise see that the letters called *Chayot*-חיות are moved by the power of other letters, even though they themselves move the others. They thus have these two uses, but do not have a third use. This is because the third, intellectual use, is exclusive to the *Chashmal*-לחשמ letters.

Likewise, the letters called *Ophanim*-אופנים, which are [the letters] “The sprout of righteousness shall blossom and soar-*Geza Tzedek Parach Tas* ט”ס-פר”ח צד”ק גז”ע,” only have one use. That is, they are root letters (*Shorashim*) that are comparable to a stone, which [only] is moved by the power of the hand, as we now will explain with the help of *HaShem*-יהו”ה, blessed is He.

The letters called *Ophanim*-אופנים, these being [the letters] “The sprout of righteousness shall blossom and soar-*Geza Tzedek Parach Tas* ט”ס-פר”ח צד”ק גז”ע,” are eleven letters which are moved by the power of the other letters, but cannot move on their own, unless they are moved by the other letters in the two [other] kinds of motions, that is, either the intellectual motion called *Chashmal*-לחשמ, or the bodily motion called *Chayot*-חיות.

In regard to the intellectual motion how is this so? For example, by way of analogy, if you take the word “blossom-*Perach*-פרח, these three letters do not move unless the *Chashmal* letters are added to them, these being the intellectual motion, such as “the blossoms-*Pirchei* [of the vine],” or “the vine has blossomed-*Parchah*,”¹⁵⁰ and the like. You thus find that the letters of *HaShem*-יהו”ה move the

¹⁵⁰ Song of Songs 6:11 and elsewhere.

letters of “blossom-*Perach*-פרה,” though they are hidden and remain separated from them.

Likewise, the letters “blossom-*Perach*-פרה” are not moved, even with a bodily motion, unless they are moved by the letters called *Chayot*-חיות, which are the letters of “Whose craft is Understanding-*SheMelachto Binah*-שמלאכתו בינה,” such as when you say:

1. “That blossomed-*SheParach*-שפרה-פרה”
2. “Which blossoms-*Mafriyach*-מפריה-פרה”
3. “To blossom-*Lifro ’ach*-לפרוה-פרה”
4. “I will blossom-*Efrach*-אפרה-פרה”
5. “As he blossoms-*Keefro ’ach*-כפרוה-פרה”
6. “You will blossom-*Tifrach*-תפרה-פרה”
7. “And he blossomed-*U’Parach*-ופרה-פרה”
8. “When he blossomed-*beeFero ’ach*-בפרוה-פרה”
9. “He will blossom-*Yeefro ’ach*-יפרוה-פרה”
10. “We will blossom-*Neefrach*-נפרה-פרה”
11. “The blossom-*HaPerach*-הפרה-פרה”

We thus see that all eleven letters of “Whose craft is Understanding-*SheMelachto Binah*-שמלאכתו בינה” move the letters “blossom-*Perach*-פרה” with a bodily motion as well, this being the motion of the *Ophanim*-אופנים as they are moved by the *Chayot*-חיות. About this the verse states,¹⁵¹ “When the *Chayot*-חיות would go, the *Ophanim*-אופנים would go with them,” literally. In other words, when the *Chayah*-חיה moves, the *Ophan*-אופן that is juxtaposed to it moves with it, literally.

¹⁵¹ Ezekiel 1:19

For example, in the words “*Ephrach*-אפרה,” “*Tifrach*-תפרח” or “*Nifrach*-נפרח,” the [prefix] letters *Aleph*-א, *Tav*-ת and *Nun*-נון are *Chayot*-חיות [letters], whereas the letters “*Perach*-פרח” are *Ophanim*-אופנים [letters], and when the *Chayot*-חיות letters move, the letters “*Perach*-פרח” are moved. That is, when you say the words “*Ephrach*-אפרה,” “*Tifrach*-תפרח” or “*Nifrach*-נפרח,” when the [prefix] letters את”ן move, the letters of “*Perach*-פרח” move with them.

You thus have learned that the letters called *Ophanim*-אופנים have no motion to any side or matter, except through the letters of *Chashmal*-חשמל, which are [letters] of vowelization (*Nikud*), or through the letters called *Chayot*-חיות, this being the secret of the usage in the act of [speaking a] a language.

After having informed you of these important principles about the mystery of the division of all the letters into three categories, which are the construct and makeup of all the worlds, and are the secret of the Chariot (*Merkavah*) that Yechezkel saw, these being the mystery of the [three mentions of] “I saw-*Va’eire*-וארא,”¹⁵² “I saw-*Va’eire*,”¹⁵³ and “I saw-*Va’eire*,”¹⁵⁴ which are the secret of the *Chashmal*-חשמל, the *Chayot*-חיות, and the *Ophanim*-אופנים, these being the mystery of the letters “*Hein*-ה”ן-55” and *Yeh*”ו-יה,” [and the letters] “Whose craft is Understanding-*SheMelachto Binah*-שמלאכתו בינה,” and [the letters], “The sprout of righteousness shall blossom and soar-*Geza Tzedek Parach Tas*-ט”ס-פר”ח צד”ק גז”ע,” we now must continue and inform you of all their levels in the orders of the world, and

¹⁵² Ezekiel 1:4

¹⁵³ Ezekiel 1:15

¹⁵⁴ Ezekiel 1:27

how they all are conducted according to the order of the twenty-two letters.

We therefore shall say as follows: Know that the division of the four foundational elements into three letters are imperative. How so? The Torah said,¹⁵⁵ “In the beginning God-*Elohi*”מ-אלהי” created the heavens and the earth.” Now, the heavens (*Shamayim*-שמים) consist of three foundational elements of substance, called the elements (*Yesodot*) of fire (*Aish*-שא), air (*Ru'ach*-רוח) and water (*Mayim*-מים), and in their inner forms, the heavens (*Shamayim*-שמים) [themselves] are made to be fourth to them, and is the mystery of their ”earth” (*Eretz*-ארץ). Similarly, in the earth below, there also are the three foundational elements (*Yesodot*) of fire (*Aish*-שא), air (*Ru'ach*-רוח) and water (*Mayim*-מים), all of which are [above] the earth and encompass it, and the earth is made to be their fourth.

Now, the knowledge of this is very difficult and distant from what the philosophers thought about the nature of the four elements. However, they had no way of entering into the depth of these matters, except like a blind man, who feels around in a dark chimney. So too, they felt around in darkness without light. This is because they did not know that the division of the foundational elements is in three paths, meaning, only three motions.

The first is the foundational element (*Yesod*) of fire (*Aish*-שא) whose motion is upward. The second is the foundational element of air (*Ru'ach*-רוח) whose motion is circular. The third is the foundational element of water

¹⁵⁵ Genesis 1:1

(*Mayim*-מים) whose motion is downward. And there is no fourth motion.

How greatly they erred, in thinking that there are two upward motions and two downward motions in the foundational elements. However, this is not so, for in all the motions there only are three motions. Thus, if there were four foundational elements (*Yesodot*), there necessary would be four motions.

Nonetheless, they are divided into two categories. The first category is called “earth” (*Eretz*-ארץ), and the second category is called “heaven” (*Shamayim*-שמים), each of which has three foundational elements, these being the three motions called the “triplicate cord.”¹⁵⁶ One ascends, one descends, and one encompasses, and those that are carried are the “heavens” (*Shamayim*-שמים). This is the order of the makeup of all four foundational elements. If not for the fact that we are not permitted to do so, we would show you many inner matters about the matter of the letters (*Otiyot*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, the gates of which are closed to the blind.

Whosoever understands the important principles in the chambers of the inner Chariots (*Merkavot*), will understand the mystery of the four seasons of the year, two of which are equal, with two remaining, one being ascendant and the other being descendant. In conclusion, even though the foundational elements are [known to be] simply four, whosoever knows the order of their qualities, knows that they are three, and that the [remaining] one is the receptacle that is affected by the three, through which there are four.

¹⁵⁶ Ecclesiastes 4:12

These matters cannot be seen through the nature of the sight of those who sit outside, being that they only are seen through gazing at the inner Chariots (*Merkavot*). This is because the division of the categories of the foundational elements (*Yesodot*) into three paths, is according to the secret of [the letters] אמ"ש, which are three letters that correspond to three elemental foundations (*Yesodot*).

That is, in the secret of *Aleph-Mem-Shin*-שמ"א, the letter *Mem*-מ is silent (*Domem*), the letter *Shin*-ש whistles (*Shoreket*), and the letter *Aleph*-א is the air, which is the decisor that mediates between them. However, those who divide the foundational elements into four, according to what they surmise through their visual perception, where do they have a decisor that mediates between them?

Rather, the division of the foundational elements (*Yesodot*) is into three, and the earth is subsumed in them, to the point that we discover that there are three levels contained in the earth (*Eretz*-ארץ). The same is also the rule in regard to the heavens (*Shamayim*-שמים), as known to those who know the hidden mysteries. For there is an “earth” (*Eretz*-ארץ) that is called “heaven” (*Shamayim*-שמים), and there is a “heaven” (*Shamayim*-שמים) that is called “earth” (*Eretz*-ארץ).

Now, in the Chariot (*Merkavah*) of Yechezkel it states,¹⁵⁷ “Behold! One *Ophan*-אופן was on the earth (*baAretz*-בארץ),” which Yonatan ben Uziel translates as “below-*BeMilra*-במלרע the height of the heavens.” Thus, the Torah proclaims and states that the earth (*Eretz*-ארץ) includes three

¹⁵⁷ Ezekiel 1:15

foundational elements (*Yesodot*) within it, one that ascends, one that descends, and one that mediates between them.

The earth (*Eretz*-אֶרֶץ) includes all three, and is the receptacle for them all. The Torah therefore states,¹⁵⁸ “The earth was empty and void, with darkness upon the surface of the deep, and the spirit of God hovered upon the surface of the waters.” The “darkness” (*Choshech*-חֹשֶׁךְ) referred to in this verse is the foundational element of fire (*Aish*-אֵשׁ), as in the verse,¹⁵⁹ “Total darkness (*Choshech*-חֹשֶׁךְ) lies in wait for his hidden treasures; an unfanned fire (*Aish*-אֵשׁ) will consume him.” Below is the water (*Mayim*-מַיִם), and air (*Ru'ach*-רוּחַ) is in the middle and mediates between them. The verse thus states, “the spirit of God (*Ru'ach Elohi*”מֵ-אֱלֹהִים) hovered upon the surface of the waters (*Mayim*-מַיִם).”

Now that you know this, we shall begin to inform you of the order of all the levels in the world, and how they are tied to the order of the twenty-two letters in this way, as it states in *Sefer Yetzirah*,¹⁶⁰ “Twenty-two foundational letters: Three mothers, seven doubles, and twelve simple.” The three mothers are the letters אַמ”ש, in which the letter *Mem*-מ is silent (*Domem*), the letter *Shin*-ש whistles (*Shoreket*), and the *Aleph*-א is the air and the decisor that mediates between them.

Having informed you of this, we now must awaken you to the foundation of how the entire world depends for its forms upon the order of the three “mothers” *Aleph-Mem-Shin*-אַמ”ש, the seven doubled (*Kefulot*) [letters, which are called doubled] because they receive either hard (*Dagesh*-שׁ) or soft

¹⁵⁸ Genesis 1:2

¹⁵⁹ Job 20:26

¹⁶⁰ See *Sefer Yetzirah* 1:2

(*Rafah*-רפה) pronunciation, these being the letters כפר"ת, and although the *Reish*-ר does not become [fully] softened, it nonetheless is included amongst them. There then are [the letters] called the twelve simple letters (*Peshutot*), these being קו"ק, being that they do not receive a softening (*Rafah*-רפה). We therefore must inform you how all the forms of the heavens and earth are tied to these twenty-two letters, in the way of אמ"ש, in the way of כפר"ת, and in the way of קו"ק. I will now explain their form. The three “mothers” אמ"ש correspond to the three elemental foundations in the following way:

	World-Olam-עולם	Time-Shanah-שנה	Soul-Nefesh-נפש
ש	Foundation of Fire (<i>Aish</i> -אש) Afternoon (<i>Tzaharayim</i> -צהריים)	Heat of summer (<i>Chom</i> -חום)	Head (<i>Rosh</i> -ראש)
מ	Foundation of Water (<i>Mayim</i> -מים) Evening (<i>Erev</i> -ערב)	Cold of winter (<i>Kor</i> -קור)	The abdomen (<i>Beten</i> -בטן)
ר	The celestial sphere of Mercury (<i>Kochav</i> -כוכב)	The fifth day [of the week] (<i>Yom Chameeshee</i> -יום ה')	The right ear (<i>Ozen Yemin</i> -אוזן ימין)
כ	The celestial sphere of the Sun (<i>Chamah</i> -חמה)	The third day [of the week] (<i>Yom Shleeshee</i> -יום ג')	The right nostril (<i>Af Yemin</i> -אף ימין)
ג	The celestial sphere of Jupiter (<i>Tzeddek</i> -צדק)	The first day [of the week] (<i>Yom Rishon</i> -יום א')	The right eye (<i>Ayin Yemin</i> -עין ימין)
ה	The constellation of Aires	The month of	The Liver

	(טלה- <i>Taleh</i>)	ניסן (Nissan)	(כבד- <i>Kaved</i>)
ז	The constellation of Gemini (תאומים- <i>Te'umim</i>)	The month of Sivan (סיון)	The Spleen (טחול- <i>Tchul</i>)
ט	The constellation of Leo (אריה- <i>Aryeh</i>)	The month of Av (אב)	The right kidney (<i>Kuliyah</i> כוליא- <i>Yemanit</i> 'ימנית)
ל	The constellation of Libra (מאזנים- <i>Ma'oznayim</i>)	The month of Tishrei (תשרי)	The esophagus (וושט- <i>Veshet</i>)
ס	The constellation of Sagittarius (קשת- <i>Keshet</i>)	The month of Kislev (כסלו)	The right hand (<i>Yad Yemin</i> - יד 'ימין)
צ	The constellation of Aquarius (דלי- <i>Deli</i>)	The month of Shvat (שבט)	The right foot (<i>Regel Yemin</i> רגל ימין)
א	The foundation of air (רוח- <i>Ru'ach</i>) Morning (<i>Boker</i> -בקר)	Abundance: spring and autumn (<i>Reviyah</i> -רויה)	The Torso (גויה- <i>Geviyah</i>)
ה	The celestial sphere of the Moon (לבנה- <i>Levanah</i>)	The sixth day [of the week] (<i>Yom Sheeshee</i> יום ו')	The left ear (<i>Ozen Smol</i> אוזן שמאל)
פ	The celestial sphere of Venus (נוגה- <i>Nogah</i>)	The fourth day of the week (<i>Yom</i> <i>Revee'ee</i> -יום ד')	The left nostril (<i>Af Smol</i> אף שמאל)
ד	The celestial sphere of Mars (מאדים- <i>Ma'adim</i>)	The second day [of the week] (יום ב'- <i>Yom Sheini</i>)	The left eye (<i>Ayin Smol</i> עין שמאל)
ב	The celestial sphere of Saturn (שבתאי- <i>Shabtai</i>)	The seventh day [of the week] (<i>Yom Shvee'ee</i> יום ז')	The mouth (פה- <i>Peh</i>)
ו	The constellation of Taurus (שור- <i>Shor</i>)	The month of Iyyar (אייר)	The Gallbladder (מרה- <i>Marah</i>)
ה	The constellation of Cancer	The month of	The Stomach

	(סרטן- <i>Sartan</i>)	Tammuz (תמוז)	(מסס- <i>Masas</i>)
י	The constellation of Virgo (בתולה- <i>Bethulah</i>)	The month of Elul (אלול)	The left kidney (<i>Kuliyah Smoleet</i> - כוליא שמאלית)
נ	The constellation of Scorpio (עקרב- <i>Akrav</i>)	The month of Cheshvan (חשוון)	The intestines (<i>Mei'ayim</i> -מעיים)
ע	The constellation of Capricorn (גדי- <i>Gedi</i>)	The month of Teivet (טבת)	The left hand (<i>Yad Smol</i> יד שמאל)
ק	The constellation of Pisces (דגים- <i>Dagim</i>)	The month of Adar (אדר)	The left foot <i>Regel Smol</i> - רגל שמאל

You thus have been shown all the forms of the heavens and earth and everything therein, which include all forms, and they all are included in the order of the twenty-two letters that we mentioned. These include the forms of the foundational elementals (*Yesodot*), the stars and constellations, and the forms of time according to their kind, as well as the forms in the body of man and its paths. When you contemplate these three kinds of forms and the mystery of the twenty-two letters, you will discover that the entire creation of the world and its kinds and compositions, all depend on the letters (*Otiyot*-אותיות).

Whosoever knows the matters hidden and concealed in Sefer Yetzirah will contemplate the depth of the letters (*Otiyot*), and will realize that no creature is capable of contemplating them to their ultimate depth. How much more is this so in regard to the Torah, which is woven from the letters (*Otiyot*-אותיות).

An example is the word “In the beginning-*Bereishit*-בראשית,” in which the six letters are comingled with one another. It is in the admixture of these letters, and the depth of understanding their revolutions and combinations, that the prophets and seers would enter into the depths of the Torah. This is something that it is not in the capacity of the creatures of the world to grasp to their ultimate depth, but only *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

I will give you an analogy for the matter of weaving the words (*Teivot*-תיבות) from the letters (*Otiyot*-אותיות). This is comparable to a doctor who is expert in knowing the nature of every medicinal remedy. That is, he knows each medicine as it is unto itself, its nature, its strengths, its properties and its uses. Once one knows the nature of each medicine as it is, separate unto itself, when he then needs to compound a medicinal remedy, out of two, three, four or more ingredients, to whatever degree he desires or needs to compose them, then upon mixing the nature of the components, which previously were separate, upon mixing them as one and mingling them with each other, the healer will then bring about the ultimate and best healing, as needed according to the illness. However, if the doctor does not know the nature of each component, as it is separate unto itself, he will never be able to make a beneficial remedy that will bring about the needed healing.

The same is so of the mystery of each letter of Torah. *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, knows the quality and makeup of each letter, its forms, properties, strengths, and functions. When he bonds two, three, four or more letters together, upon the bonding of these letters (*Otiyot*-אותיות) into a word (*Teivah*-תיבה), there comes to be the construct and

establishment of the Supernal Wisdom-*Chochmah* in the worlds He created.

This matter is “very, very deep, who can fathom it.”¹⁶¹ Rather, it only can be grasped by way of received knowledge from our teacher Moshe, peace be upon Him, who received it at Sinai, and transmitted it to those who followed after him. These are the secrets of the Torah and its depth, about which King Dovid, peace be upon him, stated,¹⁶² “Unveil my eyes that I may perceive wonders from Your Torah.” Similarly, Shlomo cried out and said,¹⁶³ “I thought I could become wise, but it is beyond me.”

One who understands this important principle that we have mentioned and explained, will be able to sense the secrets of words [in Torah] that are missing letters, that have additional letters, and that are whole. For example, what is the reason that in the verse,¹⁶⁴ “These are the generations-*Toldot*-תולדות of the heavens and the earth” [the word “generations-*Toldot*-תולדות”] is fully spelled, with two letters *Vav*-ו. What is the reason that in the verse,¹⁶⁵ “These are the generations-*Toldot*-תלדות of Yishmael” [the word “generations-*Toldot*-תלדות”] is spelled without even a single *Vav*-ו. What is the reason that in the verse,¹⁶⁶ “These are the generations-*Toldot*-תולדות of Yitzchak,” [the word “generations-*Toldot*-תולדות”] is spelled with the first *Vav*-ו, but is missing the second *Vav*-ו. What is the reason that in the verse,¹⁶⁷ “These are the

¹⁶¹ Ecclesiastes 7:24

¹⁶² Psalms 119:18

¹⁶³ Ecclesiastes 7:23

¹⁶⁴ Genesis 2:4

¹⁶⁵ Genesis 25:12

¹⁶⁶ Genesis 25:19

¹⁶⁷ Genesis 37:2

generations-*Toldot*-תלדות of Yaakov,” it is spelled missing the first *Vav*-ו, but with the second *Vav*-ו. The same applies to all other words in Torah that are fully spelled (*Male*-מלא) or are lacking (*Chaser*-חסר), each according to their kind. For, with these principles you will construct and perceive the wisdom of the depths of Torah.

How much more so, when you also consider the thorns (*Kotzin*-קוצין) of the letters and their crowns (*Tagin*-תגינין). For example, in Tractate Eirubin,¹⁶⁸ our sages, of blessed memory, stated that King Solomon would expound, “mounds and mounds-*Tilei Tilim*-תלי תלים” of laws, derived from each stroke and thorn (*Kotz*-קוצ) of the letters (*Otiyot*-אותיות), and he thus said,¹⁶⁹ “His thorns (*Kevutzotav*-קווצותיו) are mounds and mounds (*Taltalim*-תלתלים).”¹⁷⁰ Similarly, see what they said about Rabbi Akiva in Tractate Menachot¹⁷¹ about this matter.

How much more so when you also consider all the vowels of every letter, which differ from each other. These are very great principles that involve the depth of the Torah and its secrets. How much more is this so when you also consider the hard (*Dagesh*-דגש) and soft (*Rafah*-רפה) pronunciations [of the letters, such as] “*Shibboleth*-שבבלת” and “*Sibboleth*-סבלת.”¹⁷² How much more so when they also are accompanied by the cantillations (*Ta’amim*-טעמים), such as the *Zarka*, *Makaf* and *Segolta*. Some [cantillations] elongate [the word], and some shorten it, some [lean] to the right and some

¹⁶⁸ Talmud Bavli, Eruvin 21b

¹⁶⁹ Song of Songs 5:11

¹⁷⁰ This verse is usually translated as, “His locks are curly.”

¹⁷¹ Talmud Bavli, Menachot 29b

¹⁷² See Judges 12:6

[lean] to the left. Who then can stand [firmly] upon the awesome wisdom of the Torah and its precision and depth? This is our sages, of blessed memory, stated in Tractate Chagigah,¹⁷³ that [previously] the Jewish people possessed “600 orders of Mishnah, and some say 700 orders of Mishnah.”

Thus, it is in such a way that a person should contemplate the orders of the Torah, which depend on the wisdom of the Ever Present One, blessed is He, and realize that no one can grasp even one-millionth of the mounds and mounds that depend on even a single one of the letters of the Torah.

Thus, having awakened you to these important principles, we will suffice ourselves with what we have informed you of here. May *HaShem*-יהו"ה, in His mercies and kindness, open our hearts to His Torah and guide us in the path of His *mitzvot*, for the sake of His mercies and His kindnesses. Let us merit the time, about which the verse states,¹⁷⁴ “For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of *HaShem*-יהו"ה as the water covers the ocean floor.” “Blessed is *HaShem*-יהו"ה forever, Amen and Amen!”¹⁷⁵

¹⁷³ Talmud Bavli, Chagigah 14a

¹⁷⁴ Isaiah 11:9

¹⁷⁵ Psalms 89:53

