

# **Schechina consciousness and The Secret of the Ayalta and the Snake July 2014**

A snake came to my water-trough  
On a hot, hot day, and I in pyjamas for the heat,  
To drink there.

In the deep, strange-scented shade of the great dark carob-tree  
I came down the steps with my pitcher  
And must wait, must stand and wait, for there he was at the trough before  
me.

He reached down from a fissure in the earth-wall in the gloom  
And trailed his yellow-brown slackness soft-bellied down, over the edge of  
the stone trough  
And rested his throat upon the stone bottom,  
And where the water had dripped from the tap, in a small clearness,  
He sipped with his straight mouth,  
Softly drank through his straight gums, into his slack long body,  
Silently.

Someone was before me at my water-trough,  
And I, like a second comer, waiting.

He lifted his head from his drinking, as cattle do,  
And looked at me vaguely, as drinking cattle do,  
And flickered his two-forked tongue from his lips, and mused a moment,  
And stooped and drank a little more,  
Being earth-brown, earth-golden from the burning bowels of the earth  
On the day of Sicilian July, with Etna smoking.  
The voice of my education said to me  
He must be killed,  
For in Sicily the black, black snakes are innocent, the gold are venomous.

And voices in me said, If you were a man  
You would take a stick and break him now, and finish him off.

But must I confess how I liked him,  
How glad I was he had come like a guest in quiet, to drink at my water-trough  
And depart peaceful, pacified, and thankless,  
Into the burning bowels of this earth?

Was it cowardice, that I dared not kill him? Was it perversity, that I longed to talk  
to him? Was it humility, to feel so honored?  
I felt so honored.

And yet those voices:  
If you were not afraid, you would kill him!

And truly I was afraid, I was most afraid,  
But even so, honored still more  
That he should seek my hospitality  
From out the dark door of the secret earth.

He drank enough  
And lifted his head, dreamily, as one who has drunken,  
And flickered his tongue like a forked night on the air, so black,  
Seeming to lick his lips,  
And looked around like a god, unseeing, into the air,  
And slowly turned his head,  
And slowly, very slowly, as if thrice a dream,  
Proceeded to draw his slow length curving round  
And climb again the broken bank of my wall-face.

And as he put his head into that dreadful hole,  
And as he slowly drew up, snake-easing his shoulders, and entered farther,  
A sort of horror, a sort of protest against his withdrawing into that horrid black  
hole,  
Deliberately going into the blackness, and slowly drawing himself after,  
Overcame me now his back was turned.

I looked round, I put down my pitcher,  
I picked up a clumsy log  
And threw it at the water-trough with a clatter.

I think it did not hit him,  
But suddenly that part of him that was left behind convulsed in undignified haste.  
Writhed like lightning, and was gone  
Into the black hole, the earth-lipped fissure in the wall-front,  
At which, in the intense still noon, I stared with fascination.

And immediately I regretted it.  
I thought how paltry, how vulgar, what a mean act!

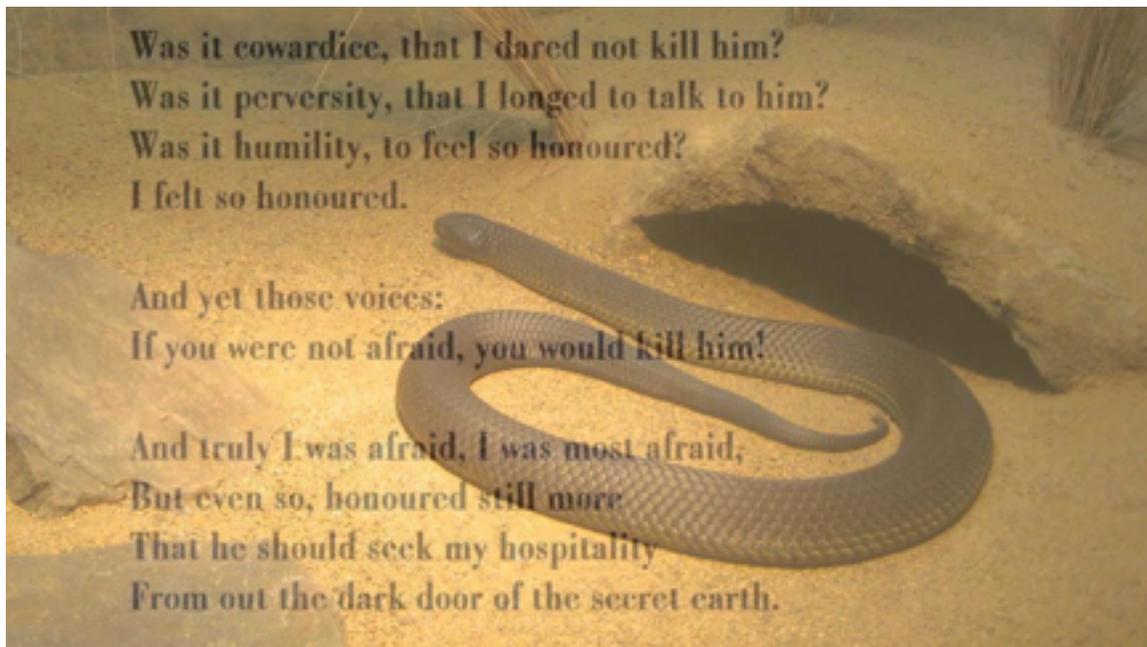
I despised myself and the voices of my accursed human education.

And I thought of the albatross  
And I wished he would come back, my snake.

For he seemed to me again like a king,  
Like a king in exile, uncrowned in the underworld,  
Now due to be crowned again.

And so, I missed my chance with one of the lords  
Of life.  
And I have something to expiate:  
A pettiness.<sup>1</sup>

D. H. Lawrence: Snake Taormina, 1923



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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ft6TB0XpsL4>



*And as for the Spring, it has no time of its own, because it does not exist within the parameters of time. However, the Heart gives it time as a present, one day at a time. And when it comes to the end of each day, at which point the Spring has no more time, and is about to die, G-D forbid, which would thereby cause the Heart to die also, G-D forbid, which would cause the whole world to cease to exist, G-D forbid. At the very end of the day, the two take leave of each other, with the most wonderful poems and verse, filled as they are with such a love and longing for each other. That is when the Man of True Kindness, who is watching over them, at the very last possible minute, gives a present of one day to the Heart, and the Heart gives it to the Spring. And the Spring thereby has another day to exist. And this day, where it comes from, its source, it also comes with the most wonderful poetry and verse, (which is made up of all the wisdoms.) And all the days are completely different, for there is Sunday and Monday etc. also the first day of each month, and also the holidays, and so on.*

In the following interpretation, Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz explains the Kabbalistic ideas woven into this beautiful parable:

*The story of the heart and the spring draws on the imagery of the Psalms, especially Psalm 61. The heart and the spring, which are at opposite ends of the earth, are the two poles of existence. The heart is the , the indwelling presence of God in the world that imbues everything with life and vitality. The spring, on the other hand, is the infinitely distant transcendent aspect of God, the primal source from which all divinity emanates. The heart yearns perpetually to return to and be reunited with its origin, the first cause, but it cannot. The burning sun and the shade given by the wings of the bird represent, respectively, the exhausting earthly passions that obscure true spiritual desires, and the divine grace that occasionally appears in the world.*

*The unbridgeable gulf between the heart and the spring, the Shekhinah and the primal source, is a basic feature of Creation. Were the heart ever to attempt to cross it, the world would cease to exist. Distance from the primal source is thus a prior condition of existence, and an intense, unending yearning characterizes the basic relationship that inheres in the world. However, this yearning is not entirely static, but involves a kind of ebb and flow in which the world (and man) moves toward the transcendent, thereby nullifying its own existence temporarily before returning to mundane reality.<sup>2</sup>*

I believe that Rabbi Nachman's stories of the Lost Princess and the story of the "spring and the heart" all point to an impossible love situation whereby the very longing of two lovers for each other is the source of their paralysis to move because of the circumstances surrounding their love, the narrator's "set up". This paralysis, due to the conflict between a desire to come closer to each other, to

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<sup>2</sup>Translation of "The Parable of the Heart and the Spring" from *The Seven Beggars*. Band, Arnold J. and Dan Joseph, eds. Nahman of Bratslav: The Tales. Copyright © 1978 by Arnold J. Band (New York: Paulist Press). pp 154-156.

unite, and the price of such a move in coming closer. This price is too heavy to pay-and the consequences of loss of visual connection, becomes for the Rebbe, his signature metaphor for the human soul and its desire to come closer to the heart of the world the Shechinah. This added tragic component to his tales is insufficiently stressed.

His notion of the Shechina as the Heart of the world or another character, the Lost Princess, has been well documented by scholars such as Dovid Sears, and Joseph Dan, but I wanted to add another connection between his tales and these mythic stories, that is to connect the longing and desire found here with a similar understanding by the author(s) of the Zohar of the split within the divine between the masculine (Tiferet) the feminine divine (malchut). The longing occurs between the intradivine potencies gendered between the masculine and feminine archetypes, both in the Zohar as well as Rebbe Nachman tales. The set up is the very split itself, due to Lurianic ideas of tzimtzum or exile in Zohar.

In this meditation I wanted to stretch this notion a little further by introducing the dynamic interplay of another character, the snake, who intermediates between the masculine divine and the powerless feminine ayalta. The Lost Princess also needs rescuing but it is the zaddik or man of kindness who is the agent and character in the plot who is able to rescue her from the Water Castle or the Evil King. Is it possible that there is a snake like quality to the zaddik, referenced by the sefira of Yesod, the phallus, shaped like a snake?

Is the zaddik therefore in need of retooling and redefining inasmuch as we are used to this pietistic moralistic super hero Rabbi, whereas in fact his role as mediator between the divine potencies and sweetener of divine rage has more of the snake like quality to it. there is in need of serpentine archetypal features to his mode of operation that allows him to negotiate the delicate spaces between din and chessed.

Before this articulation what do we meanly the divine masculine and feminine?

In the scholarly literature there are subtle differences between Israeli and American readers of the Zohar as to the gendered notion of the masculine and feminine sefira or malchut.

In *Eros and Kabbalah*, Moshe Idel (Professor of Jewish Mysticism, Hebrew University in Jerusalem) argues that the fundamental distinction between the rational-philosophic strain of Judaism and theosophic-mystical Judaism, as exemplified by the Zohar, is the mystical belief that the Godhead is complex, rather than simple, and that divinity is dynamic and incorporates gender, having both male and female dimensions. These polarities must be conjoined (have yihud, "union") to maintain the harmony of the cosmos. Idel characterizes this metaphysical point of view as "ditheism," holding that there are two aspects to God, and the process of union as "theoeroticism." This ditheism, the dynamics it

entails, and its reverberations within creation is arguably the central interest of the Zohar, making up a huge proportion of its discourse (pp. 5–56).

Mention should also be made of the work of Elliot Wolfson (Professor of Jewish Mysticism, New York University), who has almost single-handedly challenged the conventional view, which is affirmed by Idel as well. Wolfson likewise recognizes the importance of hetero-erotic symbolism in the kabbalistic understanding of the divine nature. The oneness of God is perceived in androgynous terms as the pairing of male and female, the former characterized as the capacity to overflow and the latter as the potential to receive. Where Wolfson breaks with Idel and other scholars of the Kabbalah is in his insistence that the consequence of that hetero-erotic union is the restoration of the female to the male. Just as, in the case of the original Adam, woman was constructed from man, and their carnal cleaving together was portrayed as becoming one flesh, so the ideal for kabbalists is the reconstitution of what Wolfson calls the male androgyne. Much closer in spirit to some ancient Gnostic dicta, Wolfson understands the eschatological ideal in traditional Kabbalah to have been the female becoming male.<sup>3</sup>

The essential flaw in creation whether due to the Lurianic smashing of the vessels or its furthering by the original sin of Adam, is the cause for the set up whereby evil is allowed to flourish. Suffering is eroticized by the longing between the masculine and feminine in the intradivine potencies of *tiferet* and *malchut* as well as in the stories of Rebbe Nachman.

In both cases however, there is a split in the divine, whether due to the original cosmic catastrophe, or the “sin” of Adam. In one zoharic text that sin, rather than being due to his succumbing to Eve’s wiles in eating the forbidden fruit, was more his excessive devotion to the female aspect of divinity, Shechinah. Rather than settling for the earthly feminine he preferred her archetype in Shechina, and the punishment was HER banishment into the exile of history, reality and divorced from Her male divine counterpart.

*“and he banished Adam” (veyagerish ES ha-adam): Reb Elazar stated: it is unclear who banished whom, whether God banished Adam or Adam banished Her (through his actions).*

History, then becomes the attempt at restoration of the primordial divine split, through the efforts of Adam’s progeny, mankind. This is accomplished by the ritual acts and devotions of the kabbalist in suffering alongside the banished Shechinah in history and slowly through theurgic acts and devotions of re-unification, restoring the hierosgamos in the calendrical cycle of the Jewish year.

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<sup>3</sup> Wolfson, Elliot, *Circle in the Square: Studies in the Use of Gender in Kabbalistic Symbolism*: 1995 SUNY Press.

The metaphor for the Shechinah as anthropomorphized in the Zohar includes ... rock...hind...mother bird fluttering over her children in the nest, (*shiluach hakein*) ...and such women personalities of the bible as Eve, Sara, Rachel/Leah, Tamar, Esther, Ruth. In each of these women's lives and struggles, there is a covert reference to Her struggles being captive in the world of the finite and in time. On the other hand She struggles alongside Her people and provides comfort for those who identify with Her.

Being a kind of intermediate between the (masculine depicted) divine at times Tiferet or Hakadosh Baruch Hu, at other times Binah, She suffers the double curse of knowing the bliss of unity and conjugation with Her consort yet the agony of sinking as far as the *klippot* or shells and husks, the detritus or "other side" the demonic world where Her feet touch. In this hierarchical vertical array from the infinite transcendent light of Ein Sof the descent of light passes through the immanent stages of the sefirotic tree of life (the four worlds of *Atzilut*, *Beriya*, *Yetzira* and *Assiya*) either the bright front side or the darker *sitra achra* until it reaches the lower realms of the real world of malchut of Assiya which is the interface with the lowest realms of the netherworld of darkness and the demonic.

In her banishment she is condemned to descend into the world of reality touching even the world of the *klippot* and become polluted by them. Our real world is a delicate balance of the forces of light and darkness, divine and demonic, restoration (Tikkun) and destruction. The holographic image painted by the Zohar projected down here is reflected within the divine realm. The physiology of the intra-divine struggle centers around the reified demonic which is reflected in *gevurot* those forces of strict justice and conditional performance unmitigated by mercy or *chesed*. The Zohar claims that any work done in *tikkun* down here in the physical world through ritual acts and devotions actually causes a "sweetening" of the *gevurot* by restoring harmony and balance of the *gevurot* by assuaging the divine unmitigated rage.

It is as if by the very act of creation, the infinite divine has wished to perform an experiment in finitude which went horribly wrong. For the very desire to create was a kind of constriction by the nature of desire, evoking an original lack. Space had to be made prior to this initial desire for a sense of lack so as to for a desire. This is the *tzimtzum*. This initial contraction to allow a desire to even be created is the *gevurot* that also permeates the universe holographically. Reb Nachman claims<sup>4</sup> that the *Tzimtzum* is real for without it how could there be a real world (like the teachings of the Gra as well as Reb Chayim mi-Volozhyn) however the Zohar claims<sup>5</sup> : "*leit atar panui minei*" there is no reality devoid of Him....meaning His presence of being, meaning the *tzimtzum* is not to be taken literally -for the

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<sup>4</sup> Likutei Mehoran I Torah 64

<sup>5</sup> Zohar:

divine light is really incarnated in all reality whether physical spiritual or even demonic.

These demonic forces suck vitality from the divine wherever possible so that much of the activity by the Shechinah and Her devotees is to either fool or outwit the denizens of the dark side so as to promote Tikkun without emboldening or strengthening their forces. Strategies center around either hiding their ritual so as not to be noticed, or more radically somehow feeding scraps to the other side in a minimal fashion but sufficient to calm them. Shechinah thus mediates between the divine and the demonic and invites us to help her survive these torturous highs and lows. This is the triangle I think that has received insufficient attention thus far.

The holographic theory implies that humanity too is torn between these opposing forces of light and darkness, divine and demonic. The Zohar promote and validates those biblical heroes that were able to manage this task, the most lauded being Enoch:<sup>6</sup>

*“ Chanoch melded the good within the bad and saw the bad within the good....”*

The opposite was the excessively pious (frum) Job who split the good from the bad by only bringing sacrifices known as Olot. These sacrifices were totally consumed on the altar as opposed to others which were partially consumed by the devotee. The paradigm for this was the se le-azazel brought by the High Priest on Yom Kippur. The goats were divided between the one sacrificed in the Temple and the other goat sent to the wilderness as an expiation or food for the other side, Azazel representing the dark demonic forces. In only bringing Olot, Job had not realized the need to assuage the demonic forces down here (and thereby neither the powers of gevurot within the divine) so he was struck *mida keneged mida* in like manner, by similar splitting between happiness and misery in a sequential fashion: first living in wealth bounty with family, then being stripped of his children, possessions and suffering followed by restoration of his wealth health and family. Precisely because of his excess piety and refusal to confront and integrate the darker side into his devotions and religiosity, he was punished in like fashion.

The zoharic model of devotion is thus integration in the mundane world so as to cause integration within the divine of chessed and gevurah, Malchut and Tiferet.

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<sup>6</sup> Zohar:

Having identified the set up as well as the triune balance between the masculine, feminine and demonic forces both intradivine and holographically mirrored in the real world, let us turn our attention to the *Ayalta* and the snake to flesh out further the dynamic process and as to why it requires the demonic forces of the serpent and the dark side in the service of the divine reconciliation. Does this use of the darker shadowy side of the divine also take effect holographically within each of us and as such does this not alter the way we look at spirituality?

***Ayelet ha-Shahar (The Doe of the Dawn)***

***Zohar III:249a-b:***

*“And in the seventh month” (Num 29:16). Rabbi Abba began: “As a hart longs for flowing water, so does my soul long for you, O God” (Psalm 42:2). This verse has been interpreted [i.e. in Rabbinic midrashim]. It says here ayal (“hart / hind—i.e., male deer”), and it says there ayalah (“doe, i.e., female deer”), for there is male and there is female. But even though there are male and female, it is all one. For that ayal is itself called male and is called female. Hence it is written “as a hart longs”—ta’arog [i.e., using the feminine form in the future/indefinite tense] and does not say ya’arog [i.e., the masculine form]. For it is all one.*

*Ayelet ha-shahar. “The doe of the dawn” (Ps 22:1). What is meant by “the doe of the dawn”? There is a certain creature that is compassionate; there is no other creature in all the world who is as compassionate as she. For at a time of want, when she needs food for herself and for all the creatures, she goes far off, on a distant way, and she goes and brings food. And she does not eat until she has returned and come back to her place. Why? So that the other creatures may gather around her and she may divide the food among them. And when she comes, all the other creatures gather around her, and she stands in the middle and gives to each and every one. And the sign of this is “And she rises while it is yet night, and gives food to her household...” (Proverbs 31:15). And from that which she divides among them, she is satiated, as if she had eaten more food than all of them.*

*And when morning comes, which is called dawn, the travails of exile come to her. And for that reason she is called ayelet ha-shahar, “the doe of dawn”—because of the darkness [just before] dawn. For she suffers pangs like one giving birth, as is written, “like a woman with child whose time draws near, she writhes and cries out in her birthpangs” (Isa 26:17). When does she divide the food among them? When dawn is about to come, when it is still night, and darkness retreats before the light. As we say, “and she rises while it is yet night and gives food to her household.” Once dawn breaks, all are satisfied / satiated with her food.*

*Then one voice is heard in the middle of the sky, calling with strength, saying: "Those who are close, come up to your place! Those who are distant, go away!" Each one enters the place suitable to it. Once the sun shines, each one enters into its place, as is written, "The sun rises, they are gathered [and return to their places]" (Ps 104:22). And she goes about during the daytime, and is revealed at night, and divides [food] at dawn. For that reason she is called, "The doe of dawn."*

*Thereafter she strengthens herself like a man, and when she goes out she is called ayal (hart). Where does she go? She goes sixty parsangs from that place, ascending the mountain of darkness (and from there she brings the food). She goes up that mountain of darkness, a tortuous serpent twists around her feet, and she goes out from there to the mountain of light. And once she arrives there, the blessed Holy One causes another serpent to come, and they struggle with one another, and she is saved. And from there she takes food and returns to her place in the middle of the night. And from midnight, she is allowed to divide it, until the darkness of dawn dispels. And once day breaks, she goes away and is not seen, as we have said.*

*But at a time that the world needs rain, all the other creatures gather to her, and she goes to the top of a high mountain and places her head between her knees. And she moans and cries bitterly, moan after moan; and the blessed Holy One hears her voice and is filled with compassion and takes pity on His world. And she comes down from the top of the mountain and hides herself, and all the other creatures run after her and do not find her. Concerning this it is written, "Like a heart yearnings for flowing streams." What is meant by "flowing streams"? Those streams that have dried up, and the world is parched for water—for these "she longs."*

*But when she is with child, she is sealed up. And when her time comes to give birth, she cries out and lifts her voice, cry after cry, up to seventy cries, like the number of words in "The Lord shall answer you on a day of trouble" (Psalm 20), which is the song of the pregnant women. **And the blessed Holy One hears her cry and prepares for her near that stream a great serpent from the mountains of darkness, and he comes from between the mountains, his mouth licking the dust until it comes to that hind; and it comes and bites her twice in that place. The first time blood comes out and he licks it up. The second time, water comes out, and all those creatures that are at the mountain drink it; and she opens up and gives birth. And the sign of this is "And he hit the rock twice with his staff" (Num 20:11), and it says "and he gave to the congregation to drink and to their animals" (ibid.). At that time the blessed Holy One has compassion upon her offspring. And this is what is written, "The voice of the Lord makes does to give birth, and strips forests bare (Ps 29: 9). "he voice of God makes the does give birth."** These are the pangs and travails that arouse those seventy voices. Immediately, "and he strips the forests"—to get rid of that snake, and to reveal that creature among them. "And in His palace" (ibid.).*

*What is meant by “in His palace”—in the palace of the blessed Holy One. All those myriads open their mouths and say glory. And what is “glory”? “Blessed be the glory of the Lord from His place” (Ezek 3:12).<sup>7</sup>*

The Ayalta represents the Schechina, who provides nourishment for the world and its creatures through Her travails. She seems trapped down here in the world of reality and through Her suffering the Divine is aroused to take mercy on the world and provide water and sustenance through her agency exclusively.

“Standard Kabbalistic commentaries interpret ayalet ha-shahar as symbolizing the Shechinah—the female Presence of the Divine within the world, who serves as a channel or reservoir for collecting and distributing Divine blessing and plentitude. On another level, she is Eternal Feminine or the Great Mother—the embodiment of the maternal principle. Mother, whether human or animal, cares for her young to the point of self-sacrifice; certainly, the figure of the ayalah going hungry and being satisfied by her young being satisfied rings true to life, even on the non-symbolic level.

“The idea that “male and female are one” (based on the female declension of the verb עָרָב used in Psalm 42 in reference to a male) is often interpreted as alluding to the zivvug, the intra-Divine union of Tiferet and Malkhut, sefirot taken as symbolizing male and female, respectively. But perhaps one can read it differently: as representing the presence of male and female within the psyche of each individual, what Jungians call the anima and animus within man and woman, respectively. Or again, if the Kabbalistic zivvugim occur within Adam Kadmon, the sefirot as archetypal of the human soul and personality, then perhaps the union of male and female may be read as the inner integration of male and female elements within the personality.

“The snakes, the dark mountain, which the ayalah conquers, may be seen as overcoming the Other Side, the demonic forces in the universe, as does the snake which curls around her feet, and which later bites her in “that place” (in Hazal, a euphemism for the female genital; that place from which she bears new life, and from which there emerge first blood—symbol of impurity—and then water—symbol of purity). Again, the ayalah’s poignant experiencing of Exile, her birth pangs “just before the dawn,” when it is darkest, are suggestive of the Shechinah, who is simultaneously the Divine Presence in this world, who is “with you in your troubles” (and who is at times elusive, disappearing and suddenly reappearing), as well as the Jewish people, Knesset Yisrael, the “Congregation of Israel.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> I. Tishby’s *Mishnat ha-Zohar*, Vol. I: 237-239

<sup>8</sup><http://hitzeiyehonatan.blogspot.com/2009/07/pinhas-zohar.html>, Yehonatan Chipman, July 2009

This idyllic view of the ayalta is matched by this darker view in Zohar Beshallach 52b. The very rituals and devotions, the Mitzvoth, (even the Temple sacrificial cult on the holiest day of the calendar), have this element of “feeding the other side” giving it its due or at least hiding the immanent divine light forces from being grabbed and “suckled” by the demonic forces of the *Sitra Achra*. The notion of hiding finds its expression most daringly in the birthing of the ayalta, the hind.<sup>9</sup> The hind wishes to give birth but “its sides are closed up” there seems to be a cephalo-pelvic disproportion! Labor increases in intensity but she is helpless. This horrific visual image is portrayed on three occasions in Zohar but also in midrash<sup>10</sup>. The image of helplessness and extreme visceral pain is the metaphor evoked by these radical texts to express a similar image in the Shechinah and in humanity. She too is helpless and in pain, millennia after being banished to suffer alongside humanity and watch helplessly the wanton mass murder genocide and torture that man inflicts on man, the demonic powers given to men to do evil, causes Her immense pain. The birthing of a young roe signifies the birthing of messianic healing of new *mochin* new spiritual insight, of higher divine effluence to come down and refresh and reinvigorate, of new Tikkun. The secret of this ayalta is revealed in the passage of the splitting of the Reed Sea in Exodus (Beshallach). The renting of the sea into two, its splitting, is like the splitting open of the birth canal of the ayalta. The question remains as to how this is accomplished.

*“When the world needs rain in a drought”*

***“The Almighty invites a great (Holy) serpent/dragon/snake to writhes its way toward her eating the dust of the ground as it proceeds, until ti reaches her and bites her twice in her ervah. The first tie evokes blood which it drinks, the second bite breaks her waters and out flows water to nourish the parched animals around. The she is able to proceed and give birth”***

The pain is relieved by an act of divine grace, like the splitting of the waters of the Reed Sea, the Children of Israel were helpless, with the Egyptians in hot pursuit and the sea ahead of them “the mountains closed in on them”<sup>11</sup>. The Moses was able to “lift his hand over the sea” and it split. This miracle is troped in the in Zohar as the divine invitation of the snake to open the womb of the Ayalta allowing the birth of her child. Of course the question is why a serpent and furthermore even more why does it require two bites?

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<sup>9</sup> see my podcasts “Ayalta and Serpent” I and II May 2014 . [www.jyungar.com/podcast](http://www.jyungar.com/podcast)

<sup>10</sup> Zohar II, beshallach 52b, Midrash,

<sup>11</sup> Exodus:

*“And this is the mystery of striking the rock twice”*

Moses was told to strike the rock in two places. Early on in Exodus...he struck it and water proceeded to miraculously emerge from the rock. In the second episode in Numbers he struck it twice, the first time the midrash states only a few drops emerged so in his rage he struck it again. In one dramatic midrash drops of blood emerged.<sup>12</sup> The Zohar sees the rock as a metaphor for Shechinah and Moses as representing Tiferet, his rod the serpentine stick that transforms at his desire into a lethal snake, represents yesod, the generative organ, or its darker counterpart. Striking the rock is a union of other sorts, first causing blood and second causing water to break forth. This image of a double penetration is reminiscent of a virginal penetration causing initially the breaking of hymenal blood followed by the water of desire upon second penetration. Moses is punished for striking the rock instead of speaking to it. Clearly he had been instructed 40 years earlier to strike it. Why now merely speak to it?

I wanted to suggest that the first penetration was violent, the spirituality had to be “knocked into a bunch of slaves” (or should I say knocked up!). However the second generation of the wilderness were now ready to enter the promised land and were spiritually ready for a different type of instruction/penetration of the divine, one of words. Words are spoken and articulated with the lips. The secret of the lips is the kiss/*neshika*. The spirituality of kissing requires words and poetry seduction and the breath. Moses was stuck in the old paradigm using penetration by violence, by *neschicah*, biting instead of persuasion and rhetoric, seduction and kissing.

The secret of the snake biting twice is referred to the biblical proof-text of Moses hitting the rock twice. The Leshem devotes many chapters on this very subject in an attempt to understand the Ari'zal. He suggests that the use of a snake/serpent/dragon is part of giving the demonic its due on the one hand and hiding the fetus from the demonic forces on the other. The divine light that is needed to finally execute the delivery of new mochin, requires an underhanded method so as not to attract the forces of the other side to suckle from this new infant. The trick is to allow the light to come down via the dark side of *sitra achrah* thereby not arousing interest or attention. This might explain the first bite and the blood which represents the harsh gevurot within the divine manifesting down here as the blood of *dam tumah..dam leidah*. This impure blood emerges from the womb and makes the woman *tumaah*. The second bite however is more difficult to explain. Why would the snake be co-opted in the service of birthing and breaking of waters to nourish the world?

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<sup>12</sup> Midrash Pirke deReb Eliezer punning on the word “*vayozovu mayim*”, ziva as in impure blood of a zav.

Here lies the deepest secret of the Zohar, one which Rabbi Shimon writes after revealing it...”and on this there is no further discussion” and the Ari z’al tells Reb Chayim Vital, “and for revealing the secret of the Ayalta, I lost my son”.

(Rabbi Teitlebaum came to Chicago. A Kretchveneh chasid, he specializes in removing “Ayin Haraah” the “Evil Eye” using methods initiated by the Chidah. He has intimate knowledge through his practice, over the years, in the ways of the dark side, as it impacts people who come to consult him from all over the world. When I asked his advice he suggested two types of Ayin Haraah: one being typical jealousy of neighbors who cast a spell on the object of jealousy. The second being “*ifargin*” a Yiddish word which is difficult to translate but most closely follows the line of “begrudging”. He works on these two levels of Ayin Haraah. When he had finished his ritual (the molten lead hebeejeebe stuff!) he said to me “leave this business of the Ayalta!” I intuitively knew he was right. I have been obsessed with it! It has taken over my waking and dream life! I cannot get the image of her wailing in pain. Then this dragon appears, the same serpentine creature that seduced Mother Eve! The uroborus that encloses the earth<sup>13</sup>, our reality, in its grip, its mouth eating its tail in a cobra like grip of the world. Surely the secret of this dragon lies deep in the archaic mythologies of the world and in the Jungian collective unconscious.

I remember on one of the Mens’ Work trips with Robert Bly, James Hillman, a Mexican Shaman and Robert Gielgud (Sir John’s son), we were asked to act out a meditative group posture, requiring us all to interlock into a tree by climbing upon one another. The four in our group began to climb on each other with postures reminiscent of branches. I felt myself being dragged down to the floor in a serpentine posture and when asked what was I doing I said “ I am the snake around the foot of the tree of life” ! Something inside me dragged me down down to the foot of the tree of life, identifying in this meditative exercise a hitherto unconscious connection. Needless to say I was shocked!

On meeting my Jungian analyst/Theologian Dr Kapucinkas<sup>14</sup> from South Bend, and confessing my newest obsession of the Ayalta, he responded with the opposite recommendation to the Rabbi. Rather than veer away from this subject he recommended I pursue this reflection of anima within. His validation of the struggle as well as the investigation of the deeper meaning of this unique mythologouem, gave me the impetus to face the danger of this journey. (Notwithstanding the effect on the RSHBI as well as the ARI), in a post Holocaust theology we must find a myth that satisfies and expresses the horror and the

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<sup>13</sup> for more on the Uroborus see Erich Neuman the History of Consciousness and Midrash:

<sup>14</sup> Thomas Kapacinkas - IN, J.D., NCPsy.A.

DIPLOMATE ANALYTICAL PSYCHOLOGY: C.G. Jung Institute, Zurich, Switzerland. (1972)

CERTIFICATE IN OBJECT RELATIONS THEORY AND THERAPY: Washington School of Psychiatry, Washington, D.C. (1996) J.D. IN JUDISPRUDENCE: University of Notre Dame. (1968)

disconnect with the divine we all face. This unique midrash seemed to me for the first time, after decades of searching, a possible candidate.)

In deep meditation it came to me that the snake bites her in the womb, meaning the opening to the womb, the cervix. He had in effect “entered” her vaginally which means an intercourse of sorts. The image now implies biting-as-intercourse. Biting versus kissing . *Neshichah vs neschikah*. This difference is critical. The “womb” is too tight, but the zohar means to say the vaginal canal is too tight to give birth (cephalo-pelvic disproportion, to use modern medical terms), which means (I thank Reb Hershy for this insight), the snake, gets pleasure entering a tight vaginal canal at the expense of her pain. This perverse pleasure could not be expressed other than in this deeply mythological scene. The divine pleasure at the expense of humanity is a pagan myth reminiscent of the Greek and Indo-European myths.

Although I cite the Leshem, I find his reading too philosophical. The Leshem discusses the meaning behind the two bites of the snake/dragon in the tradition of the Vilna Gaon’s reading of the Lurianic myth. In doing so he demythologizes the potency of evil and the power of the demonic by insisting on the need for evil to allow free choice and the exercise of free will. The focus of attention is on man preserving the power to make moral choices which reduces the demonic quality of the snake and its mythological power. For all depends on man and no responsibility devolves on the very set up.

The snake represents the dark forces of din or strict judgement that come from above and allow the world to run along the lines of the laws of nature physics and justice. As these divine forces descend they become the source of evil in the world, the kelippot. The Leshem suggests that the agency of the snake and the evil forces must be so in order to preserve free will and in order to receive their own desert. This is represented by the first kiss of blood. The second kiss then allows for the sweetening of these forces by the waters of the womb, which then nourish and fertilize the world.<sup>15</sup>

I find it troubling that this entirely mythic tale should be preserved so as to allow evil in the world to give us free will. there is something demonic about this image that is insufficient to be rationalized away by the Vilna Gaon’s reading of the Ari’zal’s path of Kabbalah and *Hashgacha*. The myth embodies the demonic aspects of the divine in the guise of the snake/serpent/dragon which is such a cross cultural image that evokes terror and powerlessness, that a philosophical rationale does insufficient justice to the this power by expressing it as a mere reflection of human moral agency.

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<sup>15</sup> Sefer HaDeah Vol II Derush 5 Anaf 2 simanim 7-9

If we examine the **Zohar Parshas Pinchas** we get an idea of how dangerous this power is and how the zaddik can avert this by balancing the forces of goodness. Pinchas differs from even Moses in his unique ability to assuage the divine wrath which was set to destroy the entire Israelite camp. By “sweetening” the forces of divine rage, Pinchas is able to reduce the killing to 24000 Israelites. He does so by triggering the divine forces of sweetness within the divine, calming the rage down. Zaddikim have this power to sweeten the harsh judgements.

**Parshas Pinchas Zohar III:337-8:**

**What did Pinchas see? He saw the letter men filled with blood suspended over the heads of the Israelites.**

וידבר ה' אל משה לאמר פינחס בן אלעזר בן אהרן הכהן השיב את חמתי מעל בני ישראל " בקנאו  
את קנאתי בתוכם ולא כליתי את בני ישראל בקנאת

“And Hashem spoke to Moshe, saying: Pinchas, son of Elazar and grandson of Aharon the kohein, was the one who zealously took up My cause among the Jewish people and turned My anger away from them, so that I did not destroy them in My jealousy [demand for exclusive worship].”

בגין דאות מ' הוה סימנא קדמאה לאדם הראשון, למבני מות על  
 עלמא, בגין דאת דא הוה טאס על רישיה דאדם, כשעתא דכתיב,  
 ותקח מפריו, מ' פריו, והוה מחכא ו"ת, בזמנא דכתיב, ות'אכל, ות'תן,  
 ות'פקחנה, כדין אתבני מות על עלמא.

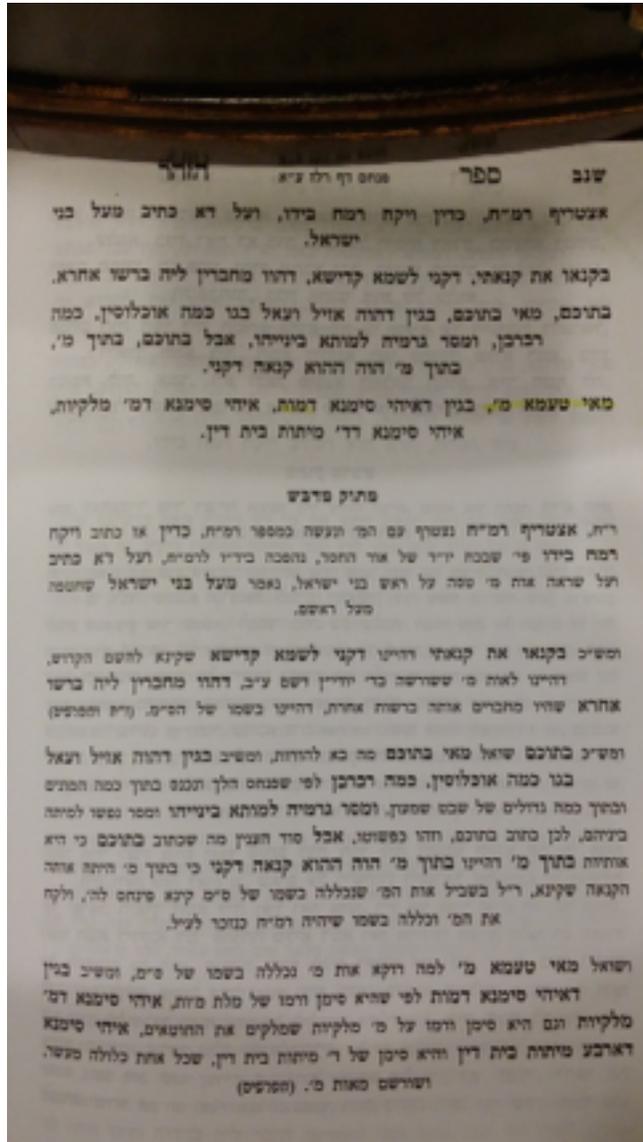
פנחס הוה חמי ליה השתא ההוא את מ' טאים על רישיהון דישראל,  
 והאיך חמא ליה, חמא דיוקנא דמ' פתוחה מליא דמא, כיון  
 דחמא ליה, אמר, הא ודאי סימנא דמלאך המות, מיד חטף לה,  
 אדכר עלה שמא מפרש, ונחית להאי את לגביה, ומה דהוה ר"ח,

## מתוק מדבש

שמו, ואתעביד מיד רמ"ח ונעשה מיד צירוף רמ"ח, שהוא אור דחסד, הדא הוא  
 דכתיב והו שכתוב ויקח רמח בידו.

עתה מפרש את ענין אות מ' כשהיתה עדיין בתוך שמו של הס"ם, ואמר בגין דאות  
 מ' הוה סימנא קדמאה לאדם הראשון לפי שאות מ' היה סימן הראשון  
 לאדם הראשון אחר שחטא, למבני מות על עלמא לבנות מות על העולם על ידי  
 הס"ם (נקט לשון בנין לפי שהאופיות נקראות אמיס, ומג' אופיות מ' ו' מ' נבנה מלת מות), בגין  
 דאת דא הוה טאס על רישיה דאדם לפי שאות זו היתה מעופפת על ראשו של  
 אדם, ומפרש בשעתא דכתיב בשעה שכתוב ותקח מפריו הנה מלת מ'פריו הוא  
 אותיות מ' פריו, אז והוה מחכא ו"ת אות המ' היתה מחכה לאותיות ו' ת', בזמנא  
 דכתיב בזמן שכתוב ות'אכל, ות'תן, ות'פקחנה אז נצטרפו אותיות ו' ת' עם מ',  
 כדין אתבני מות על עלמא אז נבנה ה"מות" על העולם, כי נתחברו ג' אותיות מ'  
 ו' ת' ונעשו מלת מר"ח. (ו"ם ומפרשים)

עתה חזר לענין פנחס ואמר פנחס הוה חמי ליה השתא ההוא את מ' פנחס  
 היה רואה עתה לאות מ', טאים על רישיהון דישראל שמעופפת על ראשיהם  
 של ישראל, והאיך חמא ליה ואיך ראה אותה, ר"ל איך הכיר שהיא המ' של הס"ם,  
 ואמר חמא דיוקנא דמ' פתוחה מליא דמא ראה צורת מ' פתוחה מלאה דם, המורה  
 על אדמימות כח הדיון, שניתנה רשות לס"ם לשפוך דמם של ישראל, כיון דחמא  
 ליה כיון שראה אותה, אמר פנחס, הא ודאי סימנא דמלאך המות הרי ודאי  
 זהו סימן של מלאך המות שהתחיל להשחית את ישראל, מיד חטף לה מיד חטף  
 אותה והמתיקה, אדכר עלה שמא מפרש על ידי שהוכיר עליה את השם המפורש,  
 שהוא השם ע"כ שבר' יודיין שבו הוא השורש של אות המ', ונחית להאי את  
 לגביה והוריד את המ' אליו ונכללה בשמו, ומה דהוה ר"ח ומה שהיה מספר שמו



“Pinchas saw a letter mem flying through the sky. This was a sign of the angel of death who wished to join this mem with the letter vav and the letter tav which would spell death. What did Pinchas do? He enrobed himself with [the gevuros of] Yitzchak. He then seized the letter mem from the angel of death and bound it to himself [and transformed it into life by connecting it with its source where everything is good and filled with life].

When the angel of death saw that Pinchas had seized the letter mem from him, it retreated [and was transformed into a good angel named Sa’el rather than Samael].”

Pinchas was able to assuage the divine rage by piercing the bag of blood filled letter men, and in doing so sweeten the rage of the divine.

Moshe was unable to perform this sweetening, by hitting the rock instead of speaking to it.

"And Pinchas stood up and prayed"—"וַיֵּעַמַּד פִּי יִנְחָה סוּ וַיִּפֹּל לִי" ,

Our sages explain that he made a reckoning (פְּלִילוֹת) with his Creator. This is prayer in the aspect of judgments. (Sanhedrin 44a).

Here we see Pinchas as being able to assuage the divine rage. Does this also apply to mere mortals? And at all times? Following in the footsteps of his grandfather the Degel Machaneh Ephraim applies this spiritual roadmap to all instances of suffering and affliction in the world.

Each person must emulate the zaddik in his approach to evil and human suffering since holographically this is also happening to the divine.

The **Degel Machaneh Ephraim**, interprets the same Zohar passage, and in doing so he reflects the function of the zaddik in all generations, to sweeten the divine rage by focusing on the Shechinah and Her travails.

**"And when Pinchas, the son of Elazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose up from the midst of the congregation, and took a spear [in Hebrew 'romach'] in his hand." (Num. 25:7)**

[On the above verse, the Zohar comments:] Pinchas saw the letter mem floating in the air....and he attached to it reish-chet and also vav, so that it made "romach". (Zohar III:237a)

The floating mem relates to the level of prophecy known as "*aspaklaria d'eino me'ira*" - "a vision through an unclear lens". This was the level of prophecy experienced by all prophets other than Moses. The floating mem lets the prophet know the level of his clarity.

I heard from my grandfather, the Baal Shem Tov, that Pinchas saw and understood from within himself that malchut lacked unification - for a human being is a microcosm. Thus, he made the unification [in himself].

Another explanation by the same author: he perceived that the aspect of malchut in his own mind had fallen, and so he raised it up by taking the "spear".

To explain this a little further. Pinchas realized this from his own thoughts of fallen love [chesed]. It was not the illicit act of Kozbi and Zimri that Pinchas saw, but his own inner fall....

Every human emotion and characteristic, in its purest form, is directed toward G-d. However, these emotions can fall to lower manifestations. Thus, the love of G-d can become love of the flesh.

According to the Baal Shem Tov, it was not the illicit act of Kozbi and Zimri that Pinchas saw, but his own inner fall - an extraneous thought of carnal love that entered his mind. This signified that the sefira of malchut (where all thoughts are manifest) had fallen from its attachment to G-d. This is the meaning of the floating mem - i.e. malchut disconnected from its higher source. By overcoming the thought, through the trait of Isaac, he reconnected it to its source. This is the meaning of the "romach".

However, he strengthened himself, as it says, "Who is strong? He who conquers his nature." (Avot 4:1) This reflects the aspect of gevura, the trait of Isaac, whose name has the numerical value of the letters reish-chet [208]. Then the sparks of chesed rose from their fall and brokenness and were revealed through the letter vav, making the aspect of "romach", whose numerical value is that of "Abraham" [248].

Actually, the numerical value of the word "romach", when spelled with the letter vav is 254. When it is spelled without the vav, as it is in the verse, it equals 248; the same as "Abraham".

Every harsh Judgment, which occurs because malchut lacks unification....

This is true of every harsh judgment, which occurs because malchut lacks unification. But when you find the aspect of love in the judgment, the judgment is rectified in its root and transformed into the aspect of Abraham. The good ascends and the evil falls away. This also happened in the story of Nachum Ish Gamzu (Taanit 21a), who said "This is also for the good" [in Hebrew, "gam zu l'tovah"]; He found the aspect of chesed that was there, and so the judgment was sweetened to become love; and this is what Elijah said in the story, that it was the dirt was that of Abraham - meaning, from the aspect of Abraham, which is love; then it rose up, and they fell and were broken.

There is much more that could be said here, but this should be sufficient to the wise. A wise person will understand from my grandfather's words that the reish is chochma, and that chochma is the source of gevura.<sup>16</sup>

This majestic mediation includes the classical zohar reference and the notion of the split gendered divine with the need for the zaddik to look within himself for what is taking place in the drama outside.

All suffering occurs because of Her suffering and we only need to thus look within to our own struggles and suffering to see what is really taking place within the divine drama. Seeing the carnal act in others caused some kind of reflex within himself to carnality and it was this realization within that precipitated his response not a pious condemnation of others. He saw the diving incarnation within having fallen due to his carnal thought and thus disconnected from the higher divine male potency. This empathy for Her caused his actions.

Unlike the Leshem, the Degel refers to the mythic intra divine suffering as the underpinnings of human suffering. His actions were not for the sake of preserving free will, rather his suffering reflecting Her suffering and the need to accept Her travails as a stimulus to relieve it. Our own suffering is merely the trigger to force us to see Her's. The tikkun lies in relieving Her like Pinchas did. The method was to see his own issues as a mirror of Her's.

We come back to Rebbe Nachman's story of the heart of the world. Her longing for the spring opens us to interpretation of the longing of the Ayalta to be relieved of her pain. She is paralyzed with pain and cannot give birth. She too lies in pain waiting for relief. This must come in the form of a serpent. The secret of the way to speak to the rock (Shechinah) and not strike it is the secret of the two bites of the serpent. The hear of the world longs for relief which comes in the form of a giant Eagle which protects it from the sun. The world is a place of suffering and anguish, mirrored in the heart of the world and its yearning for the spring its source.

*And all the time that the True Man of Kindness has, it all comes from me, (the beggar that stammers.) For I go and collect all the acts of true kindness, from which time is created. (Which is why he is wiser even than the wise man mentioned earlier, because he is as wise as any of the days. For all the existence of the time, and of the days, it is all because of him. Because he collects all the acts of true kindness, from which the time is created, and brings them to the True Man of Kindness, who gives it as a day to the Heart, who gives it in turn to the Spring. And through this does the whole world remain in existence. So it turns out*

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<sup>16</sup> Degel Machane Ephraim, parashat Balak: [http://www.kabbalaonline.org/kabbalah/article\\_cdo/aid/1890567/jewish/Passionate-Union-of-Opposites.htm](http://www.kabbalaonline.org/kabbalah/article_cdo/aid/1890567/jewish/Passionate-Union-of-Opposites.htm)

*that the very existence of time, with all its songs and prose, which have in them all the wisdom of the world, it is all because of the beggar that stammers.)*

*That is why I have the approbation of the True Man of Kindness, that I am able to speak the most wonderful poetry and verse, which contains within it all the wisdom of the world. And now I give it to you as a wedding present, that you should be like me." And the happiness and rejoicing continued, there at the feast.*

This paradoxical zaddik, the beggar that stammers, is the one who provides the songs and prose containing all the wisdom of the world, and all the true acts of kindness he brings it to the zaddik, the "True man of Kindness" who gives it to the heart and the spring in turn.

Through the acts of charity and the acts of speech in poetry and prose, from the beginning of time, all the wisdom is summoned in keeping the relationship between the heart and the spring going by offering them the acts of kindness in the world.

I would like to think that he also mediates between them listening to each other and soothing each other's pain. In this way Rabbeinu is moving the trajectory forward beyond the Degel, his uncle, and beyond the Zohar. It is all now up to the paradoxical stammerer beggar who cannot speak, and his ability to provide the True man of Kindness in his work of healing the divine potencies.

In a world saturated with evil and demonic powers through the new agency of technology, where the killing fields and the drone warfare is commonplace, where human life is now so degraded we have become insensitive to the daily dose of news visual bites of human corpses suffering and torture, the words of the zaddik ring true.

*For this Man of True Kindness is indeed a very great man, and the beggar with the stammer goes around collecting all the acts of true kindness that are done, and brings them to the Man of True Kindness. For the main existence of time, (for time itself is a creation,) is through all the true acts of kindness that are done. And the beggar with the stammer, he collects them all up, and brings them to the Man of True Kindness.*

## **In Conclusion**

The Ayalta represents the Shechinah in travail. The invitation of the snake is the divine paradoxical way of integrating the darker forces in the service of the sacred. These darker forces must be harnessed and neutralized before new light is brought into the world. Our relationship with the feminine divine or Shechinah requires us to similarly integrate the forces of darkness within us and make peace with them. Owning these forces is the true path to individuation for us as well as for the divine. Characters such as Enoch and Pinchas in the Zohar represent paradigms of these virtuous individuals who assuaged the divine rage.

The story of the Heart and the Spring allow Rebbe Nachman to similarly express the suffering of the Schechina, trapped as She, is in this world, and similarly but in a different way, depend of the “Man of True Kindness” to maintain her relationship with the source by being fed the wisdom and acts of charity by the Beggar who Stammers.

The use of the serpent and the demonic forces in the service of the Schechina and Her birthing of new divine light into the world is a precise and measured way of controlling the demonic and preventing it access to the Holy. In a world gone mad, Rabbeinu suggests that even this may be insufficient and requires the Zaddik to actually mediate between the heart and the Source to prevent the destruction of the world.

## ADDENDUM

In speaking with my holy friend Avraham Sutton he offered me below a reference to his commentary to the Ari'zal's Shaar Hagilgulim as follows:<sup>17</sup> THE STRUGGLE WITH EVIL OUTLINED ABOVE IS ALSO SEEN WITHIN.

*We pick up here well into Hakdamah 38, where Rav Chayim Vital explains that we all have a penimi (inner) level of soul, as well as a makif (surrounding, enveloping, encompassing) level. The penimi level relates to the basic concept of gilgul, in which a part of the soul descends to this world to be born as a newborn infant. The makif level allows for something else, namely, a specific form of gilgul called ibur neshamah, gestation or impregnation.*

*I will now clarify the level of my own soul.*  
ועתה אבאר מציאות נשמתית.

*The Ari revealed to Rav Chayim the entire history of his soul. This is brought out in Rav Chayim's diary, entitled Sefer HaChizyonot, The Book of Visions. Even here, in Shaar HaGilgulim, Rav Chayim is unabashedly autobiographical. However, he does not just reveal such classified information without good reason. In truth, he is only using autobiographical facts as a cover up in order to teach us about ourselves.*

*דע כי אין לך אדם שאין לו נשמה בחי' אור פנימי, ובחי' אור מקיף... וזה האור המקיף, הוא סוד יש אך בצלם יתהלך איש". Know that there is no man without both an or penimi (inner light) and an or makif (surrounding light) [i.e., levels of soul]... This makif is the mystery of the verse, "Akh be'tzelem yit'halekh ish—only with a tzelem [i.e., makif] can a man can walk [i.e., live, in this world]" (Psalm 39:7).*

*ודע כי זו הבחי' של קין, שהוא שרש נשמתית, לא התחילה ליתקן עד נדב ואביהוא. וז"ס פסוק "ויהי אנשים אשר היו טמאים לנפש אדם". נפש אדם ממש, שהנחילה לקין בנו, והיא נפש דאצילות.*

*Know too that this [makif] level of Cain—which is my soul root—did not begin to receive its rectification until Nadav and Avihu [Aharon's sons] were born. This is the mystery of the verse, "We are ritually impure by virtue of nefesh adam (a man's soul)" (Numbers 9:7). [On a deeper level this refers] literally to "nefesh Adam" (the nefesh of Adam HaRishon) that he bequeathed to his son Cain, which is called nefesh d'Atzilut.*

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<sup>17</sup> Avraham Sutton, "Well of the Living Waters" 119. Sefer HaGilgulim 2 Book of Reincarnations, Rabbi Chayim Vital

*When Hashem commanded Israel to keep Pesach in the second year after the Exodus (Numbers 9:1- 6), the Torah records that there were some men who had come in contact with dead corpses. As a result, they were, in the words of the Torah, “tameim le’nefesh adam—unclean by virtue of (coming into contact with) a man’s soul” (Numbers 9:6), and therefore unfit to offer the Pesach sacrifice in its proper time. They approached Moshe and Aharon, saying: “We are ritually impure by virtue of a man’s soul” (9:7).*

*In Likutey Torah, Rav Chayim explains this further: “Behold, the dead referred to in the verse, ‘we are ritually impure by virtue of a man’s soul’ (Numbers 9:7), are none other than Nadav and Avihu.”<sup>167</sup> [The men who approached Moshe and Aharon were therefore none other than Mishael and Eltzafan, who became ritually impure when they brought the dead bodies of Nadav and Avihu forth from the Holy of Holies.] The verse, however, speaks in the singular about “a man’s soul” [and therefore seems to be referring to one man].*

*In the following parashah in Likutey Torah he elucidates, “Now, behold, Nadav and Avihu were the beginning of the rectification of the good of the soul of Cain. It is for this reason that the Zohar calls them *trei palgei gufa*—two halves of one body. Of course, they hadn’t married [and anyone who is not married is called “half a person”]. [But more importantly in terms of our present discussion] they were really two halves of one person, namely, Cain. They could therefore later enter together as one into Pinchas, in a state of *ibur*, when he killed Zimri.”*

*We return to our text in Shaar HaGilgulim:*

*ואמנם דע כי כל הנשמות נתערבו טוב עם רע, מעת שחטא אדם, ומעת שחטאו קין והבל, כנזכר בתקונים. והנה נשמת נדב ואביהוא, התחיל בתחלה ליתקן, והוברר הטוב שהוא מן הרע שבו.*

*Know however that all [i.e., a large majority of] the souls [that were included in Adam] became intermingled, good with evil, from the time that Adam sinned, and from the time that Cain and Hevel sinned, as mentioned in the Tikuney Zohar. As such, when the soul of Cain incarnated into Nadav and Avihu, only part of it began to be rectified, i.e., its good aspect was refined from its evil aspect.*

*ואמנם כל שאר הנשמות אשר משרש בחי' זו, עדיין לא הובררו. וכלם באו בסוד צלם מקיף כל אחת, בעת הנגזר לה לצאת מן הקליפות, על ראש נדב ואביהוא.*

*Nevertheless [as this was only a partial rectification], there were numerous souls left from this root that had not begun to receive their rectification. They were therefore allowed to come forth out of the *klipot/shells* (the realm of evil), each at the time decreed upon it from above, unto the head [i.e., the *makif*] of Nadav and Avihu.*

ועדיין היו אז כל אחת ואחת מעורבים הטוב עם רע שלו. ואח"כ כשחזרה הנשמה אחרת להתקן  
מזה

השרש באדם אחד, היא לבדה נתגלת, אך כל שאר הנשמות שבכל שרש הזה, באו בסוד צלם  
מקיף על ראש האיש ההוא.

As Rav Chayim explains in another place (Shaar HaPesukim, Shemini):

*“The only souls that remained part of Adam’s collective oversoul [after the sin] were called the challah of the world [i.e., the choicest souls in Adam]. Adam bequeathed these aspects of himself to Cain and Hevel, when he fathered them... Nadav and Avihu themselves are [or come from] the nefesh of Adam haRishon, specifically from those souls who remained with Adam after he sinned [some of which he bequeathed to Cain]. They are thus called nefesh d’Atzilut.”*

*Of course, each of these [essentially good souls] was still intermingled with much evil. As a result, when any soul from this root was allowed to return [fully incarnate] in a particular person in order to receive rectification, it alone came fully revealed, while all the others that shared the same root came in the mystery of tzelem makif on this person’s head.*

*As above, when a soul enters into and joins with the soul of another [as opposed to simple reincarnation at birth], this is referred to as ibur neshamah. It is difficult to translate ibur here. Certainly, it means gestation, and it normally refers to the gestation period of a child in its mother’s womb. Here, however, the womb that it enters is the body of another person. It is for this reason that we sometimes use the English term piggy-back to describe the unique symbiotic relationship between a person’s main soul and the one or more extra souls that enter into his makif in order to assist him in advancing his soul-evolution, or God forbid, in order to bring him down to the shells. 169*

*As we shall see, Rav Chayim is supplying us with this information here (i.e., that all the un-rectified souls from Cain come in ibur unto the makif of the soul that came in gilgul) in order to prepare us for things that he is about to say regarding his own soul—and ours.*

*וכן נמשך לעולם, עד שבאה נשמת הרב מגיד משנה בעולם.*

*This process continued for a long time, until the soul of the Maggid Mishnah incarnated. In Hakdamah 36, Rav Chayim identifies the Maggid Mishnah as Don Vidal di Tulusa.*

*Here, he only refers to him by the name of his gloss on Rambam’s Mishneh Torah.*

ואז כל הנשמות של שורש הזה שלא נטהרו מקליפתם, באו עליו בסוד צלם מקיף כנז"ל

*At that point, all the souls from that soul-root that had not been refined from their klipah/shell, came unto the makif of the Maggid Mishnah.*

והנה הרב מגיד משנה, כבר ידעת שהיה בימי בדרשי. שהיו עוסקים בחכמת הפילוסופיא, ולא בחרו בחכמת הקבלה, כנזכר בשו"ת הרשב"א זלה"ה. ובקשו החצונים להטעות את הרב מגיד משנה, לסבת עון הנזכר, שלא היה מאמין בחכמת הקבלה.

*I have already informed you that the Maggid Mishnah lived at a time when a philosophical group called the Badrashee flourished. The members of this group did not believe in the Kabbalah, [the received tradition from Sinai, specifically, the deeper teachings that had been transmitted by the great prophets and master teachers of each generation], as recorded in the Sheelot veTeshuvot of the Rashba of blessed memory. As a result of this sin [i.e., because he joined this group and was influenced by their beliefs], the chitzonim (external forces, forces of evil) were given an opening to try to deceive the Maggid Mishnah.*

ואז הוציאו את נפשי שהיתה נתונה בעמקי הקליפות מזמן רב מימות קין [להתעבר במקיף של הרב המגיד משנה].

*They took my soul, which had been in the imkei ha'klipot (depths of the shells) for ages, from the time of Cain [and brought it in ibur into the makif of the Maggid Mishnah].*

*As Rav Chayim will inform us shortly, this was the first time that his soul had ever been taken out of the shells since Adam. Here, interestingly, Rav Chayim says that they [referring to the dark forces themselves] took his soul and brought it in ibur into the makif of the Maggid Mishnah. Later, he says that Hashem took his soul. This is part of the drama. It must seem as if the forces of evil have some autonomy. In truth, in the end, it will be revealed that they or it are completely parasitic, with no life or energy or existence of its own. This point is also clarified more explicitly in the sister-text, Sefer HaGilgulim.*

והם נתיאשו ממני, וחשבו כי כבר הייתי מחברתם, והוציאוני אותי וגם כמה חיצונים אחרים, להתעבר בהרב מגיד משנה, ולהטעותו, לאבדו מן העולם.

*[Having been there in the shells such a long time] they trusted me [to do their dirty work for them] and considered me as one of them. They therefore placed me together with a number of other chitzonim [i.e., souls whom they considered as their own] in [the makif of] the Maggid Mishnah [i.e., in his subconscious, so that we could influence his thoughts and] cause him to fall and destroy him from the world [i.e., cause his soul to descend and become trapped in the shells forever].*

Again, they were allowed to do this [i.e., to have entry into his psyche] for due to his philosophical studies the Maggid Mishnah had fallen into the mistaken idea that there is no inner tradition of Kabbalah. As a result, an opening was made for the evil forces to place Rav Chayim's soul in the Maggid's makif. His job was to deceive him even more, thereby causing his soul to descend and become trapped in the shells forever.

ולהיות שנשמתי היתה ממקום גבוה כנז"ל, מעם מקום ר' עקיבא ז"ל, ובפרט שנתעברתי בהרב מגיד משנה, שגם הוא משרש נשמתי, ואז נתחברנו יחד. ואדרבא גברה כחי על החיצונים, וחזקתיו וסייעתיו.

However, being that my soul is from a very exalted place [in Adam], from the same soul-root as Rabbi Akiva of blessed memory; and in particular, because the Maggid Mishnah shared the same soul-root with me, we worked together [i.e., the good deeds that he had done helped me], and I was able to overcome [the insidious negative influence of] the chitzonim. On the contrary, I overpowered them [with the vestiges of innate holiness that still remained in me], as a result of which I was able to strengthen and assist him.

כי הם חשבו שכבר הייתי אבוד ביניהם מזמן רב, וכי כבר הייתי במדרגתם ח"ו. וגברה הקדושה אשר בי. והכנעתים, וכפפתי אותם.

[Again, I was able to do this because] they thought that I had already long ago become one of them, and that I was on their level [of evil], God forbid! But the innate holiness within me overcame [their insidious influence]. I was therefore able to overcome them and subdue them.

ונשארתי אז בסוד צלם מקיף על ראש הרב מגיד משנה, אעפ"י שאינו ממדרגתי כי אני גבוה מאד, עכ"ז להיותו משרשי, נשארתי עמו בסוד צלם מקיף, ואז היתה התחלתי לצאת מעמקי הקליפות:

I thus remained [hovering] over the head of the Maggid Mishnah, in the mystery of his tzelem makif [until his death]. I did this even though I was not on the same level as he was, for I [my soul] is truly very exalted. Nevertheless, being that we shared the same soul root, I remained with him in the mystery of his tzelem makif. [As stated] this was the first time I had been extricated from [the clutches of] the imkei ha'klipot.

"וכדי שתבין זה, אודיעך פסוק "עַתָּאֵ שְׂרָשׁ לַטְהָאָדָם בְּאָדָם לְרַע לוֹ"

To understand this, I will now reveal to you the meaning of the verse: "Et asher shalat ha'adam be'adam le'ra lo—there is a time when the [evil] Man subjugates the [good] Man, to do him evil/harm" (Ecclesiastes 8:9).

*In addition to its literal meaning (“to do him evil/harm”), the key phrase at the conclusion of the verse, le’ra lo, also means, “to his own undoing” or “to his own detriment.” That is, the harm that, ultimately, the evil man wishes to inflict on the good man will rebound back against the evil man, and will be shown, in the end, to have been “to his own undoing/detriment.”*

*כי "האדם" הוא "אדם בליעל". והם החיצונים ושולטים ב"אדם הקדוש" ב"נשמות הקדושות" מחמת עון אדם וקין והבל בניו שעירבו טוב ברע.*

*The evil man [of this verse] is none other than the shells, the system of evil, also known as Adam Belyaal (literally, man without a yoke, i.e., the yoke of heaven).*

*This system of evil dominates and subjugates Adam d’Kedushah (the man of holiness), i.e., the holy souls [that fell from Adam] due to the sin of Adam, and of Cain and Hevel his sons, who caused good [holy souls to fall and] to thereby become intermingled with evil [i.e., to become the energy that sustains the system of evil].*

*וכפי גדלות הנשמה הקדושה כן גדלות הרע שלה. כי כפי האבר שנאחזת בקדושה כן תתערב "באבר שכנגדו בטומאה. וזה סוד "כל הגדול מחבירו יצרו גדול ממנו*

*[The damage done was so great that,] to the degree that any particular soul is greater [i.e., capable of doing greater good due to its exaltedness and intrinsic goodness], the evil with which it is saddled when it incarnates is even greater! For to the degree that a soul is great—i.e., depending on where its root is in Adam—to that very extent it becomes inextricably entangled with its counterpart in tumah (impurity, i.e., in the shells). This is the deeper meaning behind the statement of the sages: “Kol ha’gadol mi’chavero, yitzro gadol mimenu—the greater a person, the greater his inclination [to do evil]!”*

*This phrase can also be understood in our context as “The greater a person [i.e., the higher and more exalted his soul], the more powerful his yetzer is [to do evil]—to the extent that it—the yetzer (the inborn propensity and inclination to do evil)—is even gadol mimenu—more powerful than he is.”*

*וזה ג"כ היה ענין דוד הע"ה שהיתה נשמה גדולה ובפגם אדם נתערבה ברע גדול מאד בעמקי הקליפות. ולכן יצא אדמוני, ועשה ענין דבת שבע ואביגיל, ולא נחשב לו כלום. והטעם הוא כפי שאז היתה הפעם הא' שיצא מעמקי הקליפות. ובא משותף עם רע גדול מאד. ואינו מן התימא אם יעשה מה שעשה ובפרט כי הקב"ה הניחו ביד יצרו להרבות שר.*

*Indeed, a prime example of this was David haMelekh of blessed memory. He was a very great soul who, as a result of Adam’s blemish, became trapped and intermingled with a powerful evil in the imkei ha’klipot. This explains why he was born ruddy [red, which indicates a tendency towards din, bloodshed and hot-bloodedness], and that he did what he did with Batsheva and Avigail. Such that,*

because he was saddled with such a *ra gadol meod* (great evil, i.e., such a powerful negative charge), these actions were not held against him [in heaven]. For this was the first time that his soul had been brought forth from the *imkei ha'klipot*, such that he was born with a mighty and powerful negative charge. It is therefore not surprising that he did such things. But the Holy One placed him in such a difficult situation precisely in order to increase his reward [when he would finally overcome and transmute this negative charge].

וז"ס מ"ש ז"ל אלמלא אתה שאול והוא דוד הייתי מאבד כמה דוד מפני שאול (מו"ק ט"ז: ועיין מדרש תהליםפ"ג.) (וזהדברתימאכי הצור תמים פעלו. כי כלדרכיו משפט אל אמנהואין עול צדיקנישרהוא

*This is the meaning of what Hashem said to David [when he sang a song of praise for having been saved from Shaul], "David! A song you sing over Shaul's downfall? Know that if you were Shaul and he were you, I would discard a number of Davids for one Shaul!"*

*This is astonishing in its implications. How could the Holy One say this! Behold, isn't it written: "The Rock whose deeds are perfect, for all His ways are just; a faithful God, never unfair, righteous and moral is He!" (Deuteronomy 32:4).*

אלא הענין הוא כנזכר. כי אם הנשמה גדולה מאד ובפרט אם אז יוצאת מעמקי הקליפות הקב"ה מניחו ביד יצה"ר להרבות שכרו לראותו שנשמתו גדולה ולא יוכל הרע עמו

*Rather, it is as we have said: If the soul is very great, and in particular, if it has just been brought forth from the *imkei ha'klipot*, the Holy One attaches to it a powerful *yetzer hara* (evil inclination) in order to increase its reward and to show it [i.e., let it know] that indeed it is a great soul, and that the evil force [negative charge] cannot overcome it [but rather, on the contrary, that it can overcome the negative charge].*

ולכן אפילו שיעשה איזה דבר אשר לא טוב, לא אשם בזה. משא"כ אם רואה הקב"ה שהאדם חלש ונשמתו שפלה שמביאו בגלגול סתם, שאפילו שירצה להרע, אין בו כח

*Therefore, even if such a soul will do certain things that are not befitting it, still, it is not held totally responsible for this. This is not the case if the Holy One sees that a person is weak-willed, and that his *neshamah* is lowly [i.e., mediocre], for it has come into a standard *gilgul* (incarnation), and even if he wishes, this person is incapable of doing something bad.*

ולכן אל תתמה אם אנשים גדולים מאד יעשו איזה עון שלא יעשהו פחות ממנו מאד במעלה. וזה סוד פסוק"כי האדם יראה לעינים ויהוה יראה ללבב". הםשנילבבותטבורע

*Therefore, do not be astonished if [you see] great individuals transgressing a sin that a far lesser person would never [even think to] transgress. This is the deeper meaning of what Hashem said to Shmuel HaNavi when He reprimanded him for*

thinking that he [or anybody else] could look deeply into someone else's heart [without His help]: "For a man sees only with his [physical] eyes, whereas Hashem sees the levav" (I Samuel 16:7). The word levav [being written with two beth's] refers to the two inclinations in a man's heart.

We have, in this entire passage, an excellent example of Kabbalistic Relativistic Psychology. The Ari is telling us here that Hashem knows the tests that each of us has been given, and because He is a fair judge, we are judged fairly in terms of how much opposition we face in trying to overcome the inclination with which we have been saddled. This divine leniency is never to be used as an excuse to sin. As we shall see in a moment, it is rather to give us hope that, whatever sins we have committed, they do not mark us as low-lives.

On the contrary, what the Ari is telling us here about King David, and about Rav Chayim Vital, and about ourselves, is that, if we haven't been able to stand up against the yetzer hara (our own inner adversary) till now, it is because he [the inner adversary] has had us convinced that we are no good, and incapable of overcoming him. We may be able to see through this hype intellectually, but the yetzer works from beneath the threshold of consciousness, so it is no easy task to beat him. Nevertheless, the truth is that we are good. And the reason we have fallen is because we haven't understood yet how very good we are [and who we are as souls]. With this information that the Ari is providing, however, we can now begin to strengthen ourselves against the inner adversary and to transmute the energy that it has stolen from us until now into a powerful desire to serve the Creator.

והרע שלו גדול עד מאד, והטוב שהוא עושה אפילו שהוא מועט יותר גדול מאדם אחר, וזה שאמר דוד "וַיַּעַלְנִי מִבּוֹר שְׁאוֹן מַטִּיט הַיּוֹן וַיִּקֶּם עָלַי סֶלַע רְגִלְכֹּנִי אֲשֶׁר־יָנִיתִן בְּפִי שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ תִּהְיֶה לִּי לֵאמֹר הִינֵנִי יְרֵאוּ רַבִּים וַיִּרְאוּ בִּי הַזֹּה" (תהלים מ'). ודי בזה למבין

When [as described above in terms of King David] the yetzer hara (evil inclination with which we have been saddled) is exceedingly powerful, then, even if the good that we do is extremely insignificant, it is considered greater than that of another [mediocre] individual's good deeds [by virtue of the fact that we have faced a much stronger opponent and overcome him]. This is what King David meant when he wrote: "He [Hashem] raised me up from the pit, from the miry clay, to set my feet upon a secure rock, and establish my steps. He then placed a new song in my mouth, a praise to Elokenu. Many shall see [this] and be in awe; and they shall trust in Hashem!" (Psalm 40:3-4)

ואמר לי מורי ז"ל כי גם אני להיות שנשמתי בתכלית הגדולה והקדושה, הניחני הקב"ה ביד היצה"ר שלי. שאלולי גודל נשמתי היה היצה"ר שלי יכול לאבדני ח"ו מן העולם. לכן אין עונותי שקולים אחד מני אלף כמו לאנשים אחרים. כי נסתלקה מהם בחירתם לסבת חולשת נפשם. אמנם אני שעומד עתה בתחלת

נקיון אין עונותי נחשבים לכלום בפני עונות אחרים כי זו היא הפעם הראשונה שיצאתי מן הקליפות ובאתי לעולם. ואלולי זה בקלות מועט הייתי יכול להיות חסיד גדול מאד מאד כפי גודל נשמתו.

*Now, my Master of blessed memory explained, precisely because my soul too is extremely holy and exalted, the Holy One has incarnated me together with such a strong yetzer. Indeed, if my soul were not as great, such a powerful yetzer [as mine] could have completely undermined me, and caused me to perish from the world, God forbid. It is for this reason that I am not held accountable [in heaven] for my sins compared to others. For their ability to do evil is limited due to the mediocrity of their souls. Because I stand at the threshold of the cleansing of my soul, my sins are not considered significant compared to others. For this is the first time that I have been brought forth from the klipot/shells and come into the world [i.e., born as a full-fledged gilgul]. If it were not for this [i.e., if not for the fact that my yetzer was so great], I could have been a very great chasid (extremely pious), being that my soul is so exalted.*

*Again, do not look at Rav Chayim as some megalomaniac. He writes these things in complete candid honesty and frank unsophisticated simplicity at the same time that he knows that he is touching on the depths of the human condition and explicating it in a way that countless others will gain from what the Ari has told him about himself. He fills us in with an important piece of information about Cain that he "forgot" to tell us about above:*

*ועוד טעם אחר, כי הטוב של קין להיותו בכור כמו שנבאר למטה בעה"ת הנה הטוב שלו גדול בתכלית המעלה יותר מכל שאר הנשמות. אמנם להיות שרשו בכתף הגבורה ששם הדינים הם מתגברים לכן הטוב של קין, עם היותו גדול, בא מעורב עם זוהמא רבא וקליפות גדולות. והרע של קין מרובה מן הטוב עם היותו גדול מאד.*

*Another reason [why I could have been a very great chasid]: Being the firstborn, the good of Cain is far greater than many other souls. It is only because his soul is rooted up in Adam's left shoulder, the shoulder of gevurah, where there is a preponderance of dinim/judgments, that the forces of evil [whose job is to implement the divine dinim], become so strong. It is for this reason that Cain's good, being so strong, is intermingled with an immense pollution and massive klipot. As a result, Cain's evil is greater than his good, notwithstanding the fact that he [and his good] is so great.*

*Rav Chayim reveals the general principle behind all this, and thus how it applies to us:*

*ודע כי לעולם כשהנשמה היא גדולה מאד אי אפשר להוציאה מן הקליפות אלא ע"י מרמה ותחבולה. וכמו שאירע לי שלהיותם החיצונים חושבים שכבר הייתי אבוד ביניהם ח"ו לא חששו על הענין והוציאני הקב"ה מביניהם על צלם מקיף הרב מגיד משנה. והם חשבו כי אדרבא לטובתם היה ונהפכתי להם לאויב.*

*Know that whenever the time comes for a great soul to come to the world [i.e., incarnate], it is impossible to extricate it from the klipot/shells except by means of mirmah (deceit, deception) and tachbulah (trickery). What I described above about my own soul is an example of this. The Holy One brought me forth from their midst by making them think that I was one of them, God forbid, and could be trusted to do their dirty work. He therefore placed me in the makif of the Maggid Mishnah. They [the chitzonim] thought this would be to their advantage, but on the contrary, it was really to their detriment. For I turned on them and became their enemy.*

*Here, as we mentioned above, he does not say that they brought his soul forth, but rather that the Holy One Himself did this. As above, the evil man must think that this is to his advantage, so he will be caught unaware.*

*This is the meaning of the deceit and the trickery that Hashem uses to extricate the holy souls from the klipot. Below, in Sefer HaGilgulim, Chapter 2, Rav Chayim will expand upon this important point.*

*וכן תראה כי נשמות רבות גדולות באים בבני עמי הארץ, ולפעמים בבני רשעים, כגון אברהם מתרח. ולא הספיק זה אלא כמ"ש חז"ל וכן נזכר בזוהר כי תרח ארתח למאריה, שנזדווג עם אשתו בנדה, ואז יצא אברהם אבינו ע"ה. כי ע"כ רימה השי"ת את החיצונים והמשיך באותה טפה נשמת אברהם אבינו ע"ה. ולא ידעו החיצונים כי זהו תקונו.*

*In the same way, you will see that many great souls are born into families of simple folk, or even to wicked parents. Avraham is an example of this. Why do you think he was born to Terach [a high priest of idolatry]?! It is as the sages revealed, and as mentioned in the Zohar: Terach ir'tach leMareh—Terach infuriated his Master (Hashem), i.e., literally caused His anger to boil (lirtoach), when he engaged in marital relations with his wife during her menstrual period.*

*But this is exactly what was needed to bring the great soul of Avraham Avinu into the world. For in this way [i.e., by allowing Avraham's mother to conceive during her menstrual period], Hashem blessed-be-He rimah (deceived) the chitzonim, and drew forth, in that very seed, the soul of Avraham Avinu, peace be on him.*

*[Thinking that this was to their benefit,] the chitzonim were caught completely unaware that this was exactly what Avraham's soul needed for his own tikun (rectification).*

*This is also why Terach was later reincarnated as Job, and why Job suffered boils. For the sages taught: He who has relations with a woman in menstruation will be struck with tzaraat (i.e., skin disease). Conversely, this is also why Avraham was cast into the fiery furnace by Nimrod. This was exactly what was needed to purify and purge him from the negative charge of having been born*

*from a menstrual relationship. And so we learn too that this is how King David's soul was extricated from the chitzonim, in line with the story that our sages told on the verse, "Hen be'avon cholalti; ube'chet yechematni imi— indeed, I was created with a propensity to transgress; in addition, my mother conceived me in sin" (Psalm 51:7).*

*Alternate translation: "Indeed, I was created with a propensity to transgress [by virtue of the fact that a human being is born without a developed intellect and therefore naturally drawn to satisfy his physical needs and appetites even when these contradict the dictates of intellect]; in addition, my mother conceived me in sin [i.e., the heat of my parents' sexual passion, which imbued me with a strong sexual desire as well]."*

*According to the Ari, the two parts of this verse apply specifically to David (as opposed to being statements of some kind of universal law that every human being is born "in sin"). He thus reminds us of the Midrash about Yishai (Jesse), David's father, who, after having seven sons, all of whom were righteous and upright, had doubts about his own Jewishness. After all, his grandmother Ruth was a Moabitess. Perhaps his grandfather Boaz had erred in his understanding of the verses, "An Ammonite or Moabite [man] may not enter [to become members of] Hashem's congregation...even after the tenth generation. This is because they did not greet you with bread and water when you departed Mitzrayim..." (Deuteronomy 23:4-5).*

*Boaz was the greatest sage of his generation. He reasoned that, since the Torah itself provided a specific reason for this prohibition ("they did not greet you..."), and since women are exempt from going out to greet guests, the verse must refer only to Ammonite and Moabite males.<sup>173</sup> He thus married Ruth the Moabitess (Ruth 1:4, 4:13).*

*All his years, Yishai had accepted this line of reasoning. Now, however, in his old age, he began to have doubts. "Perhaps my illustrious ancestor was wrong?" Yishai therefore separated from his wife (after she had borne seven upright sons), and composed a special conditional ketubah (marriage contract) to marry his Canaanite maidservant. In essence, the ketubah stated: "If I, Yishai, am an Israelite, then this Canaanite maidservant is hereby freed and becomes a bat Yisrael. If I am not an Israelite, then we are married as gentiles." To everyone's consternation, the day was set for their marriage.*

*In the meantime, this Canaanite maidservant loved her mistress very much. "How can I marry him," she confided to her, "he is your husband!" They therefore concocted a plan. When they would be alone, ready to consummate their marriage, she would rise up to douse the candle and bar the door, and instead of returning to bed, Yishai's wife would take her place. After all, they reasoned, he is an old tzadik whose thoughts are bound on high at all times. He won't even notice! And so it was.*

*With this, the Ari says, we can understand the first part of our verse: "Hen be'avon cholalti—I was conceived in or through a transgression." What was the transgression? When a man lies with his wife, it is forbidden for him to think of another woman, even if the second woman is also his wife!*

*שחשב ישי אבי דוד שבא אל פילגשו, והיתה אשתו ממש. וכן אשתו ראתה טפת דם בסוף הזיוג. "וזש"ה "ובחטא יחמתני אמי".*

*Yishai thought that he was lying with his maidservant, when in truth it was his own beloved wife! Concerning the second half of the verse, "ube'chet yechematni imi—and in sin my mother became pregnant with me," [the Ari informs us that:] David's mother felt her menstrual cycle begin, at the very end.*

*While still locked in loving embrace, she whispered, "I am a niddah." As the halakhah states, after waiting a few moments in complete stillness, they separated. Nevertheless, David's mother conceived him while in a state that is considered ritually unclean.*

*כי אלולי כך לא הניחוהו החיצונים לצאת לעולם*

*If not for this, the chitzonim would never have willingly allowed David's soul to depart from their midst!*

*The reason for all this, the Ari tells us, was in order to free such an exalted soul from being trapped in the service of the system of evil. In order to bring David's soul into the world, Hashem had to deceive the system of evil. He did this by causing something to seem wrong; by giving the whole thing the appearance of sin.*

*Yishai's thinking that he was with his second wife, and David's mother becoming ritually unclean was all that was needed. With this, the soul of the Mashiach entered the world:*

*וכן זהו הטעם של תמר ורות ורחב הזונה וכל נשמות הגרים וכל מלכי בית דוד והמשיח שבאים מן רות המואביה ומזוג יהודה ותמר. וכן ר' עקיבא בן גרים שהוא מבני בניו של סיסרא, כי זו היא המרמה ותחבולה שהקב"ה עושה עם הקליפה ומרמה אותם להוציא נשמה עשוקה בתוכם והבן זה.*

*Indeed, it was for this same reason that such great souls as Tamar, Ruth, and Rachav, were born non-Jewish and later converted. This includes all the souls of righteous converts down through the ages, and all the kings of the House of David, and Mashiach himself who comes from Ruth the Moabitess and from the union of Yehudah and Tamar, and also Rabbi Akiva, who was the child of converts, a descendant of Sisera. For this is the mirmah (deception) and the tachbulah (trickery) which the Holy One perpetrates against the klipot/shells, to*

deceive them, in order to bring forth the oppressed souls from their midst. Understand this well.

The universal laws of gilgul that the Ari revealed are as operative today as they were thousands of years ago. The reason this information can be divulged today is so that those of us who are struggling to break out of the matrix of the klipot will have not only a good fighting chance, but, with Hashem's help, will be able to retrieve and redeem the last sparks of holiness that are presently still trapped in the klipah system.

As I explain elsewhere, the mutiny of the oppressed souls is set to go off in stages until most of these souls will be extricated in our lifetime. In the merit of Avraham Avinu and David haMelekh, and Sarah, Rivkah, Leah and Rachel, and Tamar and Rachav—and all the great tzadikim—may we merit to see this in our days.

This is a sister-text to Shaar HaGilgulim 38. It fills in certain key details that are crucial to understand. As in Shaar HaGilgulim 38, the main idea here is that the forces of good must temporarily suffer at the hands of the forces of evil in order to undermine those very forces by extracting and drawing out the sparks of holiness and good that are being held there in captivity. Only when the captor really believes that the captive is under his control can the captive succeed in drawing out the imprisoned energies from the soul of the captor himself.

אחר שביארתי לך איך נתערב הטוב עם הרע, אבאר לך פירוש הפסוק "עַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁלֹּטְהָ אָדָם בְּאָדָם לְרַע לוֹ".

Having explained to you how good [sparks] became intermingled with evil [shells] [by virtue of the original Shattering of the Vessels, and again by Adam], I will now clarify for you the meaning of the verse: "Et asher shalat ha'adam be'adam le'ra lo—there is a time when the [evil] Man subjugates the [good] Man le'ra lo—to his own detriment/undoing" (Ecclesiastes 8:9).

The key words here are le'ra lo, which can be translated in two ways: "to do him evil/harm" or "to his own undoing/detriment." According to the simple translation, the evil Man ("Man A") intends to harm the good Man ("Man B"). According to the Zohar, however, this verse contains its own built-in boomerang: The very harm that the evil Man ("Man A") wishes to inflict on the good Man ("Man B") rebounds against "Man A," i.e., "to his own detriment/undoing."<sup>18</sup>

כי אדם הבליעל – הם הקליפות – שולט באדם דקדושה שהם נשמות אדם הראשון, והלבישום והטמינום בתוכם. אמנם הם חושבים שהם [הנשמות] לטובתם, ואינם אלא לרעתם, כמו שנבאר.

<sup>18</sup> Zohar Mishpatim, 2:95b.

*For the system of the klipot/shells of evil, known as Adam Bliyaal (Man A), subjugates Adam d'Kedushah (Man B), i.e., the souls of Adam haRishon, by ingesting them and concealing them in itself. Of course, they [the forces of evil] think that they [these souls] will benefit them, but it is [ultimately] to their detriment and undoing, as I will now begin to explain.*

ובו נבין טוב טעם למה החיצונים מתאווים כל כך להחטיא את האדם, וטורחים מאד בזה. ואיך הם מכעיסים את הבורא יתברך להגלות שכינתו ולהחריב בית מקדשו, אשר כל זה הוא על עונות ישראל.

*We will then understand exactly why these chitzonim (external forces) have such a strong desire to cause a person to sin/err, and put so much effort into this. [We will also understand] how they anger the Blessed Creator, causing Him to exile His Shekhinah and destroy His Temple—all of which results from Israel's sinning.*

אך הענין הוא כי הנה החיצונים הם שירין ופסולת וזוהמה של הז' מלכי אדום כנ"ל. והם נקראים מוות. ואמנם הטוב שהוברר מהם הם נקראים חיים. ובכוד שהקדושה ביניהם הם חיים. ויש להם חיות ומזון ושפע. וכשמסתלקת הקדושה מהם, הם מתים. ולכך הם טורחים כל כך בכל מאמצי כוחם להחטיא את

האדם, כדי להכניס נשמתו בתוכם. ועל ידה יהיה להם חיות ושפע ומזון. כדרך הטורחים אחר מזונותיהם.

*This crux of the matter is this: (1) The chitzonim are the debris [left over] from the Shattering of the Vessels [i.e., left over and not refined by the Creator with the specific intention that man complete this work]. They are therefore called mavet/death. (2) The good holy sparks that are refined from these shells are called chayim/life. (3) As long these holy sparks are lodged in them, the shells have life. That is, the shells draw their life-force and nourishment from the sparks/souls [that they hold captive under their dominion]. When, however, the holy sparks are extracted from the shells, the shells die [for their existence is parasitic, and they have no life of their own except what they are able to steal from the holy sparks]. This explains why the shells exert every effort to cause humans to sin [i.e., to misuse the holy energy they are given by the Creator, to steal, lie, hate, murder, lust, etc.]. It is in order to bring souls down [into their domain] so that they may draw/suck their life-force and sustenance from them. In this, the shells are likened to men who work hard to bring home their livelihood [the only problem being that the shells are likened more to thieves than to honest laborers].*

*Now, to understand why Hashem allows this situation to exist, and how their domination of the holy Souls/Sparks is ultimately to their detriment and undoing:*

וכתיב " אִיבּוּזוֹל גַּבְכִּי גִבּוֹב לַמַּלְאָכִים כִּי יִרְעוּ". והענין הוא כי אי אפשר שהנשמה של ישראל הקדושה, אפילו ניצוץ קטן של הקדושה, הגם אשר תחטא, שתלך אל הקליפות. [הוא "הדבר דכתיב"] "וְחָשַׁבְתָּ שְׂבִי וְלֹא תִדְחֵךְ מִמֶּנּוּ נִדְחָה".

*It is thus written, “Do not despise the thief when he steals to fill his soul, for he is hungry [and dying of starvation]” (Proverbs 6:30). The explanation is as follows: It is not acceptable [to Hashem] that a single holy Israelite soul, or even a single spark of holiness, even one that has sinned, to go to [and remain eternally imprisoned in] the shells. [This is the meaning of the verse] “He [Hashem] has thought deep thoughts [i.e., devised means] whereby not one that is [presently] rejected shall remain rejected forever” (II Samuel 14:14).*

*ולכן היות ממקום קדושתו יתברך הוא ממשיך מזון לאותן הנשמות העומדים אסורים תוך הקליפות, ועל ידי זה הם – החיצונים – נזונים.*

*The Holy One therefore provides sustenance to all these imprisoned souls, even though the shells themselves inevitably draw/suck this very sustenance from the souls for their own purposes.*

*זוהן] כדרך האילן הממשיך מזון אל הפרי, ומשם נמשך המזון אל העלים והקליפות. וכשנגמרן] הפרי מתיבשים העלים והקליפות.*

*This is likened to a tree that draws sustenance to its fruits, even though, at the same time, some of that sustenance goes to its leaves and bark. At the moment the fruit attains ripeness, however, this sustenance is immediately withheld, and the leaves and bark naturally dry up.*

*ולא עוד אלא כבר נתבאר לעיל בפרק הראשון כי כשישראל גולים ביניהם, גם השכינה גולה ביניהם, כי היא אש אוכלת, ומלקטת את הניצוצות—הנשמות—מביניהם. ובהיות הנשמות והשכינה מתלבשים בתוכם, וודאי שיונקים שפע רב*

*Furthermore, as we explained in Chapter 1, when Israel is exiled among them [i.e., among the nations, paralleling (1) the exile of the souls in the shells, and (2) “Man B” dominated by “Man A”], the Shekhinah is likewise exiled in their midst.*

*And although she descends like a consuming fire to gather and reclaim her beloved children from their midst [i.e.,*

*(1) Israel from the midst of the nations, and*

*(2) the souls and sparks from the midst of the shells],<sup>20</sup> nevertheless, they [the nations and the shells] derive a tremendous amount of power from this.<sup>21</sup>*

*ולכן כל מגמתם להחטיא את ישראל כדי להמשיך את נשמותיהם והשכינה גם כן ביניהם.*

<sup>19</sup> Megillah 29a, “Come see how beloved is Israel before the Holy One. For everywhere they were exiled, the Shekhinah accompanied them.” This same teaching appears throughout the Zohar (1:120b, 3:22a-b, 3:90b, 3:115a, 3:270a, 3:297b); see also Sefer HaLikutim (Ari), Yeshaya 45, s.v. Yisrael Nosha baShem, p. 83.

<sup>20</sup> Zohar Pinchas 3:240b quoted in Leshem, Deah, Chelek Beit, p. 135

<sup>21</sup> Ramchal, Maamar HaGeulah.

*Therefore their entire existence depends on causing Israel to sin, to draw down their souls, and the Shekhinah with them, into their clutches.*

*והנה וודאי כי כפי ערך גודל קדושת הנשמה, כן הוא תוקף השפע שינקו משם על ידה. ולכן כל מה שתהיה הנשמה יותר יקרת הערך, כך הם מתכוונים להחטיא ולהכניסה בעמקי הקליפה. לכן רוב הקליפות הם בתלמידי חכמים. ולכן אמרו רבותינו זכרונם לברכה שתלמיד חכם לא יצא יחידי בלילה.*

*Now, behold, to the degree that a soul is greater—i.e., has a greater ability to attain holiness—the shells can draw more powerful sustenance through it. Therefore, the more precious a soul, the more effort they exert to cause it to sin, to bring it down into the imkei ha'klipot (depths of the shells). It is for this reason that the klipot expend so much of their energy trying to cause Torah scholars to sin. (TB. Succah 52b) This is why the sages warned that a scholar should never go out at night alone. (TB, Chullin 91a)*

*This is exactly what the Talmud says there (Succah 52a) in its phrase-by-phrase exposition of the following verse in the prophet Yoel: “I [Hashem] will remove the tzfoni far from you, and drive it into a barren and desolate land. [I will turn] its face to the eastern sea, and its rear to the western sea. Its stink shall rise up and its pollution will ascend, because of the great [evil] it wrought” (Joel 2:20):*

*“I will remove the tzfoni (hidden one) far from you,” this is the yetzer hara that hides in a man’s heart. “And drive it into a barren and desolate land,” to a land where there are no men whom it can entice to sin. “[I will turn] its face to the yam ha’kadmoni [eastern or ancient sea],” as a punishment for destroying the First Temple and slaying its scholars. “And its rear to the yam ha’acharon [western or latter sea],” for having destroyed the Second Temple and slaying its scholars. “Its stink shall rise up and its pollution will ascend,” for having desisted from enticing the nations to sin, and rather rising up and concentrating all its efforts on enticing Israel to sin. “Because of the great [evil] it wrought,” for having concentrated exclusively on enticing the great ones [the sages of Israel] to sin.*

*I have always understood this to mean the following: The system of evil has powerful tools at its disposal (illicit sexuality and violence, stealing, lying, etc.). But it wants a good fight. Most people, even most Jews, are unconscious. It can therefore entice them to sin without even lifting a finger. In its search for a formidable opponent, evil therefore sets its sites and invests most of its energies into enticing the sages of the Torah to sin. This is why, as Rav Chayim brings from Chulin, they must be on their guard never to go out alone at night, i.e., never to put themselves in a vulnerable situation, lest they fall for its tricks.*

*But it is even deeper. According to the Ari (through Rav Chayim), we now know (and he will continue to explain) the deeper reason why the system of evil concentrates primarily on the scholars and sages—and higher souls in general. It*

*is because of the precious energy it desires to suck from them and their souls. For this it is hungry.*

*זהו הענין "כל הגדול מחבירו יצרו גדול ממנו" כנזכר לעיל בפרק הראשון.*

*This is the deeper meaning of the expression, "The greater a person, the greater his yetzer."<sup>22</sup>*

*וזהו הטעם שמצינו אנשים גדולי הערך שחטאו חטאים גדולים ועצומים, וכמו שנבאר לקמן בעזרת ה' בפרק זה.*

*It is for this same reason that we have seen great men commit grave transgressions, as we will continue to explain further in this chapter with Hashem's help.*

*והנה אף על פי שאמרנו שלכך גלתה השכינה, כדי ללקט כל ותם הניצוצות, עם כל זה הכל תלוי ביד האדם. לפי שהאדם עצמו הוא אשר גרם זה.*

*Now, although we have said that the Shekhinah is exiled along with Israel in order to gather and reclaim those precious souls/sparks, still, nevertheless, everything depends on the person, particularly the person who brings this about by virtue of his wrongdoings.*

*ולכך מי שקלקל צריך שיתקן. ולכן נצטוונו על פריה ורביה, ושנקדש עצמינו בעת הזיווג כדי להמשיך ולהוציא משם אותם הנשמות. ויתבררו מתוך הרע.*

*Therefore the principle is: the one who has caused damage must be the one to rectify it. This is why we are commanded to be fruitful and multiply, i.e., to sanctify ourselves in marital relations. It is in order to draw forth and extract from the shells those holy souls—to refine and extract the good from its imprisonment in the evil.*

*ולהיות שבעונותינו אין אנו נזהרים לגמרי בזה, לכן נמשכים הנשמות קצת מעורבות עם הרע. וזה סוד היצר הרע שנברא עם האדם. ולכן צריך האדם כל ימיו להזהר כדי להפריד ממנו אותו הרע שנשאר בו. וזה על ידי מעשיו.*

*However, being that we are not as careful and aware as we should be, these souls are drawn forth with a slight admixture of evil. This is the mystery of the yetzer hara with which each person is born. In view of this, it is fitting for each person to be careful in his lifetime to, on the contrary, separate off the evil tendencies that he has inherited in his character makeup. This is done by elevating our actions [for the sake of Heaven, as opposed to ego-gratification].*

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<sup>22</sup> Succah 52a. As above, this can also be understood: "The greater a person [i.e., the higher and more exalted his soul], the more powerful his yetzer is [to do evil]—to the extent that it—the yetzer (the inborn propensity and inclination to do evil)—is even gadol mimenu—more powerful than he is."

ועם כל זה לא יספיק להפרידו לגמרי עד יום המיתה. כי אז נרקב הרע בתוך העפר ומסתלק והולך לו.

*Even with all this, though, one rarely succeeds in completely separating [off the lower tendencies] until one dies and is buried, at which time the body begins to decompose in the dust of the earth, and the soul-energy that was entangled in the physical urges is able to rise up.*<sup>23</sup>

והנה מיום שחטא אדם הראשון תמיד כל מעשינו הוא להוציא ולהמשיך הנשמות ההם מתוך הקליפות על ידי מעשינו הנזכרים, בסוד "תנו עז לא הים על ישר אל גאותו ועזו בשחוקים". ...

*Now, behold, from the day that Adam sinned, all of our good deeds are intended for one purpose, namely, to extract and draw forth those awesome souls from the shells. This is the mystery of the verse, "Give strength to Elokim whose pride depends upon Israel and whose strength resides in the heights" (Psalm 68:35).*<sup>24</sup>

ואלו היינו צדיקים והיינו שבים בתשובה שלימה, היה בנו כח להוציא כל הנשמות ההם שבקליפות ברגע אחד. ותיכף היה בא משיח, כמו שאמרו רבותינו זכרונם לברכה "אין בן דוד בא

עד שיכלו כל הנשמות שבגוף". אמנם חטאתינו הם מתישים כחו של יוצר כמ"ש "צור ילדך **ד**ת שיו תש כח אל מחל לך".

*Although Hashem could very well rectify creation in a moment, He makes this task dependent, as it were, upon us. If we were all righteous tzadikim; if, that is, we would fulfill our task properly, we could extract all the souls from the shells in a single instant, and Mashiach would appear, as the sages said, "Ben David will not come until all the souls are finished [i.e., drawn forth completely] from the Guf/Body [the body of Adam Bliyaal, the system of evil]!"<sup>25</sup> However, on the contrary, our many sins weaken the power of heaven, as per the verse, "You have weakened the Rock that bore you, and forgotten the God who made you" (Deuteronomy 32:18).*

והנה כשיכלו כל אותן הנשמות לצאת מתוך הקליפות הנקראים מוות, אז תצא משם השכינה הגולה ביניהם, המחיה אותם, וישארו מתים, ויתבטלו ויתאבדו. וזהו פירוש הפסוק "בלעה מות הקליפות הנקראים מוות]לנצח ומחה אדני יהוה על כל פנים וחרפת עמו". "סיר מעל כל הארץ כי יהוה דבר

<sup>23</sup> Malbim, in Torah Or, his commentary on Parashat Chukat; and his Shirey HaNefesh on Shir HaShirim.

<sup>24</sup> Alternate translation: "Give strength to Elokim [the Shekhinah, the specific mode of divine providence] whose pride rests upon Israel and [by virtue of our service] whose strength resides in the heights. O Elokim, Your awesomeness is revealed through those who sanctify You. Elokay Yisrael [although You make the revelation of Your power dependent on Israel's service], it is You alone who gives strength and power to the people. Elokim is intrinsically blessed!"

<sup>25</sup> Yevamot 63b, Niddah 13b.

*Now, behold, when all the souls will finally depart and leave the shells [just as the children of Israel departed from Mitzrayim at the Exodus], the shells will die [as above], and the Shekhinah will go forth as well. Losing the source of their sustenance from which they have drawn/sucked their life-force until now, they will die and cease to exist. This is the mystery of the verse, "Death [the system of evil which is called Death] will be swallowed up forever, and Hashem Elokim will wipe the tears off every face. He will remove the insult against His people from the entire world. Hashem has declared" (Isaiah 25:8).*

*ומה גם אחר שתצא משם השכינה הנקראת חיים, ואז מתבלע לנצח ואין להם תקומה, כמו שהיה בשעת מתן תורה. אלא שבעשיית העגל חזרה המוות למקומה.*

*This will be all the more dramatic when the Shekhinah which is called Life goes forth from there. It [the system of evil] will then be swallowed up forever into nothingness. They [the forces of evil] will not be able to withstand [the powerful revelation of Hashem's light]. It will be exactly as it was at the Giving of the Torah on Sinai [when the angel of death was temporarily overcome (Shemos Rabbah 32:1) It was only because we worshipped the golden calf that Death was enabled to return to its full power.*

*והנה כבר נתבאר כי כפי גודל ערך הנשמה כן היא נטבעת בעמקי הקליפות. והחיצונים משתדלים בכל מאמצי כוחם לטנפה בכל מיני טינופים כדי שתשאר תמיד ברשותם להיותם נהנים ממנה.*

*Now, behold, we have already explained that the greater the soul, the deeper it is sunk in the imkei ha'klipot, and the chitzonim exert every effort to pollute it with all manner of impurity, so that it will remain there forever under their subjugation, to give them life.*

*והנה הם מתייראים שמא על ידי צדיק גמור יוציאה מביניהם בעת זיווגו כנזכר. ולכן קודם שיוציאנה הצדיק משם ויאבדו אותו המזון שהיו ניזונים על ידו, מה הם עושים?*

*But behold, they fear one thing: a complete tzadik may succeed in drawing out a precious soul when he bonds with his wife in purity. Therefore, before a great tzadik is able to do this—which would mean that they would lose this precious soul forever—what do they do?*

*כשרואה איזה מקום פגום עד מאוד, אז הם מוציאים את הנשמה העצומה משם כדי שתכנס שם. ואז לסיבת היותה באותו מקום הרע, יחטיאנה ויקלקלנה יותר מבתחילה. ותחזור לידם פגומה כבתחילה. ועל ידי זה תעמוד בידם תמיד. והם הם שולטים בזה האדם ומחשבים שהוא לטובתם. ואדרבא הוא לרעתם.*

*They find a place of blemish, a man and woman who join together in a lowly [lustful] way, and they willingly allow this precious soul to be drawn forth from their midst [and be born to such a couple]. Then, once it is born into this unclean/blemished place, they easily cause it to sin, even more than before, so that it will be returned to them more blemished than before. In this way, they scheme to*

*maintain their domination over these souls, thinking that this is to their advantage and benefit. It is, however, to their detriment and undoing.*

*והענין, כי הקב"ה הוא "הַצוֹרֵת מִים פֶּעַל וְכִי כָל דֶּרֶךְ כִּיּוֹ מִשְׁפָּט אֶל אֱמוּנָהּ וְאֵין עוֹל צְדִיק וְיִשְׁרָאֵל וְכִיּוֹן שֶׁעַל יְדֵי חַטָּא אָדָם הֵרָאשׁוֹן שֶׁלְטוֹ בְּאֵלוֹ הַנִּשְׁמוֹת אֵינּוּ רוֹצֵה לְהוֹצִיאֵם מִיָּדָם שֶׁלֹּא כַדִּין. אֲבָל מֵה הַקֶּב"ה עוֹשֶׂה*

*How? The Holy One is called "The Rock whose deeds are perfect, for all His ways are just; a faithful God, never unfair, righteous and moral is He" (Deuteronomy 32:4). Since Adam's sin brought about the situation wherein these shells subjugate the souls, He does not wish to extract/draw the souls forth from there in a way that is not fair, but rather in a way that satisfies the requirements of justice [i.e., fair and just, even to the system of evil]. How does He do this?*

*ממתין עד שיהיה איזה מקום פגום. ומרמה את החיצונים ואומר שרצונו להכניס הנשמה הקדושה ההיא באותו הטינוף. והם חושבים כי אדרבא יותר טוב להם להכניס שם הנשמה ההיא. והם חפצים בענין ההוא*

*He too waits for an unclean/blemished place to place these souls, and deceives the chitzonim by His very acquiescence to their desire to bring this soul forth into this unclean place. As noted, the shells, of course, are delighted with this, thinking that they will thereby benefit.*

*ונמצא כי הקב"ה עושה כוונתו, ועל פי הדין, ברצונם, על דרך מצות שער לעזאזל. שעל ידו נוטלים כל עונות ישראל כנזכר בזוהר. והם חושבים כי בהיות הנשמה הקדושה ההיא במקום הגרוע ההוא כגון בבן אדם רשע או בגר אחד וכיוצא, שעדיין היא ברשותם וכבר נתיישבו ממנה וחושבין שאין לה תקומה*

*The result is that the Holy One does what He wants, but in a way that satisfies the requirements of justice. For they too not only agree, but are delighted with the arrangement. They think that since this holy soul is in such an unclean and blemished place—like the child of a rasha, a wicked man, or a particular convert, etc.—it will surely remain under their influence. They therefore consider it an excellent proposition.*

*ולהיות כי הנשמה היא עצומה וקדושה היא מתעוררת ומטיבה מעשיה. ונפרדת לגמרי מהקליפה. ולא די זה אלא שאדרבא מביאה ניצוצות אחרות עמה. ומוציאם מעמקי הקליפות*

*Being, however, that the soul in question is awesome in holiness, it awakens and arouses itself and betters its ways [even, and perhaps especially, in this unclean place!], and in this way, overcomes and overturns the shell-impurity [negative character traits] that dominated it from birth. And more, it also brings forth other precious sparks/souls with it from the imkei ha'klipot.*

וזהו ענין אברהם אבינו שהיה הבן תרחה עובד עבודה זרה וכו' מרגדול. ואדרבא נאמר בו "ויקח אברהם את שרי אשתו ואת לוט בן אחיו ואת כל רכושם אשר רכשו ואת הנפש אשר עשו בחרן ויצאו ללכת ארצה כנען".

*This is exactly what happened with Avraham, the son of Terach, the idol worshiper and high priest. For concerning Avraham, it is written, "Avram took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, and all their belongings, as well as the souls that they had made in Charan [i.e., converted, and brought beneath the wings of the Shekhinah], and they left and headed toward Canaan..." (Genesis 12:5).*

וכן כל הגירי צדק כגון רות ותמר ורחב וכל מלכי בית דוד והמשיח ורבי עקיבא ורבי מאיר וכיוצא בהם. והנה דוד הוא אשר הכרית הקליפה שהיה מלובש בתוכה בתחלה, שהוא קליפת מואב, ששם היתה נפש דוד טבועה...

*The same is true of all the righteous converts, like Ruth, Tamar, Rachav, and all the kings of the Davidic Dynasty, and Mashiach, and Rabbi Akiva, and Rabbi Meir, etc. For behold, it was David who eventually vanquished the shell, for his soul was imprisoned there, in the shell of Moav. Afterwards, however, he vanquished the king of Moav.*

ונמצא כי שלט האדם הבליעל באדם הקדוש להרע לו, לאדם הבליעל הנזכר.

*We see from this that Adam Bliyaal (the system of the shells) does indeed dominate over Adam d'Kedushah (the holy souls). Nevertheless, in the end, it will be revealed that this was to its own ultimate detriment and undoing. Amen, may it be soon in our days.*

*In this wonderful translation of the Ari'zal Avraham Sutton suggests that evil is very much a set up, albeit man doesn't make things any better with his actions. By the actions of Adam the kelippot now are in control and cannot be subjugated in the "interests of justice". Lies and deceits then are the only stratagem to escape their hegemony. In Shaar HaGilgulim 38, the main idea here is that the forces of good must temporarily suffer at the hands of the forces of evil in order to undermine those very forces by extracting and drawing out the sparks of holiness and good that are being held there in captivity. Only when the captor really believes that the captive is under his control can the captive succeed in drawing out the imprisoned energies from the soul of the captor himself. This strategy is for Sutton "making the bad guy think he is winning".*

*In a sister text chapter 38 of Sha'ar HaGilgulim, the text is mainly concerned with the way Hashem runs history from behind the scenes. That is, by giving us a peek into the spiritual dimension behind our physical world, it opens up a completely new way to understand our lives here on this planet. As in many other places in the Writings, Rav Chayim takes us back here to the sin of Adam haRishon. As a result of that sin, many sparks of the collective soul of Adam "fell" into what he calls the imkei ha'klipot, depths of the shells. The klipot/shells are also called the chitzonim, external forces, for they have no life of their own, and*

*their whole existence is parasitic. The entire realm of evil is also called Adam Belyaal (from beli ol, literally, without a yoke, i.e., the yoke of heaven). As a result of Adam's sin, this realm of evil was given life and power, in the form of soul-sparks.*

*The drama that ensues involves the protracted story of how Hashem has redeemed many of these soul-sparks throughout history, what part the great tzadikim of the past have played in this (Avraham and Sarah, Yitzchak and Rivkah, Yaacov and Leah and Rachel, Yoseph, Yehudah, Moshe, David, etc.), how He will ultimately redeem all of these soul-sparks, and that this entire drama of the souls is the hidden Messianic drama behind the scenes of what we call "history."*

*Of course, Hashem needn't play this game with the forces of evil. He could eliminate evil in the blink of an eye. As the Ari informs us, however (here and in Sefer HaGilgulim, Chapter 2, see below), Hashem does not wish to do this. On the contrary, He wants us to do this work. In doing so we participate in the great tikun of creation, and merit a greater revelation of Hashem's light than if evil had never existed.*

*We pick up here well into Hakdamah 38, where Rav Chayim Vital explains that we all have a penimi (inner) level of soul, as well as a makif (surrounding, enveloping, encompassing) level. The penimi level relates to the basic concept of gilgul, in which a part of the soul descends to this world to be born as a newborn infant. The makif level allows for something else, namely, a specific form of gilgul called ibur neshamah, gestation or impregnation.*

These words from Avraham Sutton were brought to show how according to the Lurianic worldview the evil out there has been projected onto the divine within and how it manifests itself in the struggles of the Ari to make sense of the inner evil.