

ספר

# שערי קדושה

חלק ד'

למורנו ורבנו הרב הקדוש

רבי חיים ויטאל זצ"ל

## Gates of Holiness

Part 4

By the Holy Kabbalist

Rabbi Chaim Vital

A practical guide to attaining Divine Inspiration, the Holy Spirit, Prophecy, the revelation of Eliyahu the prophet and the souls of Tzaddikim etc.

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# Warning

The Holy Torah, the living words of the Living God, commands us,<sup>1</sup> “You shall not desecrate My Holy Name.” In explaining the true unity and path of 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.<sup>2</sup>

Now that we have entered the era of the true and complete redemption, it is our mitzvah and obligation to disseminate these teachings,<sup>3</sup> “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 by the Prophet Amos,<sup>4</sup> “Then he shall say: ‘Silence, for we must not make mention of the name of *Hashem!*’” Rather, one must toil only to **know** *HaShem* and thereby know His name, as stated,<sup>5</sup> “For he has loved Me, therefore I shall deliver him; I

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<sup>1</sup> Leviticus 22:32

<sup>2</sup> Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 115a

<sup>3</sup> Kings I 8:60

<sup>4</sup> Amos 6:10

<sup>5</sup> Psalms 91:14

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 warns us that the only sin *HaShem* does not forgive, is the sin of bearing His Holy Name in vain.<sup>6</sup> 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 either be enjoyed by someone who will appreciate its value, or if is tattered and worn 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*. This is as stated,<sup>7</sup> “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

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<sup>6</sup> Exodus 20:6

<sup>7</sup> Talmud Bavli, Brachot 13b

realize the time,<sup>8</sup> “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 solely to know *HaShem*. Therefore, the Jews will be great sages<sup>9</sup> 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 world shall be filled with the knowledge of *HaShem* as the waters cover the ocean floor.’”

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The Translators

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<sup>8</sup> Mishneh Torah, Melachim u’Milchamot 12:5

<sup>9</sup> Who will teach the entire world about *HaShem*, for all the nations will be thirsty for this knowledge and will greatly desire it.



# Part Four

## The ways of activating and attaining the Holy Spirit (*Ru'ach HaKodesh*) of Divine Inspiration

In the seventh gate of the third section, we already explained that there are five levels of attainment of the Holy Spirit (*Ru'ach HaKodesh*), which are:

1. The Holy Spirit (*Ru'ach HaKodesh*)
2. Revelations of souls of the righteous *Tzaddikim*
3. Revelations of angels called *Maggidim*
4. The revelation of the prophet Eliyahu, who is remembered for good.
5. Dreams

We explained that each of these levels can be attained automatically, through a person sanctifying himself and engaging in the study of Torah, without need of any other actions. It is, however, also possible for these levels to be attained through specific courses of action, provided that the one who does so is fitting and prepared for its attainment. It is this second manner of attainment of the Holy Spirit (*Ru'ach HaKodesh*) that will be explained in this section of the book, which is a compendium of the methods already found written in the works of earlier sages.

This section is divided into three gates. The first gate discusses the ways that one should approach and conduct himself in action. The second discusses the manners of attaining the Holy Spirit (*Ru'ach HaKodesh*). The third discusses the conditions and methods required for the attainment of the Holy Spirit (*Ru'ach HaKodesh*). It should be noted, however, that in my main book called *Etz Chayim*, I already have written a number of unifications (*Yichudim*) and various different wondrous paths in regard to the matter of attaining and grasping the Holy Spirit (*Ru'ach HaKodesh*). If *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, shall allow it, I shall write them with more extended explanations in a volume unto itself.

## The Matter of Attainment of Grasp (*Inyan HaHasagah*)

In this composition that I, the youth Chayim, have composed, I have compiled together all that I have found scattered amongst different books in regard to man's attainment of grasp with respect to three types of attainments. The lowest amongst them is the dream, the second is to converse with [the prophet] Eliyahu, who is remembered for the good, and the third is the loftiest of them, and is the manifestation of the Holy Spirit of Divine Inspiration (*Ru'ach HaKodesh*).

These three types are divided into two manners. The first manner is in regard to the prerequisites required in man in order to be fitting of attainment of grasp, and the second manner is in regard to the method of its attainment. We shall begin with the first manner.



# Part Four

## Gate One

[The prerequisites required in a person to be fitting of attainment]

1. **Rabbi Pinchas ben Ya'ir said:** Alacrity leads to cleanliness, cleanliness leads to purity, purity leads to separation, separation leads to holiness, holiness leads to humility, humility leads to fear of sin, fear of sin leads to the Holy Spirit (*Ru'ach HaKodesh*), the Holy Spirit (*Ru'ach HaKodesh*) leads to the resurrection of the dead (*Techiyat HaMeitim*), and the resurrection of the dead is brought about by the prophet Eliyahu, who is remembered for good. There are other versions of this that I have not written here.<sup>10</sup>

2. **The letter of the Ramban**, of righteous memory, sent from Acco to Barcelona, to his son: Hear, my son, the instruction of your father, and do not forget the teaching of your mother.<sup>11</sup> Habituate yourself to always speaking calmly to every person. This will prevent you from anger, a serious character flaw that brings people to sin. As our sages, of blessed memory, stated,<sup>12</sup> “Whoever flares up in anger is subject to the

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<sup>10</sup> Mishnah Sotah 9:15; Talmud Bavli, Sotah 49b; Avodah Zarah 20b; Talmud Yerushalmi, Shekalim 3:3; Shabbat 1:3

<sup>11</sup> Proverbs 1:8

<sup>12</sup> Talmud Bavli, Nedarim 22a

discipline of purgatory (*Gehinnom*), as it states,<sup>13</sup> ‘Cast out anger from your heart, and [thus] remove evil from your flesh.’” The “evil” referred to in this verse means purgatory (*Gehinnom*), as written,<sup>14</sup> “the wicked are destined for the day of evil.” Once you have distanced yourself from anger, the quality of humility will enter your heart. This radiant quality is the finest of all admirable traits,<sup>15</sup> because,<sup>16</sup> “The result of humility is fear of *HaShem*-יהו"ה.”

Through humility you will also come to fear *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. It will cause you to always consider where you came from and where you are going, and that during your lifetime you are only like a maggot and a worm, and the same applies after death.<sup>17</sup> It will also remind you before Whom you will be judged, before the King of Glory,<sup>18</sup> as it states,<sup>19</sup> “Even the heavens and the heavens of heavens cannot contain You” – “How much less the hearts of man!” It similarly is written,<sup>20</sup> “Do I not fill the heavens and the earth? – Says *HaShem*-יהו"ה!”

When you think about all these things, you will come to fear *HaShem*-יהו"ה, your Creator, blessed is He, and will guard yourself from sinning. You therefore will be happy with whatever happens to you. Also, when you act humbly and modestly before everyone and are in fear of *HaShem*-יהו"ה and

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<sup>13</sup> Ecclesiastes 12:10

<sup>14</sup> Proverbs 16:4

<sup>15</sup> Talmud Bavli, Avodah Zarah 20b

<sup>16</sup> Proverbs 22:4

<sup>17</sup> See Mishnah Avot 3:1

<sup>18</sup> Avot 3:1 *ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> Kings I 8:27; Proverbs 15:11

<sup>20</sup> Jeremiah 23:24

of sin, the radiance of His glory and the Holy Spirit of the Indwelling Presence of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He – the *Shechinah* – will rest upon you, and you will live the life of the Coming World (*Olam HaBa*).

And now my son, understand and observe that whosoever feels that he is greater than others, is rebelling against the Kingship of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, because by doing so, he adorns himself in His garments, as written,<sup>21</sup> “*HaShem*-יהו"ה is King, He is clothed in pride.” Why should one feel proud? Is it because of wealth? *HaShem*-יהו"ה makes one poor or rich.<sup>22</sup> Is it because of honor? Honor belongs to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, as we read,<sup>23</sup> “Wealth and honor come from You.” So how could a person adorn himself with *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה honor? Moreover, one who is proud of his wisdom must surely know that *HaShem*-יהו"ה “takes away the speech of assured men and reasoning from the sages.”<sup>24</sup> We thus see that everyone is equal before *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, being that with His anger He lowers the proud and when He wishes, He raises the lowly. Therefore, lower yourself and *HaShem*-יהו"ה will uplift you!

I will therefore now explain to you how to always behave humbly. Speak gently at all times, with your head bowed, your eyes looking to the ground and your heart focusing on *HaShem*-יהו"ה above, blessed is He. Do not look at the face of the person you are speaking to. Consider everyone as greater

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<sup>21</sup> Psalms 93:1

<sup>22</sup> Samuel I 2:7

<sup>23</sup> Chronicles I 29:12

<sup>24</sup> Job 12:20

than yourself. If he is wise or rich, give him respect. If he is poor and you are wealthier, or if you are wiser than he is, consider yourself as being more guilty than him and that he is more worthy than you are, since when he sins it is through error, whereas your sins deliberate, in that you should know better!

In all your actions, words and thoughts, always regard yourself as standing before *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, which is His *Shechinah* above you, for His glory fills the whole world. Speak with fear and awe, like a servant standing before his master. Act with restraint in front of everyone. When someone calls you, do not answer loudly, but gently and softly, as one who stands before his master.

Always diligently learn Torah, so you will be able of fulfilling its commands. When you rise from learning, carefully reflect upon what you have just learned, to discern what of it can be put into practice and do so. Examine your actions every morning and evening. In this way all your days will be spent in repentance (*Teshuvah*).

Concentrate on your prayers by removing all worldly concerns from your heart. Prepare your heart before *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, by purifying your thoughts and thinking about what you are about to say. If you follow this in all your daily actions, you will never come to sin. In this way everything you do will be proper and your prayers will be pure, clear, clean, devout and accepted by *HaShem*-יהו"ה, as written,<sup>25</sup> "*HaShem*-

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<sup>25</sup> Psalms 10:17

יהו"ה, You have heard the desire of the humble; when their heart is directed to You, let Your ear be attentive.”

Read this letter at least once a week, and neglect none of it. Fulfill it, and in so doing, walk with it forever in the ways of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, so that you will be successful in all your ways. You thus will succeed and merit the Coming World (*Olam HaBa*) which lies hidden away for the righteous *Tzaddikim*. Every day that you read this letter, Heaven will answer the desires of your heart. Amen, Selah!

3. **Rabbi Yitzchak of Acco**, of righteous memory, received from **Rabbi Moshe**, of righteous memory, the student of **Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla**, of righteous memory, who heard it directly from the mouth of his teacher Rabbi Yosef [Gikatilla] mentioned above, that one whose heart is moved within him to correct his character traits and straighten his ways and deeds, to pursue humility to the ultimate perfection, to be shamed but not shame others, to hear his disgrace and not respond, the Indwelling Presence of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the *Shechinah*, will immediately rest upon him, and he will not need to learn from flesh and blood, for the spirit of God will teach him.

4. I found it written in Tractate Kallah, in the chapter [beginning], “Judge your words [before you let them come out of your mouth] etc.”<sup>26</sup> that Father Eliyahu,<sup>27</sup> who is remembered for the good, said: “The Torah can never be taught

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<sup>26</sup> Tractate Kallah Rabbati, Ch. 5

<sup>27</sup> A deferential and affectionate term for Eliyahu the prophet. See also Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 113a.

except by one who is not pedantic,<sup>28</sup> and I too am not revealed except to one who is not pedantic.” Happy is he who met him, and who sat with him, for he is assured to be a member of the Coming World (*Olam HaBa*).”

5. It is written in the book **Brit Menuchah**, in the first path, as follows: Wisdom turned her face to three places. The first is to the north, the place of Might-*Gevurah*, and she humbled her arrogance and stood trembling before He who enlarges her. That place is called the place of fear and is [called] “*Taveirah*-תבערה-”<sup>29</sup> [meaning “conflagration”]. This is the name “I will reveal-*Egila*-א”אגל” as included in the Torah and it affects its effects, which are drawn down in the line of fear (*Yirah*), even without purity.

The second place that she turned her face to is the place of humility (*Anavah*), and its name is called “tranquility is there-*Menuchah*-מנוחה-שם.” This is the name “God glorifies me, the God of Israel-ישראל-אלה”י.” The third place is the place of joy (*Simchah*) and its name is called “From the fruit of the name Ya’h-ה-שמ”י-ה-”מפרישמ”י-ה-”. These three levels, fear (*Yirah*), humility (*Anavah*), and joy (*Simchah*), whosoever desires to learn wisdom must adhere to them. That is, he should fear sin, be humble, and be happy with his lot. When he attains understanding of these three levels, he will grasp the wisdom.

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<sup>28</sup> Also see Mishnah Avot 2:5

<sup>29</sup> Deuteronomy 9:22

6. He of meditative solitude said,<sup>30</sup> whosoever desires to attain meditative solitude, so that peace will rest upon him, must fulfill the following three things, and distance himself from their opposites, and then peace will rest upon him during his lifetime and certainly after his death, and these are them: He should be happy with his lot, he should love meditative solitude, and he should flee from power and honor.

7. It is written in **Sefer HaChassidim**,<sup>31</sup> “One who is careful to speak the full truth in all matters, his dreams will be fulfilled, literally like prophecy.”

8. It happened with a certain person who spent many days in fasting, did many acts of kindness, and financed the weddings of many orphan brides, but would pursue power. He came to those engaged in meditative solitude and had attained the level of prophecy, and said to the greatest of them, “My master, in your kindness, please explain to me why after having done all these many acts of kindness, I have not merited the level of prophecy to tell the future as you do.” He said to him, “Take a bag of nuts and figs and hang it on your neck. Then go into the streets of the city, before the greatest and most honored people of the city, gather children around you and tell them, ‘Whoever wants me to give them figs and nuts should come and hit me on the neck with his hand, and then on the cheek.’ If you do this many times and then return to me, I will guide you on

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<sup>30</sup> The source of this passage is in Reishit Chochmah (Shaar HaAhavah, Ch. 3) where it is said in the name of Rabbi Yitzchak of Acco. See there. It thus appears that the text should read, “Rabbi Yitzchak of Acco said etc.”

<sup>31</sup> Section 363

how to grasp the truth.” He said to him, “My master, how would this be fitting for one honorable as myself?” He said to him, “Does this seem difficult for you? This is just the easy way of what you must do if your soul desires to see the light of the truth.” He immediately got up and left with a deflated soul.

9. **Rabbi Eliyahu Vidash**, of righteous memory, the author of **Reishit Chochmah**, attested to me in the name of his teacher, **Rabbi Moshe Cordovero**, of righteous memory, the author of **Pardes Rimonim**, that whosoever desires to know that which he seeks, should accustom himself to holiness, purity, and fear of sin, especially on that day. On that night, after reciting the order of the *Shema* before retiring for bed, he should be alone with his intellect, without any foreign thoughts at all. He then should contemplate and think about his question until sleep overcomes him and he sleeps. He should be alone in the house, in a place where no one will wake or rouse him. They then will answer his question while he is sleeping, but he should be careful that his sleep should not be interrupted.

10. **Rabbi Yitzchak of Acco**, of righteous memory, wrote that amongst the conditions of separation and meditative solitude, is that one must distance himself from unintentional sins, willful sins, and sins of rebellion, which cause the light of the *Shechinah* to withdraw from the soul of the sinner. This is because the wicked cause separation between their souls and the light of the *Shechinah*, and they remain in thick darkness. However, if they are good, they then will find the ray of the light of the *Shechinah* with them.



# Part Four

## Gate Two

[Explaining the ways to actively attain  
contemplative grasp]

This is the second manner, regarding the methods of actively attaining grasp according to the three above-mentioned categories [mentioned in the introduction]. I will not write about any acts done through deed, such as by making oaths or pronouncing names, but only by way of contemplation and thought alone, or by way of praying to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in a way of prayer.

You already have been informed that in all matters of attaining grasp, one must be alone in the house, so that he will not be interrupted from his thoughts, that a person must be alone with his thoughts to the endth degree, and divest his body from his soul, as though he has no sense of being vested in any substance at all, but should rather only be soul alone. The more he divests himself of substance, the greater will be his grasp. However, if he perceives some sound or movement disturbing his thought, or he comes to have some coarse thought within himself, the thought of his soul will cease from its adhesion above, and he will grasp nothing. This is because the upper holiness does not rest upon one who also is in a state of adhesion to the physical, even to a hair's breadth. This is why prophecy or the Holy Spirit (*Ru'ach HaKodesh*) are called "sleep," or "a dream," or "a vision."

To conclude, even though a person may be fitting for the Holy Spirit to rest upon him, if he does not accustom himself to completely divesting his soul from his body, the spirit will not rest upon him. This is the secret of the students of the prophets [about whom the verse states],<sup>32</sup> “before them [players] of lyre, drum, flute etc.” For, through the sweetness of the voice of the melody, meditative solitude would come upon them from the sweetness of the sound. They then would divest their souls [of their bodies], and the musician would then stop the melody, and the students of the prophets would remain in that state of Supernal adhesion and prophecy. This is the first condition.

The second condition is that one must remove all matters from himself that cause meditative solitude to cease. For, about the first condition, we only mentioned material [external] matters that naturally cause meditative solitude to cease. However, here we are referring to spiritual matters that cause meditative solitude to cease, these being the powers of impurity drawn from the evil inclination that manifest in the person himself, and become strengthened through sins.

Therefore, one who comes to meditative solitude must first repent for all his sins and then be cautious not to continue sinning in any of them. He then should accustom himself to remove the evil character traits that have become entrenched within him, such as the quality of anger, depression, impatience, idle speech, and the like. Once he has repaired the ailments of the soul, both in regard to sin, as well as in regard character traits, the spirit of impurity will no longer have the power to

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<sup>32</sup> Samuel I 10:5

separate him from his adhesion above. He then should accustom himself to nullify matters of materiality from himself, as mentioned in the first condition. After all this, he should engage in the methods of drawing the adhesion to above, as will be explained with the help of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, as I have found in the words of our sages and the words of the solitary.

However, this second condition, which is to distance the powers of impurity from coming upon him, brought about by repenting for his sins and distancing himself from bad character traits, we already explained their matter in the first method, according to what I have found in holy books. Thus, after having instructed you regarding the two above-mentioned conditions, I now will mention some methods by which the power of a person's soul can adhere to the Supernal, after he has acquired the two above-mentioned conditions. I shall thus begin:

1. Seclude yourself alone in the house, as mentioned before, and wrap yourself in a Tallit. Sit down, close your eyes, and divest yourself of the physical, as though your soul has left your body and is ascending to the firmament. After divesting yourself, recite a single Mishnah, whichever one you wish, many times in close proximity to each other. Do this as quickly as possible, with clear language and without skipping over a single word, and have in mind that your soul should adhere to the soul of the Tanna mentioned in that Mishnah. This is done by having in mind that your lips are the vessel that emits the letters of that Mishnah, and the voice you are emitting through

the vessel of your mouth are the sparks of your inner soul, that are emitted in the recitation of that Mishnah, and they become a chariot for the soul of that Tanna, the author of that Mishnah, to manifest within, and his soul will manifest in your soul. When you weary of reciting the words of the Mishnah, then if you merit it, it is possible that the soul of that Tanna will rest in your mouth and will manifest there while you still are reciting the Mishnah. Then, while you still are reciting the Mishnah, he will speak in your mouth and greet you, and whatever you think to ask of him in your thoughts, he will respond and will speak with your mouth, and your ears will hear his words. It is not you who is speaking on your own, but it rather is he who speaks. This is the secret of [the verse],<sup>33</sup> “The spirit of *HaShem*-יהוה spoke within me and His word is upon my tongue.”

Now, if you are not yet worthy of such a lofty level as this, it could possibly be in a different way. That is, because of the quickness of your mouth, you will tire and your words will become silent, without intending it, and you will nod off in a sleep that is not sleep, and then, during that nodding off, you will see that they respond in answer to your question, whether by way of a hint or clearly, all according to your preparedness. If you do not merit one of the two above-mentioned ways, know that you either are not yet fitting for this, or that you were incapable of properly divesting yourself from the physical.

2. One should purify his body and sanctify it from impurity. He should clean his hands of all kinds of theft,

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<sup>33</sup> Samuel II 23:2

larceny, and bribery, as the verse states,<sup>34</sup> “Who may ascend... one with clean hands etc.” He should refine [himself until] his inside is like his outside, as the verse states, “and a pure heart,”<sup>35</sup> and it only then [continues and states],<sup>36</sup> “He will receive a blessing from *HaShem*-יהוה,” this being the level of prophecy, as the verse states,<sup>37</sup> “He took up his parable and said.” He should bond his spirit above and then draw the wellspring below.

At first, he should contemplate the reasons for the *mitzvot* as they are in the revealed [Torah] and he then should contemplate a little about the concealed [matters] of the Holy One, blessed is He, the study of Torah, and the fulfillment of the *mitzvot*. He should separate himself from any frivolous speech throughout that entire day, immerse himself [in a mikvah], wear white garments and be in a clean place far from every kind of impurity, far from any corpse and graveyard, and far from every sorrow, sighing, and sadness. He should vest himself with great joy, divest himself from the physical, and ascend in his thoughts from firmament to firmament, until the seventh firmament, called Aravot. He should imagine in his mind that above the firmament of Aravot there is a very great white curtain, upon which the Name *HaShem*-יהוה is written in *Ashurit* script, in the known color. The writing is very thick and each letter is like a mountain, drawn in white like snow. He should connect the letters; the *Yod*-י with the *Hey*-ה and the

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<sup>34</sup> Psalms 24:3-4

<sup>35</sup> Psalms 24:4 *ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Psalms 24:5

<sup>37</sup> Numbers 23:7

Hey-א"ה with the Yod-ד"י, the Vav-ו"י with the Hey-א"ה and the Hey-א"ה with the Vav-ו"י.

Another version is that he should connect the letters [as follows], the Yod-ד"י with the Hey-א"ה and the Hey-א"ה with the Yod-ד"י, the Vav-ו"י with the first Hey-א"ה and the first Hey-א"ה with the Vav-ו"י, the Vav-ו"י with the final Hey-א"ה, and the final Hey-א"ה with the Yod-ד"י [it could be that this should say “with the Vav-ו"י”].

3. Seclude yourself so that you are alone in the house and close your eyes. If you are wearing a Tallit and Tefillin it is all the better. After you have fully cleared your thoughts, in your thoughts combine whatever [Torah] word you want according to all its permutations. It is not important which word you combine, but rather, whatever word you wish is good. For example, [if it is the word “earth-*Eretz-ארץ*” combine all its permutations]:

ארץ, אצר, רצא, ראץ, צאר, צרא

You should do so with whatever word you want, as long as it is in the straightforward order of permutation, as known.<sup>38</sup> Then divest yourself of physicality and from this world, as if your soul has left your body, and has ascended and manifested in the six above-mentioned permutations. Ascend from firmament to firmament until the seventh firmament, called Aravot. Imagine that above the firmament of Aravot there is a curtain white as snow spread out, upon which the letters of the

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<sup>38</sup> See Pardes Rimonim, Shaar HaTziruf

above-mentioned permutations are depicted. They are written in *Ashurit* script and have the color of white fire, with huge letters, each letter as big as a mountain or hill. In your thought imagine that you are asking your question from the permutations written there, and they will respond to your question, or their spirit will rest within your mouth, or you will nod off and they will respond to you as in a dream, in the way mentioned in section one.

4. I have found the following, similar to what was mentioned in section one, and have summarized it as follows: “Who is it whose heart is emboldened [to approach Me] etc.”<sup>39</sup> When I, the youth etc., saw the deficiency of this wondrous wisdom amongst the people of our times, that there is none who reads and studies it, I made my face as hard as flint,<sup>40</sup> and I understood with the help of the man dressed in linen etc.,<sup>41</sup> and I ran yet again to greet my master and teacher, and prostrated with my face to the ground etc. in ways of the usage of Kabbalah, as I received from mouth to mouth. “When I call, answer me, O’ God of my vindication,”<sup>42</sup> with answer and response. Amen!

Those who are wise know that this wisdom of Kabbalah has already been used by many, and I already have seen many compilations of books on the secrets of the Torah etc. However, the ways of its use were concealed with the utmost hiddenness,

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<sup>39</sup> See Jeremiah 30:21

<sup>40</sup> See Isaiah 50:7

<sup>41</sup> The angel Gavriel; See Ezekiel 9:3; 9:11; 10:2; 10:6; Daniel 12:6; 12:7; Also see Midrash Bereishit Rabba 21:5

<sup>42</sup> Psalms 4:2

just for singularly unique individuals alone, transmitted as a received knowledge (*Kabbalah*) from mouth to mouth. I, in my youthfulness, yearned for this, and beseeched the countenance of my master and teacher etc.

I therefore shall present my suggestion and say as follows. Know, my brother, that when you make actual use of the Kabbalah, do so in the following manner. Take the ten *Sefirot* and that which is included in them. By way of example, contemplate and know the words and terms that are unique to the *Sefirot*, as you have seen in books.<sup>43</sup> Take each word by itself. At first, take the first word and revolve it with the power of revolution of each word, as written in *Sefer Yetzirah*<sup>44</sup> that every three letter word builds six houses, and every four letter word builds twenty-four houses etc., and thus shall you do. For example, the first *Sefirah* [*Malchut*] is called “אני-א” and you thus should permute it as follows:

אני א"א א"י א"ו א"ו א"י א"א

Do so with each word until you have completed the ten *Sefirot*. About the matter of the revolution (*Gilgul*) that we have mentioned, you should write each according to its level. This matter is called the mystery of the levels. You should be cautious not to err from all the reversals of the combinations,

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<sup>43</sup> See *Shaarei Orah* of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated under the title *The Gates of Light*.

<sup>44</sup> *Sefer Yetzirah* 4:12



for if you err, there will be “much scrutiny and weariness of the flesh.”<sup>45</sup>

Then, my brother, practice with the mystery of the vowels that move the word, [the word being] compared to the substance (*Chomer*) and the vowels being compared to the form (*Tzurah*), as explained about the ways of the vowels. When you want to vowelize them, vowelize them with the vowels of the word,<sup>46</sup> and likewise do so with its [letter] exchanges, as you find them discussed above. (I, the writer of this book, Chayim [Vital], must inform you that I forgot to search for this matter as it is expressly stated earlier in the work itself, and it is necessary to search for it.) Though tedious, I already have written most of them, according to the names of the *Sefirot*, as we know them. Though other words can also be found, they too can be revolved according to the way of permutation discussed in the above-mentioned words, since abundance in this, even if not helpful, is certainly not damaging. When you complete the revolutions and permutations of the above-mentioned [words], and you wish to make use of them for any deed, gaze upon the upper and lower [permutations], and you will know what the *Sefirot* indicate.

On the first of the month of whatever month you want, fast, immerse yourself [in a mikvah] and cleanse your thoughts. Draw your thoughts into a Psalm or into the verses of song (*Pesukei d’Zimra*) by way of prayer, that they may answer you from Heaven, and recall the sweetness of all those words in their

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<sup>45</sup> See Ecclesiastes 12:12

<sup>46</sup> [Translators note: It seems that this refers to the vowels of the original primary word.]

revolutions, in the expressions of their vowelization, and their drawing down from above to below.

When you go to lay down at night, pray in the way of “may it be desirable” (*Yehiy Ratzon*) focusing on one of the names written there before you, and have in mind from which *Sefirah* it is drawn. Recall your question, whether it is to know matters pertaining to a dream or the future, or whether it is to grasp something that you want [to grasp] from amongst other matters and then ask. When you eat after breaking your fast be careful not to eat anything that comes from an animal that entire night.

I have found the following to be closely connected to the above: The first of the month is desirable, because at that time the moon is traveling toward its fullness and the supernal powers are then in a state of bestowing to the lower. Now, my brother, penetrate and read this two and three times as I have transmitted it to you, and discern and know that these teachings bear deep mysteries that those who preceded you did not merit. You then will grasp and see the difference between the God of Avraham and the god of Nachor, and that this was not by our own [strength]. For, we too [only] grasped this by way of the ultimate toil. When you investigate this, you will know the names of the levels, and their manner of vowelization, and the ways of their use in one of the ways that shall be yours alone. For so I have made the brother swear with certainty and wholeness. This concludes what I found [there].

5. In the book **Me'irat Einayim**<sup>47</sup> [it is written]: I, the youth, **Yitzchak son of Shmuel of Acco** say that, be it an individual or the masses who wish to know the mystery of binding one's soul above and adhering his thought to the Uppermost God, so that with that constant thought that never ends he will acquire the Coming World (*Olam HaBa*) and *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, will always be with him [both] in this world and in the coming world, he should set the letters of the His Singular Name before him, as though they are written in a book in *Ashurit* script, and each letter should be huge to no end in his eyes. That is, when you place the letters of His Singular Name before your eyes, the eyes of your intellect should be upon them, and the thought of your intellect and heart into the Unlimited One, all at once, [both] the gazing and the thought, [should] both be as one. This is the true secret of adhesion mentioned in the Torah, [in the verse],<sup>48</sup> "to adhere to Him," and<sup>49</sup> "To Him shall you adhere," and<sup>50</sup> "You who adhere to *HaShem*-יהו"ה." At all times that a person's soul adheres to Him, blessed is He, in this way, no evil shall befall him, nor will he ever come to err in any of his matters, whether matters of intellect or matters of the senses, nor will he be abandoned in the hands of happenstance. This is because as long as he adheres to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, he transcends all happenstance and rules over them. Out of honor to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, he should be cautious not to

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<sup>47</sup> In the Torah portion of Eikev, on the verse (Deuteronomy 11:22), "To cleave to Him."

<sup>48</sup> Deuteronomy 30:20

<sup>49</sup> Deuteronomy 10:20

<sup>50</sup> Deuteronomy 4:4

adhere his thoughts to Him except in a clean place, rather than in filthy alleyways [or the like], nor should he do so with unclean hands, nor before an idol, and the like.

I heard from the mouth of a God fearing sage who saw **the Chassid, Rabbi Yitzchak, son of the Raavad, of righteous memory**, and served before him, and said that in his entire life this Chassid never saw, being that he was [born] blind, and when he had to go anywhere, he would tell the student that accompanied him, that upon coming to any place of idolatry, they should hurry him [away from there] as fast as possible. He apparently did this out of honoring *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, to whom his thoughts adhered, and because of the spirit of impurity that rests in a place of idolatry he had to desist from thinking thoughts that are the ultimate in holiness, while in a place of the ultimate impurity. He thus hurried to pass by, so he could return to where [his mind] had been.

Now, if you ask, why should we adhere our thoughts to this Name, over and above all [other] names? It can be said that this is because this Name is the Cause of all causes and the Affector of all effects, and everything is included within it, from the Crown-*Keter* to the Glans-*Atara*,<sup>51</sup> from no end to no end. He is the Cause of all existence, from the Crown-*Keter* to a tiny flea. Blessed is the Name of His Glorious Kingship forever and ever. About this Great Name the delightful composer of Israel said,<sup>52</sup> "I have set *HaShem*-יהו"ה before me always, because He is to my right I shall not falter." [In stating "before me"] he hints at what we said, for his eyes and heart were always

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<sup>51</sup> Kingship-*Malchut*

<sup>52</sup> Psalms 16:8

[directed] to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, as though it was literally written before him. In his statement "He is to my right-*MiYemini*-מימיני" this is like "איש ימיני-*Ish Yemini*," meaning of the tribe of Binyamin, and it thus is as if he said, "A Benjamite-*Benyamini*-בנימיני." Moreover, the word "to my right-*MiYemini*-מימיני" means from the right side, meaning the side of Greatness-*Gedulah*, as known, since it receives primarily from there. For, you already know, that the regular mention of the Singular Name, [hints] to Splendor-*Tiferet*, and Splendor-*Tiferet* receives primarily from Greatness-*Gedulah*. Thus, the explanation of the verse is that "I have set *HaShem*-יהו"ה before me always," because "He is to my right," meaning from the right side called Greatness-*Gedulah*, and through my setting [*HaShem* to my right always] before me, "I shall never falter," and the happenings of the times shall have no reign over me.

In the book **Otzar HaKavod, Rabbi Todros HaLevi** explains the teaching,<sup>53</sup> "A person should always enter two openings [into the synagogue] and only then pray." He explained that from the place that a person stands, he should enter two openings, these being Greatness-*Gedulah* and Might-*Gevurah*, and thereby enter into Understanding-*Binah*, and he should direct his intentions and pray for her [for Understanding-*Binah*]. This sheds light that his thought was always bound to Splendor-*Tiferet*, since it is about Splendor-*Tiferet* that he says, "from the place that he stands." This is because the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה is Splendor-*Tiferet* and has the numerical value

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<sup>53</sup> Talmud Bavli, Barcho 8a

of “place-*Makom*-מקום-186,”<sup>54</sup> about which it states in the [Passover] Haggadah, “Blessed is the Place-*Baruch HaMakom*-ברוך המקום.”

Now, after a person merits the above-mentioned adhesion (*Dveikut*), he will merit the secret of equanimity (*Hishtavut*). If he merits the secret of equanimity (*Hishtavut*), he then will merit the secret of meditative seclusion (*Hitbodedut*). Then, since he has merited the secret of meditative seclusion (*Hitbodedut*), he will merit the Holy Spirit (*Ru'ach HaKodesh*), and from this he will merit prophecy (*Nevu'ah*), meaning that he will prophecy and say what will be in the future.

In explanation of the secret of equanimity (*Hishtavut*), Rabbi Avner, of righteous memory, told me that a certain rabbi once came to the head of those who practice meditative seclusion and asked to be received into their brotherhood. He answered him, “Blessed are you to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, my son, for your intention is good. However, please tell me whether you have acquired equanimity (*Hishtavut*) or not.” He replied, “My teacher, please explain your words.” He asked to him, “If there are two people, one of whom honors you and the other disgraces you, are they equal in your eyes, or not?” He answered, “No, my master, for I feel delight and satisfaction of spirit from the one who honors me, and am pained by the one who disgraces

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<sup>54</sup> That is, the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה squared ( $Yod\text{-}10$  times  $Yod\text{-}10 = 100$ ,  $Hey\text{-}5$  times  $Hey\text{-}5 = 25$ ,  $Vav\text{-}6$  times  $Vav\text{-}6 = 36$  and  $Hey\text{-}5$  times  $Hey\text{-}5 = 25$ , which altogether equals “Place-*Makom*-מקום-186” (See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 3 (The Letters of Creation, Part 2), The Gate explaining that *HaShem*, blessed is He, is the place-*Makom*-מקום of all beings.

me, but I am not vengeful to respond in kind.” He said to him, “My son, go in peace, for as long as you have not attained equanimity (*Hishtavut*) until you neither feel the honor of the one who honors you nor the disgrace of the one who shames you, in your soul, you are not ready for your thoughts to adhere above when you come and enter into meditative seclusion. Rather, go and further humble your heart until you attain true humility, to the point of equanimity (*Hishtavut*), and you then will be able to enter into meditative seclusion (*Hitbodedut*).”

Now, the matter of equanimity (*Hishtavut*) comes about through the adhesion (*Dveikut*) of one’s thought to *HaShem-יהו"ה*, blessed is He, which is called the secret of adhesion (*Sod Hitdabkut*), as mentioned before. This is because adhesion of one’s thought to *HaShem-יהו"ה*, blessed is He, causes that one does not look to see whether the creatures honor him or shame him, nor is he touched by soothsayers, predictors, and sorcerers.

Do you not see that when *HaShem-יהו"ה*, blessed is He, was with Shaul, and Shaul’s thought adhered and was bound to *HaShem-יהו"ה*, blessed is He, he banished the necromancers from the land.<sup>55</sup> Moreover, he did not feel the ridicule of the base men who ridiculed him when he was crowned king over Israel.<sup>56</sup> However, when *HaShem-יהו"ה* departed from upon him, he was transformed into a different person and sought out a necromancer,<sup>57</sup> and also became angered against the righteous and the priests who had not at all sinned against him, with great rage, until the spilling of innocent blood.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Samuel I 28:3

<sup>56</sup> Samuel I 10:27

<sup>57</sup> Samuel I 28:7

<sup>58</sup> Samuel I 22:16

Likewise, at first Bilaam was a sorcerer, but when he came to bless Israel, the *Shechinah* rested upon him for the sake of the glory of Israel, and the Holy Spirit (*Ru'ach HaKodesh*) manifested within him, at which point his thoughts immediately became bound and adhered to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and "he did not go as every other time, with divinations."<sup>59</sup>

This being so, a person must first humble himself to be able to merit adhesion to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. This comes about by fulfilling the *mitzvot* with all one's might, and he also should take hold of the quality of humility to the ultimate degree, in that "his eyes should be directed downward, and his heart upward."<sup>60</sup>

6. The secret of adhesion (*Hitdabkut*) and perfect devotional intention (*Kavanah*) is to always see yourself as a soul completely absent of a body when you pray or recite Psalms in order to draw the sanctity of the Holy Spirit (*Ru'ach HaKodesh*) upon yourself, as known about the various methods in this. Whosoever comes to enter into the above-mentioned meditative seclusion and receive the Holy Spirit (*Ru'ach HaKodesh*) and is wise, must – **and is obligated** – to consider whatever grasp he comprehends, and whatever light he perceives at the beginning of his meditative seclusion, to be as darkness and blackness in his eyes, stemming from impurity. For, this indeed is so, at the very least at the beginning of practicing this, because of the barriers and sins that cause separation, unless he is a perfectly righteous *Tzaddik* (*Tzaddik*

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<sup>59</sup> Numbers 24:1

<sup>60</sup> See Talmud Bavli, Yevamot 105b and elsewhere.



*Gamur*). However, if he is outside the [Holy] Land, even if he is perfectly righteous (*Tzaddik Gamur*) and does not have the barrier of sin, nevertheless, he has the barrier of the impurity of outside the Holy Land, as well as the sin of dwelling in the land of the nations, and these separate between him and the holy, and true grasp of Godliness. Therefore, when he sees that he begins to grasp somewhat, he should continue the meditative seclusion more with greater strength. When he sees that he grasps more, he then should also consider that grasp as a spirit of impurity in his eyes [and so on from level to level].

So should he continually do, until he merits to see that he already has grasped a spirit of purity, that speaks with him by itself and at his will, [speaking] words of Torah, wisdom, piety, purity, and holiness. When he merits this, he should push himself even more [from level to level] to draw the Holy Spirit (*Ru'ach HaKodesh*) upon himself even more, to the point of becoming weak and fainting.

If he sees that he is about to faint, he should strengthen himself and say the following supplication with complete devotional intent (*Kavanah*): “Master of all worlds, it is revealed and known before Your throne of glory that I am not doing all this for my honor, but for the glory of Your Name, and for the glory of Your holiness and the Singularity of Your Being, to know You and to work in service of You, to bless Your Name and serve You, just as your servant Dovid, your righteous anointed one, said to Shlomo his son,<sup>61</sup> “And you, Shlomo, my son, know the God of your father, and serve Him.” Please be found to me, and please seek my welfare, I your

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<sup>61</sup> Chronicles I 28:9

servant, son of your maidservant,<sup>62</sup> and strengthen me and fortify me, and “illuminate my eyes lest I sleep the sleep of death,”<sup>63</sup> and “hide Your face from my sins and erase all my iniquities. Create a pure heart for me, O’ God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Restore me to the joy of Your salvation, and with a generous spirit sustain me.”<sup>64</sup> This concludes the supplication.

He should then continue until he sees, knows, and recognizes in truth that the spirit has been engraved in him, and that he is bound with a true bond without any separation at all, in an everlasting covenant. This is the secret of the verse,<sup>65</sup> “I will uphold My covenant etc.” The same is so every time upholding the covenant is said [in Torah] in connection to our forefathers, in that this is the secret.

7. In the book **Ma’arechet Elohut**<sup>66</sup> it is written: Now that you know the construct of the form of man, if you have received [the Kabbalah] from mouth to mouth you will be capable of conceptualizing the true matter of the vision of prophecy seen by the prophets, which our sages, of blessed memory, called, “The measure of the stature (*Shi’ur Komah*) etc.” This is the secret of “one who knows the measure of He who formed the [act of] creation etc.”<sup>67</sup> About this the verse

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<sup>62</sup> [It is common that in such supplications the words “I, your servant, son of your maidservant” are to be replaced with one’s name and the name of their mother, and this is possibly the case here as well.]

<sup>63</sup> See the liturgy of the *Shema* recital upon retiring; Mishneh Torah, Tefillah 7:1

<sup>64</sup> Psalms 51:11-14

<sup>65</sup> Genesis 17:19

<sup>66</sup> In Shaar HaAdam, Ch. 10

<sup>67</sup> Pirkei Heichalot

states,<sup>68</sup> “Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness,” and about the vision the verse states,<sup>69</sup> “I am likened by the hand of the prophets.” **Rabbi Yitzchak** gave a sign [for this, in that the word] “image-*Temunah*-תמונה-501” shares the same numerical value as “the face of man-*Partzuf Adam*-פרצוף אדם-501,” which I also found in the words of **Rabbi Eliezer of Garmiza**. About this the verse states,<sup>70</sup> “You did not see an image (*Temunah*-תמונה), except for a voice.” One who has the received knowledge about this vision should contemplate the matter of physicality mentioned about *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in the Torah, and should contemplate the matters of “passing” and “standing” [mentioned about Him], as the verse states,<sup>71</sup> “*HaShem*-יהו"ה passed before him... and He stood there with him,” as well as all other matters indicating motion etc. From what I have explained about “the image of man,” one who is wise can contemplate that when a person is perfectly righteous (*Tzaddik Gamur*), it then is fitting that he prophecy and live forever, being that “a kind has found its kind and is awakened etc.”<sup>72</sup>

In the commentary of **Rabbi Yehuda Chayat** there, he writes about this, that this received knowledge (*Kabbalah*) depends on two foundations. The first is that the image from *HaShem* is called “the glans-*Atarah*,” since it is a lens that receives from all the lenses above it. This is why there are seven chambers in it, one chamber for each quality of the construct,

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<sup>68</sup> Genesis 1:26

<sup>69</sup> Hosea 12:11

<sup>70</sup> Deuteronomy 4:12

<sup>71</sup> Exodus 34:4-5

<sup>72</sup> See Talmud Bavli, Eruvin 9a; Avodah Zarah 73a, and elsewhere.

and no man ascended from there and above, but rather each prophet was in the chamber appropriate to his quality. However, our teacher Moshe, peace be upon him, ascended higher than them all, in that he grasped the chamber of desire (*Heichal HaRatzon*). Thus about him the verse states,<sup>73</sup> “He gazes at the image (*Temunah*-תמונה) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה,” for in all its chambers nothing was hidden from him. Thus, just as when a person gazes into a clear mirror he sees his image, this likewise is so of this lens called, “the image (*Temunah*-תמונה) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה,” in that each [prophet] would gaze at it and through this would grasp his quality in that chamber, each one according to his grasp. This is because one would see through one partition, and another would see through two partitions, and another through three. The general principle that arises from this is that the partitions would increase according to the limitations of the one grasping. For, there could be one person whose soul assisted him, in that his inner senses were refined, and he thus only required a minor partition to see and gaze at the radiant lens that is like the sun in its strength. However, a person who has the eyes of a bat requires many partitions to gaze at that light, since if his eyes see more than this he will be incapable of grasping it, and but for the presence of the many partitions, his light would become uprooted when he gazes at the great light. However, our teacher Moshe, peace be upon him, required no partition, as the verse states, “He gazes at the image (*Temunah*-תמונה) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה.”

It can be suggested that it is about these two ways of prophecy that the prophet Hoshea, peace be upon him, hinted

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<sup>73</sup> Numbers 12:8

when he said,<sup>74</sup> “I spoke above the prophets, and I provided many visions.” If you contemplate the word “above-*Al*-על,” in that, at first glance, the verse should have said, “I spoke with (*Eem*-עם) the prophets etc.,” you will discover a hint there to one level of prophecy that transcends all the other levels of prophecy, which is called “the radiant lens” (*Aspaklariya d’Nahara*). This is only found in Moshe, the teacher of all the prophets, about whom the verses states,<sup>75</sup> “*HaShem*-יהוה spoke to Moshe face to face etc.,” and “I speak to him mouth to mouth, with a clear vision and not in riddles.” [The second part of the verse, “and not in riddles” hints] at the second kind of prophecy, which appeared to them in riddles, allegories, and likenesses. The weaker the grasp of the prophet, the more riddles and allegories would be in his prophecy. This is because of the need for many partitions, as I explained. This is what [Hoshea] hinted to in the words, “and I provided many visions (*Chazon*-חזון),” referring to “the lens that does not radiate” (*Aspaklariya d’Lo Nahara*). The word “vision-*Chazon*-חזון” indicates this, as in the verse,<sup>76</sup> “A harsh vision (*Chazut*-חזות) has been told to me.” Likewise, before Avraham was circumcised the verse states about him,<sup>77</sup> “The word of *HaShem*-יהוה came to Avraham in a vision (*Machazeh*-מחזה) saying etc.” [He continues and says],<sup>78</sup> “I am likened by the hand of the prophets,” that is, either with many partitions or with a few partitions. The differences in the analogies and riddles of the

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<sup>74</sup> Hosea 12:11

<sup>75</sup> Exodus 33:11

<sup>76</sup> Isaiah 21:2

<sup>77</sup> Genesis 15:1

<sup>78</sup> Hosea 12:11

prophets was according to the hand, power, and quality of each particular prophet, in that the word “hand-*Yad*-יד” here is like the verse,<sup>79</sup> “And if his hand (*Yado*-ידו) did not find enough to repay him etc.”

The second foundation is that the name that includes the whole emanation is “Man-*Adam*-אדם,” who also is the primary aspect of the chariot (*Merkavah*) and the lower man is the seat for the Upper Man. That is, man’s physical limbs hint at the spiritual limbs Above, which are Godly powers, and it is not for naught that the verse states,<sup>80</sup> “Let Us make man in our image etc.” Now, since this image (*Temunah*-תמונה) is the image of the spiritual Supernal Man, and the prophet is a physical man who at the time of prophecy comes close to being transformed to spiritual, and his outer senses almost completely depart from him, he therefore would behold the image of man, like one who sees his image in a glass mirror. However, what one [prophet] would grasp was not the same as what another [prophet] would grasp, since each would grasp according to the spiritual limb from which the soul of that prophet emanated. However, our teacher Moshe would grasp all the limbs of the image, as the verse states, “He gazes at the image (*Temunah*-תמונה) of *HaShem*-יהוה etc.”

It also is written there as follows: In the book of **Rabbi Menachem Recanati**, it states:<sup>81</sup> Contemplate the great secret that I shall reveal to you about the teaching of our sages, of

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<sup>79</sup> Leviticus 25:28; Also see Leviticus 12:8; 14:21; Also see Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 4 (The Gate of The Vowels), beginning of the section on the *Cholem*-חלם vowel.

<sup>80</sup> Genesis 1:26

<sup>81</sup> Recanati to the Torah portion of Vayechi

blessed memory,<sup>82</sup> “Our forefathers died with a kiss.” For, when the pious (*Chassidim*) and men of deed (*Anshei Ma’aseh*) would go into meditative solitude and engage in the supernal mysteries, they would depict with the power of imagery in their thoughts, as though those matters were engraved before them. When they then would bind their souls to the upper soul, the matters would increase and [overflow] with blessing, and be revealed to them due to the gathering of the thought, like a person who opens a pool of water and it flows on and on. For, the thought, which is [in a state of] adhesion is the source - the pool - and the flow does not cease from there. This is why a person who causes his thought to adhere to evil ruminations, is worse than the sin itself, like what our sages, of blessed memory, said,<sup>83</sup> “Thoughts of transgression are worse than transgression.”

In addition, our sages, of blessed memory, stated,<sup>84</sup> “Ben Azzai was sitting and expounding, and flames of fire surrounded him. Rabbi Akiva came to him and [Ben Azzai said to him], “How is today different than yesterday [that you have come]?” [Rabbi Akiva] said to him, “I heard about you that you are sitting and expounding, and flames of fire surround you etc. I said that perhaps you have descended into the inner sanctums of the Chariot (*Merkavah*).” He said to him, “[No...] are not the words of Torah compared to fire, as the verse states,<sup>85</sup> ‘Behold, My word is like fire.’ Rather, I only was sitting and reviewing and the words descended and were joyous before

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<sup>82</sup> See Talmud Bavli, Bava Batra 17a

<sup>83</sup> Talmud Bavli, Yoma 29a

<sup>84</sup> Midrash Shir HaShirim Rabba 1:10

<sup>85</sup> Jeremiah 23:29

me.” This is because when he would adhere his soul to the Supernal soul, the awesome words were engraved in his heart, and he would depict them as though someone placed the words in his mouth. For, with the adhesion of the thought, that emanation which he emanated and drew down upon himself, the words became more abundant and [overflowing] with blessing, and because of the joy they were revealed to him. This is why it states,<sup>86</sup> “The *Shechinah* rests [upon a person] not through laziness and not through [sadness] etc., but through joy.”

[Now,<sup>87</sup> it can be that this joy so overpowers him that many tears come upon him in a wondrous way, such that his soul wants to separate from his body. This is the [matter of] death by a kiss, indicating of the bond between the One who kisses and the one He loves, for his soul will then become bound to the *Shechinah*. This is why you often will find in Zohar that upon the revelation of the concealed mysteries, it states that “such and such rabbi arose and wept.” This weeping can grow in him to the point of the ingathering of his soul, as the verse states,<sup>88</sup> “He gathered (*VaYe’esof*-וַיֵּאסֹף) his feet onto the bed,” [and as the verse states],<sup>89</sup> “If he directs his heart, his spirit, and his soul to Him, he will be gathered unto Him (*Eilav Ye’esof*-אֵילָיו יֵאָסֵף).”

Know that the thought spreads forth and ascends to the place where it originates, and when it arrives there, it stops and

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<sup>86</sup> Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 30b and elsewhere

<sup>87</sup> This bracketed section was added by the original publisher of this section of Shaarei Kedushah from the words of Rabbi Menachem Racanati *ibid*.

<sup>88</sup> Genesis 49:33

<sup>89</sup> Job 34:14



cannot ascend any further. The analogy for this is from a spring of water coming out of a mountain. If one digs a pool there, so that its waters will not spread further, the waters will only ascend to the place of the source, and no further. Thus, whoever attempts to think [that which his thought cannot reach] will encounter one of two things; either the confusion of his mind and the ruination of the construct of his body, or because of greatly forcing his thought to adhere to what it is incapable of grasping, his soul will ascend, become separated, and return to its root. About this our sages, of blessed memory, stated,<sup>90</sup> “Do not seek that which is wondrously beyond you.”]

This is why the early Chassidim would elevate their thoughts to the place of its origin. The same is so of drawing down prophecy, that the prophet who would engage in meditative seclusion would direct the intentions of his heart and adhere his thoughts above, according to the [level of the] adhesion of the prophet, and he would gaze and know what is destined to be. This is the meaning of [the verse],<sup>91</sup> “To Him shall you adhere (*Tidbak*-תדבק)” [in the singular] and,<sup>92</sup> “To Him shall you adhere (*Tidbakun*-תדבקו)” [in the plural].

8. The **sages of Jewish philosophy** wrote about the matter of prophecy, stating as follows: It is not far removed to find a person for whom matters appear while awake in a similar way that matters appear to a dreamer while dreaming. This is caused by the nullification of his senses while he is awake, in

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<sup>90</sup> Talmud Bavli, Chagigah 13a

<sup>91</sup> Deuteronomy 10:20

<sup>92</sup> Deuteronomy 13:5

that the letters of the Explicit Name (*Shem HaMeforash*) are before his eyes with the colored lenses (*Marot HaTzov'ot*). At times he will hear a voice, a spirit, and speech, and thunderous commotion, with all the receptacles of his sense of hearing, and he likewise will see with all the receptacles of sight, and smell with all the receptacles of smell, and likewise taste with all the receptacles of taste, and feel with all the receptacles of touch, and travel and fly in the air. All this is so, as long as the holy letters are before his eyes and his colors manifest within him. This is called the “sleep” of prophecy. However, with the departure of the sight of the glory of *HaShem*-יהוה from upon him, all the visions of prophecy will depart from him.

9. In **Shaar HaGemul**, the **Ramban**, of righteous memory, writes as follows: Our sages, of blessed memory, likewise stated,<sup>93</sup> “In the future, the Holy One, blessed is He, is destined to arrange a dance of the righteous (*Tzaddikim*) and He will sit in their midst.” This is the pleasure and reward destined for the time of the resurrection [of the dead]. The matter of beholding the *Shechinah*, to the extent of being able to point Him out in the dance with one’s finger,<sup>94</sup> this being the grasp of the levels and the delight of the union out of physical joy, means that the people of [the coming] world will grasp on the level of our teacher Moshe, peace be upon him, whose soul was elevated over his body, such that his bodily powers were nullified [to his soul] and he thus was vested with the Holy Spirit (*Ru’ach HaKodesh*) always, so that it was as if he only saw and heard

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<sup>93</sup> Talmud Bavli, Taanit 31a

<sup>94</sup> See Talmud Bavli, Taanit 31a *ibid.*, and elsewhere.

with his soul, not by way of the physical eye, as was by the other prophets, whose bodies only sometimes would become nullified, their soul would divest itself of [the body] and the Holy Spirit (*Ru'ach HaKodesh*) would emanate upon it, so that they then saw the sight of [the angels] Michael or Gavriel, with [the faculty of] sight itself. This indeed is true seeing and proper hearing. This is because, those philosophers who seek to negate the Torah have no compelling arguments to negate this faith of ours, that there can be seeing or hearing [for the angel Gavriel] and that this seeing or hearing is “that which came to him from [the angel] Michael,” by way of analogy. Moreover, even souls converse with each other, as our sages, of blessed memory, stated.<sup>95</sup> Now, what is meant here is not dialogue through the lips and the articulations of the [physical] tongue, but rather, that information and grasp [is transmitted] from soul to soul. [However, we have departed from our subject and have touched upon the secrets of prophecy and the vision of the [ancient] Chassidim who would see angels.]<sup>96</sup>

10. In his commentary on the Torah portion of Vayera, **the Ramban** wrote: In truth, every mention in Scripture of the matter of seeing an angel or speaking with an angel, is in a vision or a dream, being that the [physical] senses cannot grasp angels. However, the above is not called the visions of actual prophecy, for a person who has grasped the sight of an angel or its speech is not a prophet etc.<sup>97</sup> Rather, this is a vision called

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<sup>95</sup> Talmud Bavli, Brachot 18b

<sup>96</sup> This bracket is from the text of Shaar HaGemul itself.

<sup>97</sup> [Also see Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light, Gates Three & Four (*Netzach & Hod*): For, as you know, an angel indeed

“the opening of the eyes.”<sup>98</sup> However, in places where Torah mentions angels using the word “men-*Anashim*-אנשים,” as in the verse,<sup>99</sup> “He saw, and behold, three men (*Anashim*-אנשים) were standing over him,” this is not even a vision whatsoever, but is a created glory like angels, and is called by those who know “the vestment of the angels.” This can even be grasped by the eyes of flesh with the [physical] senses, provided that a person has a refined soul, like the [ancient] Chassidim and the students of the prophets.

In the Torah portion of Balak, he wrote on the verse: “The donkey saw etc.,”<sup>100</sup> that angels of *HaShem*-יהוה – which are called “separate intellects” (*Sichliyim Nivdalim*) – cannot be perceived by the [physical] sense of sight, since they are not [physical] bodies that can be grasped by [the physical power of] vision. When they become visible to prophets or men who have the Holy Spirit (*Ru’ach HaKodesh*) like Daniel, they are grasped and perceived through the vision of the eyes of the intellectual soul (*Nefesh HaMaskelet*) when it reaches the level

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spoke to Hagar, Sarah’s maidservant, as it states (Genesis 16:7-9), “An angel of *HaShem*-יהוה found her by the spring of water... and the angel of *HaShem*-יהוה said to her,” as well as the entire matter of Hagar. However, know that Hagar was not a prophetess. The same is so of Manoach, as it states (Judges 13:16), “The angel of *HaShem*-יהוה said to Manoach, ‘If you detain me, I shall not eat your food,’” and as you see [from the narrative there], since *Manoach* was an ignoramus, he did not even realize that an angel was speaking to him (Brachot 61a). This is clear from the fact that when he saw the angel of *HaShem*-יהוה ascending in the flame upon the altar (Judges 13:20-22), he was shocked and said to his wife (Judges 13:22), “We will surely die, for we have seen a Godly angel.” Do not entertain the thought that either *Manoach* or his wife were prophets, for they are not counted amongst the prophets.]

<sup>98</sup> See Numbers 24:4

<sup>99</sup> Genesis 18:2

<sup>100</sup> Numbers 22:23

of prophecy, the level of the Holy Spirit (*Ru'ach HaKodesh*), or a level below it.

In the Torah portion of Re'eh, he wrote on the verses: "If there should stand up a prophet within you etc."<sup>101</sup> It is possible that the verse here alludes to that which is true [that this person indeed has some powers associated with prophecy]. This is because some people [naturally] have this power to prophecy [the future] in their souls by which they know of things to come, without knowing where this comes from. However, he goes into a meditative state and a spirit comes into him saying, "Regarding such and such, this will happen in the future." The philosophers called this power "*Kahi*," but do not know its cause, however it is substantiated by those who have observed this [phenomenon]. Perhaps in its keenness the soul of that person adheres to a **separate** intellect (*Sechel HaNivdal*) and concentrates on it, and thus [people] call him a "a prophet."

11. The secret of prophecy, is that one initially perceives that which he perceives, and his strength continues to increase to know its source, and he binds his spirit above and draws the wellspring down. At first, he thinks about the reasons of that which is revealed, and then little by little he thinks about that which is concealed. A white lens is needed for this so that coarse substance will not obstruct the grasp. The secret of [one who is called a] "seer-*Chozeh*-חֹזֵה" is that there is a dominance of the power of the north [Might-*Gevurah*], and the secret of [one who is called] a "gazer-*Tzofeh*-צֹפֵה" is that there is a dominance of the power of the south [Kindness-*Chessed*], these

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<sup>101</sup> Deuteronomy 13:2, referring to a false prophet.

being according to the person and the time. The secret of the “seer-*Ro’eh*-רוֹאֵה” is when there is a dominance of the air, which is the intermediate. All three are called “prophet-*Navi*-נְבִיא,” since they prophecy with “the utterance of the lips-*Neev Sefatayim*-נִיב שְׁפָתַיִם,”<sup>102</sup> bringing that which is destined to come into the world by force of the spirit that dwells upon them. The [word] “prophet-*Navi*-נְבִיא” is the secret of two spirits, for there must be both the one who receives (*Kli*), and the one who bestows (*Mashpiya*) into the receiver, and through this “we bring-*Navi*-נְבִיא” it into action.

Sometimes it is through the power of imagination of the soul and its strengthening, that a person will see dreams, sights, and visions, and hear voices in the power of thought, hidden in the imagination of the soul, in that even imbeciles who depart from the line of knowledge, were given prophecy.<sup>103</sup> However, this is not by their own volition or knowledge, but rather due to the power of imagination in their soul and its strengthening.

Those who are wise, and are accustomed to investigating things to their source, will sometimes find their knowledge to be insufficient, and it is in a similar way that a spirit from above will rest upon them and inform them of the source of their words, and stand them upon the truth. However, a person who does not know how to identify matters to their truth, can be misled by a different spirit, like the spirit of Navot mentioned in the book of Kings One.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Isaiah 57:19; Also see Rashi to Exodus 7:1 and elsewhere.

<sup>103</sup> Talmud Bavli, Bava Batra 12b

<sup>104</sup> Kings I 22:21-23; See Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 102b

There also is a prophecy that is true, but the prophet does not recognize [its truth], like the prophecy,<sup>105</sup> “Nineveh shall be overturned,” [which can be understood either for bad or for good]. One who is wise and of good intellect, must purify his body and sanctify it of impurity, and cleanse his hands, as the verse states,<sup>106</sup> “[Who may ascend...] one with clean hands.” He should refine his heart so that his inner self is like his external self, as the verse states, “and a pure heart.”<sup>107</sup> It is then that he should carry (*Yisah*-ישא) the secret of prophecy, which is blessing, as it states,<sup>108</sup> “He took up portions from his [inner] countenance (*Vayisa Mas’ot Mei’eit Panav*- וישא משאת מאת פניו),” and “Binyamins portion (*Masat*-משאת) was increased,” and Yerushalayim, which is called “the prophecy (*Masa*-משא) of the Valley of Vision (*Gei Chizayon*),” shall be in his allotment. Likewise, the word “*Masa*-משא” is as in the verse,<sup>109</sup> “The prophecy (*Masa*-משא) of the word of *HaShem*-יהוה.” Understand this.

**12. “Shaar HaKavanah” of the early Kabbalists** [states] that whoever establishes something in his knowledge in a way of complete establishment, will depend on it as a primary principle. Therefore, if you pray or want to determine the truth of something, imagine to yourself that you are light and that everything around you is light from every side and angle, and in the light there is a throne of light, and upon it is like the Light

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<sup>105</sup> Jonah 3:4

<sup>106</sup> Psalms 24:3-4

<sup>107</sup> Psalms 24:4 *ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> Genesis 43:34

<sup>109</sup> Malachi 1:1

of *Nogah* (*Ohr HaNogah*), and opposite it is the Light of Goodness (*Ohr HaTov*). When you are between them, to affect vengeance turn to the Light of *Nogah* (*Ohr HaNogah*) and to affect mercy, turn to the Light of Goodness (*Ohr HaTov*) and what comes out of your lips should be directed to His face. Turn yourself to His right and you will find *Glory-Hod*, which is the Brilliant Light (*Ohr Bahir*), turn to His left and you will discover *Majesty-Hadar*, which is the Radiant Light (*Ohr Maz'heer*). Between and above them is the Light of Honor (*Ohr HaKavod*), around Him is the Light of Life (*Ohr HaChayim*), and above Him the Crown-*Keter*, which is the Light that Crowns (*Ohr HaMachteer*) those who desire knowledge that illuminates the paths of the imagination, which illuminates the brilliance of the visions, and from the glory of His perfection, desire, blessing, life, peace and all goodness [is drawn] to those who guard the way of His unity. However, for those who turn away from the way of that light, it becomes concealed and transformed into something in exchange, with chastisements of rebuke.

Now, according to the intention of one who knows to truly direct his intention with adhesion of the thought and continuous desire, with the strengthening of his dream power [in a way that is] beyond investigation, as it is according to the strengthening of the power of the intention to draw strength according to its desire, and desire according to its knowledge, and imagery in its thought, and strength in its logic, and courage in its delving, when there is no other thought or desire to restrain it, it thus strengthens itself to draw down that which comes from



the Unlimited One (*Ein Sof*), and all things and deeds are concluded according to His knowledge and His will.

He also will know how to “round the corners” of the limited, and the desire of their thoughts, from the root from which they come, and he will ascend by the power of his intention toward them, and delve in order to destroy the crooked path and bring down a new path according to His desire, according to His intention, and he will be elevated above them by the power of his intention, which is from the glory of the perfection of the Exalted Light, which has no appearance, no likeness, no estimation, no measure, no quantification, no limit, no calculation, no end, no inquiry, no number, and no limit from any angle.

Therefore, one who ascends by the power of his intention from one thing to the other, until he reaches the Unlimited One (*Ein Sof*), must conduct his intention in a way that consents to His Perfection, in that the Supernal will should manifest in his will, and not just that it is his will alone that manifests in the Supernal will. For, bestowal does not descend from Above unless a person is cautious in his approach to the Supernal will, with a matter for which the Supernal will should manifest in the desire that he yearns for, such that the Supernal will should be one with the will of the one below. It is through his equanimity in his adhesion to His Oneness, that there then will be a drawing down of bestowal in a fulfilling way. However, there will be no fulfillment of the lower desire if his approach is out of his own need, but only if he approaches, and manifest within him is the desire and will to reveal the equanimity concealed in the most hidden concealment. When

he approaches in this way, the Supernal will shall then come close to him, and he then adds courage to his strength and desire in his idea, to complete and fulfill everything, even for the desire of his own soul, in which the Supernal desire has no portion. About this the verse states,<sup>110</sup> “He who earnestly seeks the good pursues desire.” For, according to the adhesion of his desire in a way that consents to the Supernal will, the [Supernal] desire will then manifest in him, and he will draw down desire in whatever matter he strengthens himself in, with the power of his intention, and he will draw down the bestowal of He Who crowns (*HaMachteer*) the hidden desires, and that which is brought into being with the spirit of Wisdom-*Chochmah*, the spirit of Understanding-*Binah*, and the courage of Knowledge-*Da’at*. And as he is garbed by the spirit, He will explain the intention of his words, and he will do an act as a sign in actual deed, and will draw down the bestowal from power to power, from cause to cause, until his deeds are drawn down according to His will.

It is in this way that the early [Chassidim] would delay for one hour before prayer in order to divest themselves of all other thoughts and affix the pathways of the intentions and the power of the conduct into themselves. They then would spend one hour in prayer, to bring down the intentions into the speech of their mouth. They then would spend one hour after prayer to contemplate how to express the power of the concluded intention in speech and in the ways of open actions that are seen.

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<sup>110</sup> Proverbs 11:27

Because they were Chassidim, their Torah was actualized [and preserved] and their work was completed [and blessed].<sup>111</sup>

This then, is a path amongst the pathways of prophecy, in that one habituates himself to ascend to the levels of prophecy, which is the fulfillment of the intention. He should direct his intention to establish something in his mind in a way that is fully established, and should enunciate each and every word that comes out from the breath of his mouth, which is composed of fire, air, and water, these being the mystery of the voice, the spirit, and speech, doing so with complete oneness, such that each letter formed by his lips is depicted in its form. He will then be with the King, *HaShem* of Legions-*HaShem Tzva'ot* צבאוֹת־יהוָה, and will depend on Him as the primary principle.

This is the straightforward path. Whoever desires to do something, be it a prayer, a blessing, or the opposite thereof, must depict in his mind that he is light, and around the light is a throne of light, and upon it a depiction according to the order of the known lights. He should then direct his intention to ascend in his thought from quality to quality, from below to above, according to the order of their emanation, until He who is without end (*Ein Sof*). He should strengthen the intention of his thought, as though he and the source of the beginning of the matter are one thing, of one root, since the nature of the source, as it is in the strength of his intention, is to ascend to its root. For, by the union and manifestation of his desire in the thought, there will be a drawing down of the bestowal with strength and desire to fulfill his intention, by explaining it in words, and by

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<sup>111</sup> See Talmud Bavli, Brachot 32b

the example (sign) of his deeds, provided that no other rumination or consideration comes into his thought. He then begins to draw down from quality to quality by way of their emanation to no end (*Ein Sof*), and will affix it to the place appropriate to whatever he needs, whether for compassion, or supplication with all the other qualities from the Endless One (*Ein Sof*) to no end (*Ein Sof*), and he then concludes his thought with action.

Now, when he begins to pray, whether for mercy or with the general supplications mentioned above from the Endless One (*Ein Sof*) to no end (*Ein Sof*), he should direct his intention to draw from the place of the wellspring. For, the word “prayer” (*Tefillah*-תפלה) indicates the drawing down of bestowal, and without a doubt, it is the blessing sent to Emanation (*Atzilut*). He should begin by directing his intention to the Essential One in the form of the letters of [His Name] *HaShem*-יהוה with vowels - with its vowels as received from mouth to ear and from generation to generation. [He should direct his intention] to the crown (*Tag*) of the *Yod*-י which hints at [the letter] *Zayin*-ז and to [the Godly] “nothingness-*Ayin*-אין,” as well as to the form of the point [of the *Yod*-י] itself, which includes ten pathways, and with the *Vav-Hey*-וה (*Vav-Dalet*-וה)<sup>112</sup> that remain from it, that hints to the light of Wisdom-*Chochmah*, which is the highest power (*HaTachleet*-התכלית) (or the [power of sky-blue] *Techelet*-תכלת) which adheres to the power of “no thought-*Ein Machshavah*-מחשבה-אין.” [Then direct the intention] to the *Hey*-ה - in that there is no other [power] that

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<sup>112</sup> This correction is included in the print of this section of Shaarei Kedushah.

draws with her, and she is the power of green-*Yarok*-ירוק,<sup>113</sup> and the form of the “bucket-*Deli*-דלי”<sup>114</sup> that draws (*Doleh*-דולה) the waters of creation forth, drawing them down without cessation - as well as [directing the intention] to the power of the light of the whiteness (*Ohr HaLoven*-אור הלוּבֵן) and the strength of the redness (*Odem*-אודם). [Then direct your intention] to the *Vav*-וּ, in which there are two, hinting to the two scales and the form of the [fulcrum] line, the six lights, which are bound to the form of the “bucket-*Deli*-דלי” to draw forth. [You should then direct your intention] to the final *Hey*-הּ, which draws the spring from all the springs, in that it is like a sponge that absorbs everything as one, and then bestows. This concludes [the quote].

**The author, Chayim**, says, it seems to my impoverished knowledge about the above-mentioned lights, that they are in their order from below to above. For, the Throne of Light is the *Sefirah* of Kingship-*Malchut* itself, and the Light of *Nogah* (*Ohr HaNogah*) is the soul within it, which is one [name of being] *Havayah*-הוּיָהּ. The second throne is Foundation-*Yesod*, and its soul is the Light of Goodness (*Ohr HaTov*). From there and above it was not necessary to mention the term “throne-*Kiseh*-כִּסֵּא,” but only the lights themselves, which are the souls called [names of being] *Havayah*-הוּיָהּ. For, he already hinted at the matter of the thrones in the first two. The Brilliant Light (*Ohr Bahir*) is the [name of being] *Havayah*-הוּיָהּ of Victory-*Netzach*. The Radiant Light (*Ohr*

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<sup>113</sup> The color of vegetation-*Yerek*-יֶרֶק.

<sup>114</sup> The term “*Deli*-דלי” means “bucket” but also refers to the constellation Acquarius the “cup bearer” or “water bearer.”

*Maz'heer*) is the [name of being] *Havayah*-הוי"ה of Majesty-*Hod*. The Light of Honor (*Ohr HaKavod*)<sup>115</sup> is the [name of being] *Havayah*-הוי"ה of Splendor-*Tiferet*. The Light of Life (*Ohr HaChayim*) is the [name of being] *Havayah*-הוי"ה of Understanding-*Binah*, and possibly Life (*Chayim*-חיים) includes [both] Wisdom-*Chochmah* and Understanding-*Binah*. The Light that Crowns (*Ohr HaMachteer*) is the [name of being] *Havayah*-הוי"ה of the Crown-*Keter*.

However, what you must still know is that each of these [names of being] *Havayah*-הוי"ה has is vowelized unto itself, and I do not know them. This is because the later Kabbalists had a different path in the order of vowelizing the [names of being] *Havayah*-הוי"ה that are in the ten *Sefirot*, which is not the same way as the book of Tikkunim.<sup>116</sup> I have found written in one method of attaining grasp through calling the name of seventy-two to mind, and have written it on a paper.<sup>117</sup>

There I found some mention of these lights according to the following order:

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<sup>115</sup> The text includes two variations “the Brilliant Light (*Ohr HaBahir*)” and alternatively “The Light of Honor (*Ohr HaKavod*)” here, but we have selected the version that appears more accurate.

<sup>116</sup> Tikkunei Zohar, Tikkun 70

<sup>117</sup> This is not present in the manuscript or in the published edition.

*Komatz*-קמץ  
*Havayah*-הוי"ה  
The Crown of the  
Light (*Keter HaOhr*)

*Havayah Shva*-הוי"ה  
שבא  
The Light of Nogah  
(*Ohr Nogah*)

*Havayah Segol*-הוי"ה  
סגול  
The Light of  
Goodness (*Ohr  
HaTov*)

*Cholem*-חולם  
The Light of Honor  
(*Ohr HaKavod*)

*Koobootz*-קבוץ  
The Light of  
Radiance (*Ohr  
HaMazheer*)

*Cheereek*-חירק  
The Light of  
Brilliance (*Ohr  
HaBahir*)

*Shoorook*-שורק  
The Light of Life  
(*Ohr HaChayim*)

Now, the order of these vowels is according to the order of the book of Tikkunim. However, they are not according to the order of the *Sefirot* that I explained about the matter of the Light of *Nogah* (*Ohr Nogah*) and the Light of Goodness (*Ohr HaTov*) etc., which are from below to above. Therefore, this requires further delving.

13. I found in the **Letter of the Ramban**,<sup>118</sup> of righteous memory, about the matter of the bond between a man and his wife, that he states as follows: Behold, I shall enlighten your eyes about hidden matters stated in Talmud. Our sages, of

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<sup>118</sup> End of Ch. 5

blessed memory, stated,<sup>119</sup> “Ben Azzai was sitting and studying, and flames of fire surrounded him,” and “Rabbi Eliezer sat down and expounded, and his radiance beamed forth like that of our teacher Moshe, peace be upon him.” What you must know is that all these matters have a singular intention to them. Know that when a spring of water is drawn from a high place to a low place, there is potential in those waters to ascend to another high place corresponding to the height from which they came forth. The same is likewise known to the masters of Kabbalah, that man’s thought is from the place of the intellectual soul which is drawn forth from the Supernal [worlds], and it is within the power of the thought to spread forth and ascend up to the source, and it then will adhere to the mystery of the Supernal light from which it is drawn, in a manner in which she and he are one matter. When the thought returns from above to below, it all becomes like the likeness of a single line, and that Supernal light is drawn to below. The power of thought that draws Him down to below draws down the *Shechinah*, and then the Brilliant Light (*Ohr HaBahir*) is drawn and spreads forth in that place that the possessor of the thought sits. It was in this manner that the ancient Chassidim would bind things, and they would increase and add in blessing according to the power of the thought. This is the mystery of the jug of flour and cruse of [oil]<sup>120</sup> of Eliyahu, who is remembered for the good,<sup>121</sup> and the jar of oil of Elisha, of righteous memory.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Midrash Shir HaShirim Rabba 1:10

<sup>120</sup> The text reads “water-*Mayim*-מַיִם”

<sup>121</sup> Kings I 17:14

<sup>122</sup> Kings II 4



Now, since this is so, our sages, of blessed memory, had to state that when a man bonds with his wife and his thoughts adhere Above, that thought draws down the Supernal light, and it rests upon that drop to which his intention is directed and of which he thinks, like the matter of the jar of oil. We thus find that the drop is eternally bound to the Brilliant Light (*Ohr HaBahir*). This is the secret [of the verse],<sup>123</sup> “Before I formed you in the belly, I knew you,” since the Brilliant Light (*Ohr HaBahir*) already became bound with the [seminal] drop of that righteous *Tzaddik* at the time of the bond, since the thought is bound Above and draws the Brilliant Light (*Ohr HaBahir*) to below. Understand this very well, and from it you will understand a great secret regarding the matter of “the God of Avraham, the God of Yitzchak, and the God of Yaakov etc.”<sup>124</sup>

Likewise, about the times that they engaged in eating, drinking, and marital relations, and all other bodily engagements, our sages, of blessed memory, also asked and stated, “What will become of Torah?” The answer was that even in all their bodily engagements, their entire intention was for the sake of Heaven, and their thought was not separated from the Supernal Light for even a single moment. It was because of this that Yaakov merited to beget twelve tribes, for they were all perfectly righteous, none of them perverse or crooked,<sup>125</sup> and they were all fit to bear the likeness of the order of the world, bearers of the arms of *HaShem*-יהו"ה. This is because Yaakov's thoughts were not separated from Supernal

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<sup>123</sup> Jeremiah 1:5

<sup>124</sup> Exodus 3:6

<sup>125</sup> Proverbs 8:8

adhesion even at the time of the bond of marital relations. Understand this very well.

It is for this reason that King Shlomo, peace be upon him, said in his flowing proverbs,<sup>126</sup> “Know Him in all your ways etc.” About this, our sages, of blessed memory, stated,<sup>127</sup> “Know Him in all your ways – even in all bodily needs, be they small or great.” In regard to the word “Know Him-*Da’eihu-*דעהו,” you already know what the word “Knowledge-*Yediyah-*ידיעה” refers to, and that it is the bond of the intellectual soul (*Nefesh HaSichleet*) and the adhesion to the Supernal Light. Likewise, the bond between a man and his wife is like the bond of the soul of the lowly world with the intellect, which is called “knowledge-*Yediyah-*ידיעה.” You already know that a person is not considered to be knowledgeable (*Yode’ah-*יודע) of any given thing until the conceiver of the intellect (*Maskeel*) adheres to the subject of conception (*Muskal*). Understand this very well. This being so, contemplate the secret of “know Him in all your ways” very well. Immediately thereafter [the verse continues] and states, “and He will smooth your paths.” For, the Supernal light will adhere to one’s deeds, and they will all be in a single order that is proper and upright. This is the meaning of the teaching,<sup>128</sup> “Let all your actions be for the sake of Heaven.”

After having informed you of this, contemplate and see that thoughts of sin are worse than the sin.<sup>129</sup> For, when man thinks about the ways of sin and soils his soul and his thought, bringing soil to the Upper [Realms], his soul is then culpable to

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<sup>126</sup> Proverbs 3:6

<sup>127</sup> See Midrash Tehillim 119:5; Talmud Bavli, Brachot 63a

<sup>128</sup> Mishnah Avot 2:12

<sup>129</sup> Talmud Bavli, Yoma 29a

Heaven, since he has soiled it. However, if he has sinned below [in the lower realms] but his thought did not touch the deeds, then the punishment for it is much less severe than for evil thought, which adheres to the Upper [Realms] and is close to “severing the plantings.”<sup>130</sup>

From this you can understand the secret of one who thinks sinfully during the time of marital relations. For that soiled thought rests upon the seminal drop, and finds a foundation of evil, injustice, and filth, and they are called “strangers.” About this the verse states,<sup>131</sup> “The wicked are estranged from the womb.” Understand this, if you have a soul. From this key you will be capable of understanding the deed of that pious Chassid who would sit at the gates of [the women’s] immersion sites.<sup>132</sup>

Know that when the pious Chassidim would adhere their thoughts to the Upper [Realms], everything they would think or direct their intention to in that time would be fulfilled, whether for good or for bad. About this our sages, of blessed memory, stated,<sup>133</sup> “He fixed his gaze upon him and he became a pile of bones.” Likewise, in Tractate Taanit<sup>134</sup> they related about the sage who said, “Return to your dust.” Similarly, our sages, of blessed memory, stated,<sup>135</sup> “Wherever the Sages looked upon someone [it resulted in] either death or poverty.

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<sup>130</sup> A euphemism for heresy [which is a sin of erroneous thought]. See Talmud Bavli, Chagigah 14b-15a.

<sup>131</sup> Psalms 58:4

<sup>132</sup> Talmud Bavli, Brachot 20a

<sup>133</sup> Talmud Bavli, Brachot 58a

<sup>134</sup> Talmud Bavli, Taanit 24a

<sup>135</sup> Talmud Bavli, Mo’ed Katan 17b; Chagigah 5b; Sotah 46b; Nedarim 7b

The matter of the secret of prayer and the sacrifices are related to this, they being the mystery of the adhesion Above.

Of similar relation to this matter is that of the wicked Bilaam, about whom the verse said,<sup>136</sup> “Whomever you bless is blessed and whomever you curse is accursed.” This is why he wanted to gaze upon Israel with full scrutiny, so that he could adhere his thoughts Above and draw and an evil thought upon them. The verse therefore states,<sup>137</sup> “Bilaam raised his eyes and saw Israel dwelling according to its tribes,” and it is for this reason that he had to be exacting, [saying],<sup>138</sup> “Go, now, I shall take you to a different place.” For, the wicked one had to gaze upon he who his intention is directed to, whether for good or for evil, and he would adhere his thought Above, and he desired to draw down Supernal power upon he who his intention was directed to in his scrutiny of him. This is the matter of [the verse],<sup>139</sup> “Who sees the vision of *Shaddai*-יְשַׁדַּי etc.” For, he required the revelation of deeds. It is for this reason that the wicked one intended to the matter of the seven altars, and a bull and ram on each altar, in order to bring all the powers into himself and bring them close to his thoughts, in order to use them to uphold his evil desire in all that he wished etc. This is why states,<sup>140</sup> “He took him to the field of the lookouts,” in that he would gaze upon them in order to draw upon them etc.

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<sup>136</sup> Numbers 22:6

<sup>137</sup> Numbers 24:2

<sup>138</sup> Numbers 23:27

<sup>139</sup> Numbers 24:4

<sup>140</sup> Numbers 23:14

14. In the book **Shaarei Orah** of **Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla**, of righteous memory, I will write his words in short form:<sup>141</sup> Know and understand that though we stated that whosoever wants to elicit his desire from *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, should direct his intention to that known name of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה names that applies to his needs. However, what is meant here, is not that he should direct his intention to that name alone and remain there. What is meant is that he should direct his intention to the name that the need depends on, and continue the intention of that name until he draws it up to [the upper end of the ten *Sefirot*, this being] the Upper Source called the "[Source of] Desire." He should ascend from *Sefirah* to *Sefirah*, [and from desire to desire], until, in his heart, he reaches [the Supernal "Source of Desire," called] the Unlimited One-*Ein Sof*-אין סוף, which is the matter of the thorn of the letter *Yod*-י of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה. When he arrives there, he should then make his request and elicit his desire from there, and then draw the desire down until the end of the desire, which is His title Lord-*Adona*'y-אדני. We thus find that all the *Sefirot* are blessed through him, and he then is blessed through the *Sefirot*. He should first direct his intention to ascend from below to Above, entering first into His title Lord-*Adona*'y-אדני - the final [letter] *Hey*-ה of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה - and he then should ascend from quality to quality until the Unlimited One-*Ein Sof*-אין סוף, as mentioned above, and it is there that he

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<sup>141</sup> Shaarei Orah, translated as Gates of Light, Gates Three & Four (*Netzach & Hod*), section on the title "The Essence of the Heavens-*Etzem HaShamayim*-עצם השמים."

should set forth his request, and from there he should return and descend until His title Lord-*Adona*”ג-י-ע, as mentioned.

In the [section] on the titles Victory-*Netzach*-נצח and Majesty-*Hod*-הוד he wrote: This is the mystery of the ascent of the *Sefirot* and their unification with one another, until the intention ascends to the desirable place, like one who desires to take hold of and adhere to the place of the Supernal Light. For, the lower one yearns to ascend and take hold of the Upper One.

In the [section] on the title of Wisdom-*Chochmah*-חכמה he wrote: When the *Sefirah* of Kingship-*Malchut* ascends to Understanding-*Binah*, then it too is in a state of adhesion to Wisdom-*Chochmah* which is called thought-*Machshavah*-מחשבה. For, thought-*Machshavah*-מחשבה never separates from the Crown-*Keter*, for they are both included in a single letter, the letter *Yod*-י and its thorn. This is the meaning of [the Talmudic statement],<sup>142</sup> “It thus arose in thought-*Kach Alah b’Machshavah*-מחשבה-כך עלה במחשבה.” However, about gazing at the Supernal Chariot (*Merkavah*), a term of “descent-*Yeridah*-ירידה” is used, [as in,<sup>143</sup> “He descended to the Chariot-*Merkavah*-מרכבה.”] This is because [one who gazes into the Supernal Chariot (*Merkavah*)] first enters and ascends to the heights until the place of the light-*Ohr*-אור from where he receives the bestowal to gaze, and he then returns to descend and gaze upon the Chariot (*Merkavah*). Understand the depth of this matter, for the Chariot (*Merkavah*) is the seven lower [*Sefirot*].

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<sup>142</sup> Talmud Bavli, Menachot 29b

<sup>143</sup> See Sefer HaBahir Sections 87 & 88; Heichalot Rabbati 18:5 and elsewhere.

15. In the book **Mishkan HaEidut** of **Rabbi Moshe De Leon**, of righteous memory, he wrote: The vegetative soul (*Nefesh HaTzomachat*) in man is the [soul] that sustains the body by the power of the blood that is drawn through it, and upon man's death, it becomes extinguished, withers, and remains with the body after death. The animalistic soul (*Nefesh HaBehamit*) within him is the [soul] that thinks evil thoughts, and is called the power of lust (*Ko'ach HaMit'aveh*). About this it is written,<sup>144</sup> "The soul that sins, it shall die."

In the third gate he wrote correctly about the matter of the *Nefesh*, *Ru'ach*, and *Neshamah* [levels of the soul, stating]: The *Nefesh* is the aspect of the soul that is [of] the four foundational elements (*Yesodot*), and includes the inanimate (*Domem*), vegetative (*Tzome'ach*), animal (*Chai*) and speaker (*Medaber*). It is drawn from the seminal drop of the father, which includes his body and his elemental soul. However, the *Ru'ach* and *Neshamah* do not stem from the father, but from *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He. For, the spirit-*Ru'ach* is "from God who gave it,"<sup>145</sup> which is Action (*Asiyah*) of Kingship-*Malchut*, in the mystery of the feminine waters (*Mayim Nukvin*). The *Neshamah* is from Splendor-*Tiferet* or Formation (*Yetzirah*), the masculine waters (*Mayim Duchrin*). This is [as in] the way of the Sabba of [Zohar] *Mishpatim*.<sup>146</sup> [This concludes the quote.]

However, what is written in *Zohar* is a different matter. For, both the elemental soul (*Nefesh HaYesodit*) as well as the

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<sup>144</sup> Ezekiel 18:20

<sup>145</sup> See Ecclesiastes 12:7

<sup>146</sup> See *Zohar* II 94

*Ru'ach* are called *Nefesh*, as they are both from [the world of] Action (*Asiyah*). The *Neshamah* that is from [the world of] Formation (*Yetzirah*) is called the masculine spirit-*Ru'ach Zachar*, and the true *Neshamah* is from [the world of] Creation (*Briyah*). [However,] both ways are true. It is for this reason that in the first gate he stated it literally in this way. That is, the *Nefesh*, *Ru'ach*, and *Neshamah* are from the lowly world (*Olam HaShafel*), the celestial spheres (*Galgolim*), and the angels (*Malachim*). However, when you count the lowly [world] and the celestial spheres as one aspect, this being [the world of] Action (*Asiyah*), then you will likewise find that the *Nefesh* and *Ru'ach* mentioned are [both] called *Nefesh*, whereas the *Neshamah* is called *Ru'ach* from [the world of] Formation (*Yetzirah*), which is the [world of the] angelic beings, and the *Neshamah* is from [the world of] Creation (*Briyah*). Understand this very well, as they are not in argument.

Now, when a person dies, the elemental soul (*Nefesh HaYesodit*) is consumed, it along with the blood in all the limbs. When they decompose, the elemental soul (*Nefesh HaYesodit*) remains within that decomposition. About this they said,<sup>147</sup> “His soul will mourn over him.” This is the vegetative soul (*Nefesh HaTzomachat*). However, the animalistic soul (*Nefesh HaBehamit*) hovers in the air and rests upon the grave. The rest of the intellectual soul (*Nefesh HaSichleet*), which is from the spheres of [the world of] Action (*Asiyah*), and which is sometimes called *Ru'ach* relative to the elemental soul, its dwelling is in the Garden of Eden (*Gan Eden*) of the earth. The *Ru'ach* of [the world of] Formation (*Yetzirah*) which is called

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<sup>147</sup> Job 14:22



*Neshamah* relative to the intellectual soul (*Nefesh HaSichleet*), is in the Upper Garden of Eden (*Gan Eden HaElyon*).

In the fourth section he wrote: Understand from those sages and prophets who would seek to understand, see, and grasp the matters of the celestial spheres (*Galgaim*) and the spiritual [beings] and would constantly fast and weaken their bodies with every manner of weakening, that upon the weakening of the body to a great degree, the grasp [and consciousness] of the soul reigns to a greater extent. Commensurate to the weakening of the body will be the increase in the grasp, as in the verse,<sup>148</sup> “From the first day that you set your heart to understand and to fast before your God, your words have been heard.” Similarly, we find in the teachings of our sages, of blessed memory, that “Rabbi so and so desired to see the countenance of [the departed] Rabbi so and so, and fasted forty days etc.” For, it is also not within the ability of the living *Tzaddikim* to see *Tzaddikim* who have passed, except through much fasting. Proof for this is from an ill person whose animalistic soul has become weakened to the ultimate extent, that there is then additional [strength] in their spirit-*Ru'ach*, and the intellectual soul (*Nefesh HaSichleet*) becomes dominant and they have vision of the Upper [Realms]. He wrote a similar thing in section six, and there he adds: When angels descend into this world, they temporarily don the form of man from the four elemental foundations (*Yesodot*), but even so, they are only revealed to the person to whom they were sent.

He also wrote: It is the *Ru'ach* alone that departs at the time of passing, it being the intellectual soul (*Nefesh*

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<sup>148</sup> Daniel 10:12

*HaSichleet*), as mentioned before, this being caused by the drops of the sword of the angel of death. When it comes to the vegetative soul (*Nefesh HaTzomachat*), it alone remains with the body, as well as the animalistic soul, and both of them are caused to die by those drops. Even so, they possess a small measure of being roused to be known and sensed by a person in his dream, in the mystery of “a dream is one sixtieth of (death) [or prophecy].”<sup>149</sup>

16. In regard to the secret of sanctity (*Kedushah*) I have found [written]: A person must sanctify his limbs and make them excellent in [fulfilling the] *mitzvot* in order to become a seat for the *Shechinah*. For, his limbs become like the Ark for the *Shechinah* to dwell in. Know that all positive *mitzvot* are the mystery of the sanctification (*Kedushah*). That is, when a person fulfills one *mitzvah*, he sanctifies himself in that *mitzvah*, and the more he increases in [the fulfillment of] *mitzvot*, the more he will increase in sanctity (*Kedushah*), and his limbs will be like the Tabernacle (*Mishkan*) and its implements, as it is written,<sup>150</sup> “I shall dwell within them (*b'Tocham*-בתוכם).” However, the *mitzvah* of studying Torah is greater than all of them, as it is the mystery of the Tablets (*Luchot*) that are in the Ark, which are the Written Torah (*Torah SheB'Khtav*) and the Oral Torah (*Torah SheBaal Peh*), these being Splendor-*Tiferet* and Kingship-*Malchut*, in which the “limbs” of all the ten *Sefirot* are included. It is through this that man comes to adhere [to the *Shechinah*] with true adhesion (*Dveikut*), literally. This

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<sup>149</sup> Talmud Bavli, Brachot 57b

<sup>150</sup> Exodus 25:8

is no analogy or allegory, but rather, [we are referring to] true adhesion (*Dveikut*) to the *Shechinah*, this being the secret of [the words],<sup>151</sup> “and to adhere to Him (*L’Davkah Bo*-לדבקה בו).”

17. In regard to the matter of the essence of prophecy I found [written] that it is a bestowal of beneficence from *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, through the medium of the Activating Intellect (*Sechel HaPo'el*) that [reigns] over the power of speech, and subsequently over the power of imagination that depicts allegories and imagery. However, our teacher Moshe, peace be upon him, did not [prophecy] through the power of imagination whatsoever, but rather, [directly] from the Activating Intellect (*Sechel HaPo'el*) to the separate human intellect. It is for this reason that our teacher Moshe<sup>152</sup> and Eliyahu, who is remembered for the good,<sup>153</sup> fasted for forty days, on account of the formation of the material substance [of the body] in forty days, this being in order to weaken the powers of the material substance, so as to grasp the prophecy to its ultimate perfection. To clarify, the intellect (*Sechel*) is higher than the *Nefesh*, since the animal soul (*Nefesh HaChayah*) is of the heart, the vegetative soul (*Nefesh HaTzomachat*) is in the liver, and the speaking soul (*Nefesh HaMedaberet*) is in the brain.

18. In the responsa of the great Rabbi, our teacher, **Rabbi Ephraim son of Rabbi Yisrael ben Elnkaveh**, of

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<sup>151</sup> Deuteronomy 11:22

<sup>152</sup> Deuteronomy 9:9

<sup>153</sup> Kings I 19

righteous memory, which he called **Shaar Kevod HaShem**, he states as follows: In the books of the sages of astrology it is written that there are people who see powers while they are awake, and they appear to them that they are bodies, and they will speak to them and tell them the future. They said that the reason for this is due to the person receiving bestowal from the Upper [Realms], and that this matter becomes strengthened in them according to the order of the [celestial] arrangements at the time of the birth (*Molad*) [of the new moon]. They further explained that when it comes to those powers that appear to them as bodies, they do not see them outside of themselves, but rather, everything that they perceive is of them and within them, like one who sees his [own] form in a mirror or in another shiny object, at which time he actually sees his own form in his eyes. This is likewise the view of Rabbi Avraham ben Da'ud, of righteous memory, as well as the view of **Rabbi Avraham Ibn Ezra, of righteous memory.**

19. In one book that explains the tree of the ten *Sefirot* I found written: I shall now explain to you the mystery of the garment (*Malbush*-מלבוש). What you need to know is that the form of man is in “the image-*Tzelem*-צלם,” and His Glory is in “the image-*Tzelem*-צלם,” as it is written,<sup>154</sup> “All who are called by My Name [and for My glory] etc.,” and He blew into his nostrils a living soul. The foundation of the orders of its qualities are drawn forth like its qualities, in order to receive the form, like the form of the body, and then the entire body of man becomes filled with the Glory, in order to draw forth spirit and

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<sup>154</sup> Isaiah 43:7

intellect from His power, and to adhere to Him when he goes in the ways of wisdom, and to attest to Him that it is He who makes our glorious form which is beyond inquiry, and Who commanded us to make a dwelling for His glory, like the form of the Cherubim which are like our forms, and just as He blew into our nostrils the Supernal soul, like the Cherubim, Splendor-*Tiferet* and the “crown-*Atarah*.”<sup>155</sup> The Torah cries out and says,<sup>156</sup> “The Torah of *HaShem*-יהו"ה is perfect, returning the soul,” meaning, it returns it to the place where it was. Therefore, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, does kindness with the righteous *Tzaddikim*, and prepares a spiritual garment (*Malbush*-מלבוש) for them that is more [spiritual] than the ministering angels. They are incapable of prostrating themselves, or praying for themselves or their progeny, until *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, garbs them in this second garment (*Malbush*). This garment (*Malbush*) is conscious and is able to pray for him and for his progeny. It is about this that our sages, of blessed memory, stated,<sup>157</sup> “They are aware of their own pain, but not the pain of others.”<sup>158</sup> However, if the soul merits this garment, then it is able to pray on its behalf and on behalf of its progeny. This is as we find in Tractate Ketubot<sup>159</sup> in regard to Rabbeinu HaKadosh, that after his passing he would visit his home every Shabbat eve, and similarly, the incident with Rav Achai bar Yoshiya.<sup>160</sup> For, those righteous *Tzaddikim*

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<sup>155</sup> [Kingship-*Malchut* – as in the verse (Proverbs 12:4), “The woman of valor is the crown (*Ateret*-עטרת) of her Husband.”]

<sup>156</sup> Psalms 19:8

<sup>157</sup> Talmud Bavli, Brachot 18b

<sup>158</sup> See further in Zohar I 225a-b.

<sup>159</sup> Talmud Bavli, Ketubot 103a

<sup>160</sup> Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 152b

merited this garment (*Malbush*) that hovers over their grave constantly.

20. The mystery of the garment (*Malbush*): After the soul has manifested within this body in this world, then upon its departure from it at the time of its passing, it returns and garbs a precious garment that has the appearance of this body, but is [more] ethereal and brilliant. There are those who become garbed like Eliyahu, who is remembered for the good, in a spiritual garment that remained sustaining after he divested himself of his mantle,<sup>161</sup> and which is seen by those who have a refined heart. There are those that are not seen except to those who have a refined spirit (*ru'ach*), [and then too only] when the soul is in its [full] strength and force, as in the secret of [the verse],<sup>162</sup> “For I will lie down with my fathers,” in body and soul.<sup>163</sup> The mystery of this body is the foundation of the garment (*Malbush*) which is drawn from the Upper Spirit. This is the meaning of [the teaching],<sup>164</sup> “Our forefather Yaakov did not die.” For, he [merely] became garbed in an even more perfected garment due to “his bed being perfect.”<sup>165</sup> This matter can be derived from Yehoshua who was garbed in filthy garments<sup>166</sup> because his sons were not perfect in their deeds<sup>167</sup> until they removed the filthy garments from upon him, with the

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<sup>161</sup> Kings II 2

<sup>162</sup> Genesis 47:30;

<sup>163</sup> See Zohar I 224a and on.

<sup>164</sup> Talmud Bavli, Taanit 5b

<sup>165</sup> See Rashi to Genesis 47:31 and elsewhere.

<sup>166</sup> Zachariah 3:4

<sup>167</sup> See Rashi to Zachariah 3:1; Ezra 10:18

removal of the iniquity, and his son's separation from their non-Jewish wives.

Now, our forefather Yaakov did not die, since he merited the quality of Truth-*Emet*-תמא, and he thus stands and prays on behalf of his children. Do not answer me based on the sale of Yosef, since they were already forgiven for this, and additionally, through their exile they were also atoned for to a degree. When the world requires mercy, then all the forefathers don their garb and stand and pray for their children. This is as explained in the Aggadah of Eliyahu, who is remembered for the good,<sup>168</sup> "I had to wake up Avraham, wash his hands, and [wait for him] to pray etc." Rabbi Chiyya and his sons, whose deeds [and prayers] were comparable [to that of the forefathers],<sup>169</sup> perhaps also merited a garment (*Malbush*) like theirs.

Now, when a person's thoughts are in a state of adhesion Above, he will see visions of people standing in their garments, according to his adhesion and comprehension. Those who are ill, whose bodies have become weakened so that the power of the soul has become dominant over them, as it desires to become garbed, shall see the likeness of a man garbed in a radiant garment, like the matter of "[Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai who at the time of his passing requested that his students] prepare a chair for Chizkiyahu, King of Israel, who has come [from the upper world to accompany him],"<sup>170</sup> in that

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<sup>168</sup> Talmud Bavli, Bava Metziya 85b

<sup>169</sup> Talmud Bavli, Bava Metziya 85b ibid.

<sup>170</sup> Talmud Bavli, Brachot 28b and Rashi there.

he perceived his likeness in his grasp, and the like, since they were of the same line,<sup>171</sup> and adhered to the same place Above.

In regard to Rabbi Chiyya<sup>172</sup> who said [to his sons],<sup>173</sup> “Do not bury me in white garments, nor in black garments, but rather in the clothes of the bath attendants who come from overseas,” understand that the likeness that was buried will arise to serve, and the deed below causes an imprint above. The same is likewise derived from the matter of the [woman who was] buried in the mat of reeds.<sup>174</sup> For, although one’s good deeds garb him, the body must be like the likeness of the soul. However, further analysis is required, since they compared him [Rabbi Chiyya] to Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov, and this being so, why did he not say that they should bury him in white? Perhaps it is because the garments of the bath attendants are intermediate, and he took hold of the intermediate path to ascend, for the sake of Above according to what was appropriate, and when he saw those coming to greet him, he sought that which was similar to what they were wearing, this itself being comparable to Avraham, the lesser one depending on the greater one.

Now, from Orchot Chayim of Rabbi Eliezer the Great, the mystery of the soul can be understood, as to how it becomes garbed in the spiritual air in a glorious form, to ascend and see “at every New Moon and on every Shabbat.”<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> See Talmud Bavli, Bava Batra 12b

<sup>172</sup> Rabbi Yannai in our versions, thus resolving the question of the comparison of Rabbi Chiyya to the forefathers.

<sup>173</sup> Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 114a

<sup>174</sup> Talmud Bavli, Brachot 18b

<sup>175</sup> Isaiah 66:23



Note: The third and final section has not yet been translated.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> The third and final gate is almost entirely excerpted from the teachings of Rabbi Avraham Abulafia, of blessed memory, and are the methods of adhesion to and contemplation of the Name of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, primarily as it is manifest in the seventy-two names that arise from the three verses “*VaYeesa*-וַיֵּסֵעַ,” “*VaYavo*-וַיָּבֹא,” and “*VaYeit*-וַיֵּיט” (Exodus 14:19-21). However, as Rabbi Chayim Vital wrote in his introduction, “I will reveal only a hands-breadth while concealing two thousand cubits.” That is, to attain a proper understanding and approach to this section of the book, necessarily requires prerequisite knowledge of other important foundations, which were not included in this work. Nevertheless, as Rabbi Chayim Vital instructs us in his introduction, this entire work is knowledge that he received from his master and teacher, the Godly Rabbi Yitzchak Luria, the Arizal, and he states, “I have personally tried and tested these and have found them to be effective. However, I will only enumerate their details briefly, by way of signposts that point the way.” He indeed provides such sign-posts. For, although it is well known that the teachings of Rabbi Avraham Abulafia are mostly locked gates, it is well-known that the Arizal already pointed to the student of Rabbi Avraham Abulafia, namely, Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, as having graced us with the keys to these gates, and to the secrets of the Torah, in his famed work *Shaarei Orah*. Moreover, Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla himself writes of his *Ginat Egoz*, which preceded his *Shaarei Orah*, that it includes all of the critically necessary introductions and is foundational to all his other works, and to all of Torah. In it, he elucidates the true teachings of the Kabbalah that he received from his master and teacher, Rabbi Avraham Abulafia, illuminating them in a clear and simple manner, so that they may be understood by every intelligent person. In his work *Otzar Eden HaGanuz*, Rabbi Avraham Abulafia himself refers to his student, Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, in the greatest of terms, stating that he succeeded in that which he was taught with the greatest success, and that he attained the most wondrous success beyond even that which he was expressly taught, applying to him the words of the verse (Samuel I 16:18), “*HaShem*-יהו"ה was with him,” which the Talmud (Sanhedrin 93b) explains to mean that “the *Halachah* is like him in all areas.” Nevertheless, until our generation, this work *Ginat Egoz* remained hidden in manuscript form, possessed by only the righteous few. Prior to this generation, there was only one limited printing of *Ginat Egoz* that was brought into print by the saintly Rabbi Yishayah HaLevi Horowitz, the famed author of the *Shnei Luchot HaBrit* (known as the *ShLaH*). Nevertheless, in our generation, *Ginat Egoz* has already been printed and made fully available to the public, and has also been translated and adapted into English under the title *HaShem is One*. It is our hope and prayer to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He and blessed is His Name, that the publication and dissemination of these teachings will bring about the fulfillment of the prophecy (Isaiah 40:5), “The glory of *HaShem*-יהו"ה will be revealed and all flesh, as one, will see that the mouth of *HaShem*-יהו"ה has spoken.”

