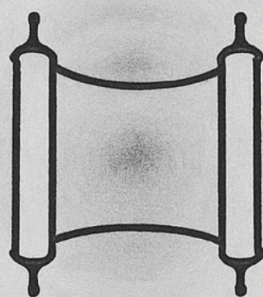


בס"ד

The Maggid of Mezritch

Ohr Torah

Parshas Vayieshev



Dedicated To:

לע"נ

רבי דוב בער בן רבי אברהם

שמעון בן ישראל

ויום הגאולה של בעל התניא

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Rabbi Dov Ber of Mezeritch

Ohr Torah Parshas Vayieshev

Siman #48

A hint in the verse, And Yaakov dwelled in the land of his father's sojournings, in the land of Canaan, these are the offspring, etc. (Bereishis 37:1).

רָמַז הַפְּסוּק וַיֵּשֶׁב יַעֲקֹב בְּאֶרֶץ מִגְוֵרֵי אָבִיו בְּאֶרֶץ
'בְּנֵעוּ, אֵלֶּה תוֹלְדוֹת וְגו'.

And it is possible to say that behold it is known that the main intention of the creation of a person in this world is that he fulfill the commandments of his Creator may He be blessed and to serve His service.

וְאִפְשָׁר לומר כִּי הֵנָּה יָדוּעַ שְׁעָקֵר כְּוִנַּת בְּרִיאַת
הָאָדָם בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה הוּא שְׂמִיכִים מִצְוֹת בּוֹרְאוֹ יִתְבָּרֵךְ
,וְלַעֲבֹד עֲבוֹדָתוֹ

As it is said, to work it and to guard it (Bereishis 2:15). And our sages said, to work it is the positive commandments and to guard it is the negative commandments.

כְּמוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר לַעֲבֹדָה וּלְשִׁמְרָה (בְּרֵאשִׁית ב:ט"ו),
וְאָמְרוּ רַבּוֹתֵינוּ וְזָכוֹנָם לְכַרְכָּה לַעֲבֹדָה זֹאת מִצְוֹת
עֲשֵׂה וּלְשִׁמְרָה זֹאת מִצְוֹת לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה

And this is the purpose of his coming to this world, like the parable of the king whose precious stone was lost from his ring, and later with the help of Heaven this parable will be explained at length.

וְזֶהוּ תְּכִלִּית בּוֹאוֹ לְעוֹלָם הַזֶּה, כְּמִשְׁלַל הַמֶּלֶךְ שֶׁנֶּאֱבָד
אֶבֶן טוֹב מִטַּבַּעְתּוֹ, וְלִקְמוֹן בְּעֶזְרַת הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּאֵר
הַמִּשְׁלַל הַזֶּה בְּאַרְיִכוֹת

And behold the righteous one, through his faith, performs the mission that he was sent for in this world, to work it and to guard it.

וְהֵנָּה הַצַּדִּיק בְּאַמוּנָתוֹ עוֹשֶׂה הַשְּׁלִיחוֹת מֵה שֶׁנִּשְׁתַּלַּח
בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה לַעֲבֹדָה וּלְשִׁמְרָה

And this is, And he dwelled, meaning that “dwelling” implies lingering, meaning that all the days of his remaining in this world he is in attachment to the Holy One blessed be He.

וְזֶהוּ וַיֵּשֶׁב, אֵין וַיֵּשֶׁב אֵלֹא לְשׁוֹן עֲכָבָה, רִיצוּי כָּל יָמֵי
עֲכוּבוֹ בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה הוּא בְּדִבְקוֹת הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרֵךְ

And even though he is in the land, meaning in the earthiness and physicality of this world, nevertheless he is in the sojournings of his Father, meaning in the fear of his Father who is in Heaven.

וְאִף שֶׁהוּא בְּאֶרֶץ, בְּעֶרְצִיּוֹת וְחִמְרִיּוֹת הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה,
עִם כָּל זֹאת הוּא בְּמִגְוֵרֵי אָבִיו, רִיצוּי בְּיִרְאַת אָבִיו
שֶׁבִּשְׂמִיכִים

And even though he is among the wicked, he does not learn from their deeds.

וְאִף עַל פִּי שֶׁהוּא בֵּין הָרָשָׁעִים אֵינוֹ לוֹמֵד
מִמַּעֲשֵׂיהֶם

And this is in the land of Canaan, as it is said, Canaan, in his hand are the scales of deceit (Hoshea 12:8).

וְזֶהוּ בְּאֶרֶץ בְּנֵעוּ, כְּמוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר בְּנֵעוּ בְּיָדוֹ מֵאֲזַנִּי
(מִרְמָה) (הוֹשֵׁעַ י"ב:ח')

And nevertheless he holds fast to his innocence, and his intention is only to increase offspring which are commandments and good deeds, and these are the essential offspring of the righteous one.

וְאִף עַל פִּי כִּן מִחֲזִיק בְּתָמוֹ, וְכוֹנֵנֵתוֹ רַק לְהַרְבּוֹת
תּוֹלְדוֹת שֶׁהֵם מִצְוֹת וּמַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים, וְהֵם עָקֵר
תּוֹלְדוֹתָיו שֶׁל הַצַּדִּיק

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And this is, These are the offspring of Yaakov Yosef, meaning to add each day delight and pleasure and satisfaction to his Creator, and this is the measure of the righteous one.

וְזֶהוּ אֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדוֹת יַעֲקֹב יוֹסֵף, כְּלוּמַר לְהוֹסִיף בְּכָל יוֹם שֶׁעָשׂוּעַ וְתַעֲנוּג וְנַחַת רוּחַ לְיוֹצְרוֹ, וְעַד כָּאֵן הָיָא מִדַּת הַצַּדִּיק.

But the wicked person who betrays his mission and goes in the stubbornness of his heart continually until his end, and this is, A son of seventeen years [was tending his brothers], meaning that all the days of his being in this world his intention and thought are only toward physical desires, to fill his belly and to pasture himself.

אָבֵל הָרָשָׁע הַמוֹעֵל בְּשִׁלְיָחוֹתוֹ וְהוֹלֵךְ בְּשִׁרְיָרוֹת לְבוֹ תַּמִּיד וְעַד סוּפוֹ, וְזֶהוּ בֶן שֶׁבַע עָשָׂרָה שָׁנָה [הֵינָה רַעְיָה אֶת אָחִיו], כְּלוּמַר כָּל יְמֵי הַיּוֹתוֹ בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה אֵין כּוֹנֵנָתוֹ וּמַחֲשַׁבְתּוֹ רַק לְתַאֲוֹת הַגִּשְׁמִיּוֹת לְמִלּוֹת כְּרִיסוֹ, וּלְרַעוֹת אֶת עַצְמוֹ.

As our sages said, A dot is upon “et” to teach that they went only to pasture themselves.

כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמְרוּ רַבּוֹתֵינוּ זְכוֹרֵנוֹם לְכַרְכָּה נְקוּדַת עַל אֶת שְׂלֵא הֵלְכִי אֶלָּא לְרַעוֹת אֶת עַצְמָם.

In the flock, meaning an expression of going out, meaning that he went out from under the authority of his Father in Heaven completely, and removed the yoke of Torah and commandments from upon himself.

בְּצֹאן, לְשׁוֹן יִצְיָאָה, כְּלוּמַר שֶׁיִּצְא מִרְשׁוֹת אָבִיו, שֶׁבִּשְׂמִימִים מְכַל וְכָל וּפְרָק עוֹל תּוֹרָה וּמִצְוֹת מַעֲלִיו.

And he is a youth, meaning all his days he is in smallness, foolishness, and youthful behavior.

וְהוּא נַעַר, רִיצוּי כָּל יָמָיו הוּא בְּקִטְנוּת וּשְׂטוּת וּמַעֲשֵׂה נְעוּרִים.

With the sons of Bilhah, meaning he is accustomed to be with gluttons and drinkers.

אֶת בְּנֵי בִלְהָה, רִיצוּי שֶׁהוּא רָגִיל עִם זֹלָלִים וְסוֹבָאִים.

And this is, The sons of Bilhah, for the letters אה"ע interchange, and it is like “Balaah,” which are the gluttons.

וְזֶהוּ בְּנֵי בִלְהָה, כִּי אוֹתִיּוֹת אַחֲה"ע מִתְחַלְּפִים וְהוּא כְּמוֹ בַלְעָה שֶׁהֵם הַזֹּלָלִים.

And the sons of Zilpah, an expression of pouring wine, meaning they are the drinkers.

וּבְנֵי זִלְפָּה, לְשׁוֹן זִלּוּף יַיִן, שֶׁהֵם הַסּוֹבָאִים.

And because of this it caused him to forget completely his Creator and the purpose of his creation and the mission he was sent for to this world.

וּמִמַּחֲמַת זֶה גָּרַם לוֹ שֶׁשָּ�כַח מְכַל וְכָל אֶת בּוֹרְאוֹ, וְתַכְלִית יִצְרָתוֹ וְהַשְׁלִיחוֹת שֶׁנִּשְׁלַח לְעוֹלָם הַזֶּה.

And this is “Nashi,” meaning forgetfulness, of his Father in Heaven.

וְזֶהוּ נָשִׁי, לְשׁוֹן שָׁכָחָה, אָבִיו שֶׁבִּשְׂמִימִים.

And afterward he returns and speaks of the reward of the righteous.

וְאַחֵר כִּף חוֹזֵר וּמְדַבֵּר בְּשִׁכְרַת הַצַּדִּיק.

And Yosef came, meaning the righteous one whose intention is always to add, as mentioned above.

וַיָּבֹא יוֹסֵף, שֶׁהוּא הַצַּדִּיק שֶׁכּוֹנֵנָתוֹ לְהוֹסִיף תַּמִּיד, כּוֹנֵן.

Their evil report to their father, meaning that concerning the wicked ones of his generation he also sees their deeds and sighs over the evil that is done.

אֶת דִּבְתָּם רַעָה אֶל אָבִיהֶם, שֶׁלְרָשָׁעִים שֶׁבְּדוֹרוֹ הוּא גַם כֵּן רוֹאֶה מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם וְנֹאנָחַת עַל הָרַע הַנַּעֲשָׂה.

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And he stands in the breach and rebukes them to their faces and returns them to the good and elevates them to holiness.

ועומד בפריץ ומוכיחם על פניהם, ומחזירם למוטב, ומעלה אותם אל הקדושה,

And this is to their father, meaning to the Holy One blessed be He.

,וזהו אל אביהם

And therefore the supernal Israel loved Yosef because he was a son of his old age, meaning as the Targum says, For he was a wise son, etc.

ולכו ישראל דלעילא אהב את יוסף כי בן זקנים הוא, כתרגומו ארי בר חכים הוא כו

And he made him a coat of many colors, and it is possible to say that this hints to the garment of the sages.

ועשה לו כתנת פסים, אפשר לומר שרומז לחלקא דרבנן.

[NOTE Summary:

The Maggid teaches that every soul is sent into this world with a holy mission: to fulfill the will of the Creator, to refine oneself, and to bring light into the world through mitzvos and pure living. The tzaddik embodies this purpose. His days in this world are defined by dveikus, clarity, and fidelity to his divine task. Even when immersed in the coarseness of physical existence, the tzaddik remains rooted in yiras Shamayim and unaffected by the corruption of his surroundings. His “offspring” are the mitzvos and good deeds he multiplies each day.

The rasha, however, abandons his mission and follows the stubbornness of his own heart. He lives for indulgence, self-interest, and worldly appetite. He pastures himself rather than serving Hashem. His companions become the gluttons and drinkers, and through this he forgets entirely his Creator, the purpose of his creation, and the mission entrusted to him at birth. His condition is symbolized by the word “Nashi,” forgetfulness of his Father in Heaven.

The Maggid then returns to the tzaddik, embodied by Yosef. Yosef not only protects himself from the spiritual decline around him, but also shoulders responsibility for his generation. He sees the wrong, sighs over it, reproves those who stray, and lifts them back toward holiness. This is the meaning of “bringing their negative report to their father” – elevating their deeds toward the Holy One. This devotion is why “Yisrael above loved Yosef,” for Yosef represents the soul that continually increases wisdom, purity, and divine delight. His “coat of many colors” hints to the exalted spiritual garments granted to those who serve Hashem in wisdom and constancy.

Practical Takeaway:

Every person possesses both paths within: the clarity of the tzaddik and the forgetfulness of the rasha. The question is not whether one is born righteous or wicked, but whether one returns each day to their mission. A soul forgets its purpose not in a single moment, but by small habits of self-indulgence and distraction. Likewise, a soul rises not through dramatic heroics, but by steady commitments to mitzvos, self-discipline, and caring for others. The most essential work is to remember daily: “Why was I sent here?” The moment a person realigns with that question, he becomes like Yosef, a source of light to himself and to others.

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Chassidic Story:

The Maggid once traveled to a distant village where many simple Jews struggled to remain observant amid harsh economic pressures and the poor spiritual atmosphere of their surroundings. Among them was a young man who had slowly drifted away from Torah and mitzvos, falling into poor company and habits. When the Maggid arrived, the young man came to see him out of curiosity rather than yearning.

The Maggid looked at him with great warmth and said softly, “A jewel from the King’s crown has fallen into the mud. Do you know what the King does? He sends His most trusted servant to retrieve it. That servant is your neshamah. It has been sent to lift you up, not to sink with you.”

The words pierced the young man deeply. In that moment he felt the truth: he had not merely failed; he had forgotten. Forgotten his mission, forgotten his worth, forgotten his Father in Heaven. The Maggid continued, “One who remembers his Father cannot remain lost. Memory itself is teshuvah.”

The young man broke down, and over the following weeks he slowly rebuilt his life, distancing himself from destructive influences and reconnecting to Torah. Years later he became a source of strength to others who struggled, lifting them with the same warmth the Maggid had once given him.

His descendants would later say, “Grandfather became who he was because the Maggid reminded him of something he had known all along.”

END NOTE]

Siman #49

And his father kept the matter (Bereishis 37:11), meaning that the thought guards the speech, and this is unification.

וְאָבִיו שָׁמַר אֶת הַדְּבָר (בְּרֵאשִׁית ל"ז:יא), פִּירוּשׁ
הַמְחַשְׁבָּה שׁוֹמֵרֶת אֶת הַדְּבָר, וְהוּא יְחִיד.

[NOTE Summary:

The Maggid explains the verse, “And his father kept the matter,” as teaching that thought guards speech. In the inner work of the soul, thought is the guardian, container, and intention behind every word that is spoken. When speech is grounded in thought, the two become unified, forming a spiritual oneness known as *yichud*. This unity elevates the spoken word so it expresses the deeper purpose and clarity of the mind, aligning the person’s inner and outer selves. Without this guarding function, speech becomes scattered; with it, speech becomes a vessel for holiness.

Practical Takeaway:

A person should pause before speaking, even briefly, to let thought “guard” the word. This transforms ordinary speech into mindful, elevated expression. Before responding, teaching, comforting, or even praying, one moment of inner alignment allows your words to carry intention, compassion, and truth. Thought shapes speech, **END NOTE]**

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Siman #50

And she sat at the entrance of Enaim, and Yehudah saw her and thought her to be a harlot, because she had covered her face (Bereishis 38:14–15).

וַתֵּשֶׁב בַּפֶּתַח עֵינַיִם וַיֵּרְאָהּ יְהוּדָה וַיַּחְשְׁבֶהָ לְזוֹנָה
(כִּי כִסְתָה פָנֶיהָ (בְּרֵאשִׁית ל"ח:ד–ט"ו)

Meaning: *Tamar* is called *tam-mar*, the foreign thought is bitter (*mar*) but in truth it is pure (*tam*).

פִּירוּשׁ תָּמָר נִקְרָא תַּם מֶר, הַמִּחְשְׁבָה זָרָה הִיא מֶר.
אֲבָל בְּאֵמֶת הִיא תְּמִימָה

As in the verse, “I have seen servants riding upon horses” (Koheles 10:7).

עַל דֶּרֶךְ רָאִיתִי עֲבָדִים רוֹכְבִּים עַל סוּסִים (קֹהֵלֶת י:ז).

Horses are called the letters of prayer.

סוּסִים נִקְרָא אוֹתִיּוֹת שֶׁל הַתְּפִלָּה

And when a foreign thought rides upon them, the person trembles greatly, because a slave is riding upon the King’s horse.

וּכְאֲשֶׁר מִחְשְׁבָה זָרָה רוֹכֶכֶת עֲלֵיהֶם וַיֵּרְאָהּ אוֹתוֹ הָאָדָם
תִּמְחָה מְאֹד כִּי עֶבֶד רוֹכֵב עַל סוּס הַמֶּלֶךְ

But when he puts to heart that these are holy letters, only the combination is foolish or improper...

אֲבָל כְּשֶׁנוֹתֵן עַל לְבוֹ שֶׁהֵרִי הֵם אוֹתִיּוֹת קְדוּשִׁים רַק
הַצְרוּף הוּא דְּבַר שְׁטוּת

And when he brings the letters into thought, this brings *temurah*—exchange—transforming from foolish combinations into words of Torah.

וּכְשֶׁמְבִיא אֶת הָאוֹתִיּוֹת לַמִּחְשְׁבָה בָּא זֶה לַעֲוֹלָם
הַתְּמוּרָה, וְנַעֲשֶׂה מֵאלוֹ הַצְרוּפִים דְּבָרִים אֲחֵרִים,
מִדְּבָרֵי שְׁטוּת דְּבָרֵי תוֹרָה

And this is, And she sat at the entrance of Enaim, the entrance through which all look toward the Holy One blessed be He.

וְזֶהוּ וַתֵּשֶׁב בַּפֶּתַח עֵינַיִם, בְּאוֹתוֹ פֶּתַח שֶׁהַכֹּל מִבִּיטִים
בּוֹ לֵה' יִתְבָּרַךְ

And Yehudah saw her and thought her to be a harlot, meaning “this is beautiful,” for she is a limb of the Shechinah.

וַיֵּרְאָהּ יְהוּדָה וַיַּחְשְׁבֶהָ לְזוֹנָה, פִּירוּשׁ זֶה נָאָה, שֶׁהִיא
אֶבֶר מִן הַשְּׁכִינָה

But it is difficult: if she is a limb of the Shechinah, why is she clothed in foolish matters? And he said: because she covered her face, meaning her inner essence is concealed.

אֲבָל קִשָּׁה, אִם זֶה אֶבֶר מִן הַשְּׁכִינָה מִדּוּעַ הִיא כֹּה
מְלוּבָשֶׁת בְּדְבָרֵי שְׁטוּת. וְאָמַר כִּי כִסְתָה פָנֶיהָ, כְּלוּמַר
פְּנִימְיוּתָהּ מְכֻסָּה

And this is the meaning of “And there reigned in Edom, Bela the son of Beor” (Bereishis 36:32).

וְזֶהוּ פִּירוּשׁ וַיִּמְלֹךְ בְּאֶדוֹם בֶּלַע בֶּן בְּעוֹר (בְּרֵאשִׁית
(ל"ו:ל"ב)

The Baal Shem Tov explained what the Zohar says, that they judge a person in every chamber, and expel him when he is not worthy.

פִּירוּשׁ רַבְּנוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל בַּעַל שֵׁם טוֹב עָלִיו הַשְּׁלוֹם עַל
מֶה דְּאִיתָא בְּזִהַר שְׁדָּנִין אֶת הָאָדָם בְּכָל הַיֵּכָל וְהֵיכָל
וּמִגֶּרְשִׁין אוֹתוֹ מִן הַיֵּכָל כְּשֶׁאֵינוֹ רָאוּי

These “chambers” are the words in which the intellect dwells.

זֶהוּ פִּירוּשׁוֹ, הַהֵיכָלוֹת נִקְרָאִים הַדְּבָרִים שֶׁהַשֶּׁכֶּל
שׁוֹרָה בָּהֶם

And the praying person moves from letter to letter and word to word.

וְהָאָדָם הַמִּתְפַּלֵּל הוּא הוֹלֵךְ מֵאוֹת לְאוֹת וּמִתְּבָה
לְתֵבָה

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And when he is not worthy, they expel him, meaning they throw him a foreign thought, and automatically he is outside.

וכשאינו כדאי מגרשין אותו, פירוש שזורקין לו מחשבה זרה וממילא הוא בחוץ.

And this is, “And there reigned in Edom, Bela the son of Beor.” *Edom* means fiery enthusiasm.

.וזהו וימלך באדום, אדום נקרא התלהבות.

And when a person prays with enthusiasm and a foreign thought rules over him, it is called *Bela*, meaning cutting off.

וכשאדם מתפלל בהתלהבות ומשלת עליו מחשבה זרה נקרא בלע, לשון כריתה.

Ben, when he understands what the foreign thought truly is...

בן, כשמבין זאת המחשבה זרה מה היא

Beor, he burns it away, and from its very force he comes to increased enthusiasm for the Creator.

בעור, מבצר אותה, שמכחה בא אל התלהבות יתירה לבואר יתברך כידוע.

“And the name of his city was Avith,” meaning why did this awaken upon him? *Aviv* means awakening.

ושם עירו אֵוִית, כלומר מפני מה נתעורר עליו, עורו לשון התעוררות.

“Danahavah,” he places to heart that he must give judgment over this.

.דנהבה, שנותן על דעתו שיתן דין על זה

And this is the meaning of “Where is the scribe, where is the counter of towers” (Yeshayahu 33:18).

.וזה פירוש איה סופר את המגדלים (ישעיה ל"ג:י"ח).

The question is: how does the foreign thought have no shame to seize upon the prayer and confuse it?

דקשאי איך המחשבה אין לה בושה לתפס בתפלה ולבלבל אותה.

The answer: it comes from the attribute of *gadlus*, expansiveness, because it desires to rise upward toward the Holy One.

אבל התירוץ שבאה למדת גדלות מכח שרוצה לעלות למעלה לה יתברך.

And this is, “the counter of towers,” meaning he illumines the towers, that is, the *maz*—the aspect of greatness that lifts him upward, as above.

.וזהו סופר המגדלים, שמנהיר את המגדלים, ריצוי המ"ז שהיא בבחינת גדלות כדלעילא.

[NOTE Summary:

The Maggid teaches that foreign thoughts in prayer are not random intrusions but distorted forms of holiness. Just as Tamar is called “tam-mar,” pure yet appearing bitter, so too every distracting thought has a holy root concealed beneath confused appearances. When a person prays, each letter is like a “horse” carrying him upward. A foreign thought is like a servant riding the king’s horse, shocking and out of place. But when one realizes that these letters are inherently holy and only the combination has become disordered, he can elevate even the distracting thought. By bringing the letters back into holy awareness, the foolish combinations are transformed into words of Torah.

Prayer itself is movement through spiritual chambers. When one is not worthy or attentive, he is expelled outward through the appearance of foreign thoughts. Yet even these thoughts can become a source of greater enthusiasm. When a person recognizes their nature, burns away the confusion, and converts their energy, he

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comes to deeper fire in serving the Creator. Each distraction asks the soul, “Why has this been awakened in you? What is this pointing to?” The soul must give an honest accounting.

Thus the inner meaning of “Where is the scribe, where is the counter of towers” is that foreign thoughts arise from a desire to ascend. Their root is in a place of greatness, seeking to rise toward Hashem, and when a person understands this, he can illuminate even those “towers” and bring the mind back to holiness.

Practical Takeaway:

Do not fear foreign thoughts in prayer. Instead of battling them, examine them. Ask: “What is this really trying to say? What holy energy is hidden inside it?” Realizing that every thought has a root in holiness allows you to redirect its force toward love, enthusiasm, or deeper intention. The moment you bring awareness to the thought, you remove its disguise, and the inner light emerges. In this way, even distraction becomes a ladder.

END NOTE]

Siman #51

In the Midrash, “Your seal, your cord, and your staff that is in your hand.” Your seal is kingship, your cord is the Sanhedrin, and your staff is the King Messiah.

במדרש חותמה ופתילה ומטה אשר בידו, חותמה זה מלכות, ופתילה אלו הסנהדרין, ומטה זה מלך המשיח.

And it is possible to say according to what our sages said, that the Holy One called Yaakov “El.” And you already know that the name “El” is an expression of ability.

ואפשר לומר על פי מה שאמרו רבותינו זכרונם לברכה שהקדוש ברוך הוא קרא ליצחק אל, וכבר נדעת ששם אל הוא לשון יכולת.

Because Yaakov is the middle bar that extends from the beginning of wisdom to the lowest level.

מפני שיעקב הוא בריח התיכון מראשית החכמה עד המדרגה התחתונה.

And this is, “Back and front You formed me,” meaning he is first in thought and last in action.

וזהו אחר וקדם צרתני, שהוא ראשון במחשבה ואחרון במעשה.

And he draws down the shefa from wisdom, which is the letter yud, the contemplative faculty.

והוא מושך השפע מהחכמה שהיא יו"ד, שהיא עיוני.

And this is called “Ein Yaakov,” meaning the imprinting of the eye, for the wisdom, the yud, becomes imprinted and clothed within the eye.

וזהו נקרא עין יעקב, וזהו לשון טביעת עין, כי החכמה שהיא יו"ד נטבעת ונתלבשת בתוך העין.

Therefore it is called “eye.”

ולכן נקרא עין.

And behold it says in the Zohar: the Holy One is above all worlds, within all worlds, filling all worlds, and surrounding all worlds.

והנה אמרו בזהר דהקדוש ברוך הוא לעילא מכל עלמין ובתוך כל עלמין וממלא כל עלמין ומסבב כל עלמין.

And they disagreed in the Gemara: one said the world was created from the sides, and another said from the middle.

והנה הפליגו בגמרא, חד אמר מן הצדדים נברא וחד אמר מאמצעיתא נברא.

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And it seems that both are the words of the living G-d, and they do not actually disagree.

וְנִרְאָה כִּי אֵלֹהֵי וְאֵלֹהֵי דְבָרֵי אֱלֹקִים חַיִּים כְּכֹכֹל, וְאֵין הֵם פּוֹלְגִין.

For they are speaking of the creation and the sustaining of the world.

כִּי הֵם מְדַבְּרִים מִבְּרִיאַת הָעוֹלָם וּקְיוֹמוֹ.

The essential infinite light shines from the sides and from within, for “the whole earth is filled with His glory.”

עֵינֵי אֹר אֵין סוֹף הַמַּאִיר מִן הַצְּדָדִין וּמִתּוֹכוֹ, כִּי מְלֵא כָּל הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ.

And each opinion is speaking according to its measure and spiritual level.

וְאֵלֹהֵי וְאֵלֹהֵי דְבָרֵי אֱלֹקִים חַיִּים הַמְחִיִּים אֶת הָעוֹלָמוֹת, רִיצוּי שְׁפָל אֶחָד מְדַבֵּר לְפִי מִדָּתוֹ וּמִדְּרָגָתוֹ.

And this is the meaning of “the halachah follows so-and-so,” meaning “the pathways of the world and its sustaining.”

וְכֵן מָה שֶׁאָמְרוּ רַבּוֹתֵינוּ וְזָכוֹנוֹם לְבִרְכָּה הַלְכָּה כְּפִלּוֹנִי, הוּא לְשׁוֹן הַלִּיכוֹת עוֹלָם וּקְיוֹמוֹ.

Thus they said, “Do not read ‘halichos’ but ‘halachos’.”

וְזֶהוּ שֶׁאָמְרוּ אֵל תִּקְרִי הַלִּיכוֹת אֲלָא הַלְכוֹת.

And it is written, “And Yaakov dwelled in the land of his father’s sojournings in the land of Canaan,” and we explained earlier the hint.

וְהִנֵּה כְּתוּב וַיָּשֶׁב יַעֲקֹב בְּאֶרֶץ מְגוּרֵי אָבִיו בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן, וּבְאֶרְנוֹ לְעֵיל הָרָמָז.

And furthermore, the verse explains the reason he dwelled in the land: why would Yaakov descend from his lofty level to dwell in physicality?

וְעוֹד נִרְאָה, שֶׁהַכְּתוּב בָּאֵר הַטַּעַם וַיָּשֶׁב יַעֲקֹב בְּאֶרֶץ. וְכִי מָה הָיָה לְיַעֲקֹב לְרִדֹּת מִמִּדְּרָגָתוֹ הָעֲלִיּוֹנָה לְשִׁכְתָּ בְּאֶרֶץ.

Therefore it says “megurei aviv,” meaning gathering and collecting.

לְכָד אֲמַר מְגוּרֵי אָבִיו, רִיצוּי לְשׁוֹן אַסִּיפָה.

His intention in this world is only to gather holy sparks and raise them upward.

פִּירוּשׁ כִּי כָּל כּוֹנֵן הַצְּדִיק בָּעוֹלָם הֵזָה לְאַגּוּר וּלְאַסֵּף הַנִּצְטוּצוֹת הַקְּדוּשִׁים וְלְהַכְנִיסָם וְלְהַעֲלוֹתָם לְעֵילָא.

A parable: a king lost a precious stone from his ring.

מִשָּׁל לְמֶלֶךְ שֶׁנֶּאֱבָד לוֹ אֶבֶן טוֹב מִתּוֹךְ טַבַּעְתּוֹ.

Many servants stood before the king, yet he did not command any of them to search for it.

וְהִנֵּה עֲמָדוֹ לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ בָּאָה הַשְּׁעָה רַבִּים מַעֲבָדָיו וְשָׂרָיו... וְעַם כָּל זֹאת לֹא רָצָה הַמֶּלֶךְ לְצוּוֹת לָהֶם.

He commanded only his beloved son to seek and find the lost stone and return it.

רַק צִוָּה לְבָנוֹ חֲבִיבוֹ שִׁיחַפֵּשׂ וַיִּמָּצֵא הָאֲבִידָה וַיַּחְזִירֶנָּה לְאָבִיו הַמֶּלֶךְ.

Although all the ministers were trustworthy, he wanted his son to merit the finding.

הַגַּם שֶׁהָיָה בְּטוֹת בְּכָל אֶחָד מֵהֶם שִׁיחְזִירֶנָּה בְּשִׁלְמוֹת, אֲפִלְפִי כֵן רָצָה לְזַכּוֹת אֶת בְּנוֹ חֲבִיבוֹ.

He even hinted to his son several hints regarding the place where it was lost.

וְלֹא עוֹד, אֲלָא שָׁגַם רִמְזוֹ לְבָנוֹ בְּכַמָּה רְמָזִים מְקוֹם מְצִיאתָהּ.

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For originally the king himself knew where it was; all was done only to bring merit to his beloved son.

כי מתחלה היתה האבידה מדעת המלך וידע את מקומה, ועשה הכל רק למען לזכות את בנו חביבו.

And so that the king would derive delight and pride from his son, saying: behold, no one in the world could have found it but my beloved son.

וכדי שיגיע למלך גם כן שעשוע ותענוג והתפארות מבנו, לומר ראו כי שום אדם לא יכול להפיש ולמצאה זולתי בני חביבי.

And the parable is understood. For the purpose of the creation of the worlds was that the holy sparks be purified through the nation of Israel, as our sages said: "For the sake of Israel who are called 'the beginning,' through whom they will be clarified."

והנמשל מובן. כי תכלית בריאת העולמות היה כדי לברר הניצוצות עלי ידי אומה ישראלית, כמו שאמרו רבותינו זכרונם לברכה בשביל ישראל שנקראו ראשית, שעל ידיהם יבררו.

And the Holy One hints to them in many ways that they should find the lost object and return it to its Owner, their Father in Heaven, and He did not command this to angels, seraphim, or ofanim.

והשם יתברך מרמז להם בכמה רמזים שימצאו האבידה ויחזירוה לבועלים, לאביהם שבשמים, ולא צוה כן למלאכים ושרפים ואופנים.

And that lost object was intentional, as our sages said: "He builds worlds and destroys them."

והאבידה היתה מדעת היתה, כמו שאמרו רבותינו בונה עולמות ומחריבן.

And this is "megurei aviv."

וזהו מגורי אביו.

And it is possible to say that this is also hinted in "the land of Canaan," meaning this world is called the land of Canaan, the land of merchants.

ואפשר לומר שזוהי רמז גם אמרו בארץ כנען, ריצוי העולם הזה נקרא ארץ כנען, ריצוי ארץ סוחרים.

For the soul was sent into this world to acquire merchandise, and its acquisition is specifically in this world, for "whoever toiled on the eve of Shabbos..."

כי הנשמה נשלחה בעולם הזה לקנות לה סחורה, וקנינה דוקא בעולם הזה כי מי שטרח בערב שבת וגו'.

And let us return to the matter. For the Zohar says: "Your seal, your cord, and your staff" are the righteous one and the two supports of truth.

ונחזור אל הענין. כי הנה אמרו בזהר חותמה ופתילה ומטה הם צדיק ותריין סמכי קשוט.

For the quality of the righteous is connection, like a seal that binds two things as one so they do not separate.

כי מדת הצדיק היא ההתקשרות. כמו חותם המקשר שני דברים באחד שלא יתפרדו זה מזה.

So too the righteous binds the worlds and draws down the shefa from the beginning of wisdom to the lowest rung.

כן מדת הצדיק המקשר העולמות ומוריד השפע מראשית החכמה עד דרגא תתאה.

And this is "the righteous rules the fear of G-d," meaning he influences the lower level, and so-to-speak "the great one who crowns..."

וזהו הצדיק מושל יראת אלקים, שהוא המשפיע למדרגה התתאה, וכביכול גדול הממליך וגו'.

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And this was the intention of Tamar, and that level is called Tamar.

וזהו היתה כוונת תמר, והמדרגה הנזכרת נקראת תמר.

And “your cord,” which is the tallis, is a surrounding light.

ופתילה, שהוא הטלית, הוא אור מקיף כידוע.

And “your staff,” as it is written, “The staff of Your strength Hashem will send from Zion” (Tehillim 110:2).

ומטה, כמו שכתוב ומטה עזך ישלח ה' מציון (תהלים (ק"י"ב).

Meaning as it is written, “The angels of G-d ascended and descended upon him,” and our sages said they ascended in Yaakov and descended in Yaakov.

פירוש כמו שכתוב והנה מלאכי אלקים עלים ויורדים בו (בראשית כ"ח:י"ב), ואמרו רבותינו שהיו עולים ביעקב ויורדים ביעקב.

Meaning they ascended above and saw him, for his image is engraved upon the Throne of Glory, and they descended below and saw his lower image.

ריצוי שעולים למעלה ורואים אותו, כי צורתו חקוקה בכסא הכבוד, ויורדים למטה ורואים צורת יעקב התחתון.

Meaning they saw the shefa flowing from above to below through the brightness of the upper image of the righteous, which is the likeness of the lower righteous one.

ריצוי שראו השפע הנמשך מעילא לתתא עלי ידי בהירות אור צורת הצדיק העליון שהיא דמות צדיק התחתון.

And this is “from Zion,” the upper form which is called Zion, and is a sign to the form of the lower tzaddik.

וזהו מציון, שהוא צורה העליונה הנקראת ציון וסימן לצורת הצדיק התחתון.

Although in truth the upper tzaddik is the essence, and the lower one is only called “Zion.”

הגם שבאמת העליון הוא העקר והתחתון נקרא רק ציון.

But because Scripture speaks to the lower tzaddik, it calls him the essence and the upper one “Zion.”

אבל מפני שהכתוב מדבר עם הצדיק התחתון מכנה אותו לעקר, והעליון מכנה אותו לציון.

For the tzaddik rules in the fear of G-d.

מפני כי הוא הצדיק מושל בקראת אלקים.

And “staff” is an expression of bending downward, the drawing down of shefa, which is the strength of the tzaddik. Hashem sends it from His upper Zion.

ומטה הוא לשון הטטה והרכנה והורדת אור השפע שהוא עוזו של הצדיק, ישלח ה' מציון של מעלה.

And they also said: “When love was strong, even the edge of a spoon was cherished...”

ועוד אמרו כפי רחמימתין הוה עזיזא אפותיא דספסירא וגו'.

And they said: “Love pushes aside the flesh.”

גם אמרו אהבה דוחקת את הבשר.

(The conclusion of the derush is missing.)

(חסר תשלום הדרוש).

[NOTE Summary:

The Maggid explains the mystery of Tamar's symbols: the seal, the cord, and the staff. In the Midrash they represent kingship, the Sanhedrin, and Mashiach, but in the inner meaning they also describe the spiritual structure of the tzaddik. The seal binds two realities, just as the tzaddik binds the upper and lower worlds. The cord is the surrounding light that protects and holds. The staff is the channel through which divine strength

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descends from the upper realms to the lower. These three aspects form the living structure through which blessing moves from the beginning of wisdom down to the lowest places.

Yaakov is called "El," a name of power, because he is the connecting beam from the highest thought to the lowest action. His inner form is imprinted in the eye, *Ein Yaakov*, meaning the ability to perceive the world through divine wisdom. All perspectives of creation whether from the side or from the center are true, for each sage speaks from the measure of life-force that sustains his own spiritual level. This is the meaning of "these and those are the words of the living G-d." Yaakov descended into the world of Canaan to gather sparks. The Maggid explains that the tzaddik leaves a high spiritual level and descends into physicality not for his own sake but to lift what has fallen. Canaan means commerce; the soul enters this world as a merchant sent to obtain precious goods, and only in this world can that acquisition occur. To illuminate this, the Maggid brings a parable: A king loses a precious stone from his ring while surrounded by loyal ministers. Yet he commands none of them to search. Instead, he asks only his beloved son. The king even hints at the lost stone's location, because he knows where it lies. The purpose is not recovery but merit and joy. The king delights in being able to say, "No one could have found it but my beloved son."

So too Hashem created and destroyed worlds, hiding sparks intentionally. Angels could recover them, but the King desired the merit, joy, and pride brought by His children Israel. He placed clues everywhere so that they could find the fallen sparks and restore them upward. The seal, cord, and staff now reflect this work. The tzaddik connects realms, surrounds with light, and directs the flow of divine strength. The angels ascending and descending the ladder see the upper image of Yaakov engraved on the Throne and the lower image below, understanding how the shefa travels from above to below through the brightness of the upper tzaddik. Zion is the name of the archetypal form, the sign of the lower tzaddik. Even though the upper form is essential, Scripture speaks to the lower and gives him the title. The staff is the bending downward of divine energy. And love when it is strong magnifies even small details and pushes aside every barrier.

Practical Takeaway:

Your life is the King's deliberate search. The sparks placed in your path were not lost by accident but positioned so you could elevate them. Every moment contains a clue, a hint, a direction from the King. Awareness means noticing: Where is the spark here that only I can lift? What did Hashem place in my hands seal, cord, or staff to bind, surround, or draw down? When you see daily life as the King's invitation to bring Him joy, the entire world becomes alive with purpose, holiness, and closeness.

Chassidic Story:

A wealthy merchant once came to the Maggid in great distress. His fortunes had collapsed; shipments were lost, partners betrayed him, and his standing in the community had fallen. He pleaded, "Why would Hashem bring me down so far? I served Him with joy when I had abundance. What is He demanding of me now?"

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The Maggid listened quietly and then said, "Do you know why a king sends his son into the dark storehouses beneath the palace?" The man shook his head. The Maggid continued, "Because treasures lie there, but no servant is permitted to enter. Only the prince may go down. And the king gives him hints so he will not lose courage in the darkness."

The merchant began to weep. The Maggid's voice softened. "Hashem has not taken from you. He has sent you. A spark lies in the place you have fallen into, and only you can lift it. When you do, the King will rejoice and say, 'See, My beloved son found what no other could find.'" Years later, after rebuilding himself with humility and faith, the man would tell his children, "The Maggid taught me that I was never falling. I was descending with purpose." **END NOTE]**

Siman #52

And on the vine were three branches; the vine is the attribute of connection, as stated in the holy Zohar that three branches include the three Avos, the attributes of love, fear, and beauty.

ובגפן שלשה שריגים, גפן היא מדת ההתקשרות, כדיתא בזהר הקדוש ג' שריגים הוא כולל ג' אבות, מדות אהבה ויראה והתפארת.

And in Yosef, when the wife of Potiphar tried to seduce him, he said, "And I would sin to G-d" (Bereishis 39:9), meaning he grasped the attribute of fear and the attribute of beauty.

וביוסף כשהסיתה אותו אשת פוטיפר אמר וחסאתי לאלקים (בראשית ל"ט:ט), שאחז במדת יראה והתפארת.

And this is the meaning of what he saw, the image of his father's likeness; for the wife of Potiphar would adorn herself before him, and the garments she wore in the morning she would not wear in the evening.

ונהו נראה לו דמות דיוקנו של אביו. שאשת פוטיפר היתה מקשטת עצמה לפניו, ובגדים שלבשה שחרית לא לבשה ערבית.

And he reminded himself of the beauty of the Creator, and this is the attribute of Yaakov as is known.

והוא הזכיר עצמו בתפארת הבורא יתברך, ונהו מדת יעקב כידוע.

And this is "and he fled and went outside," meaning he brought himself above the worlds.

ונהו וינס ויצא החוצה, שהביא את עצמו למעלה מן העולמות.

For in this world there is beauty, but when the matter is brought above the worlds, there is no beautiful woman, for beauty is the garment of the Holy One, and it has no connection with the woman.

שבעולם הזה יש יפי, אבל כשמביאים את הדבר הזה למעלה מן העולמות אין אשה יפה, כי התפארת הוא מלבוש לו יתברך ואין לזה התחברות עם האשה.

And to a person who has no desire for women, she appears ugly to him, for she is only seed.

והאדם שאין לו תאוה אשה היא מכערת אצלו כי היא רק זרע.

And there is a beauty of Beriah and there is a beauty of Atzilus.

ויש תפארת בריאה ויש תפארת אצילות.

The beauty of Beriah is that through the greatness of the servant one recognizes the greatness of his Master.

תפארת בריאה הוא מגדלת עבד נפרת גדלת רבו.

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As it says in Sifrei, “The strength of the hosts of heaven is without measure,” and if the servants are so, then how great is He in His essence.

כְּדִיתָא בְּסִפְרֵי גִדְל צָבָא הַשָּׁמַיִם אֵין לָהֶם חֶקֶר, וְאִם הָעֹבְדִים כֵּן, מָה הוּא יִתְבָּרֵךְ בְּעֶצְמוֹ.

And the beauty of Atzilus is called brightness, refinement, joy, delight, and life, and the created beings cannot endure that brightness.

וְתִפְאָרֶת אֲצִילוֹת נִקְרָאת בְּהִירוֹת צְהֻצְהֻת חֲדוּהָ וְתַעֲנוּג וְחַיּוּת, וְכָל הַנִּבְרָאִים אֵינָם יְכוּלִים לְסַבֵּל הַבְּהִירוֹת הַהִיא.

And the seraphim, who serve with fiery enthusiasm, come to that level; they stand above it, meaning a drawing down.

וְזֶהוּ שְׂרָפִים, הָעֹבְדִים בְּהֵתְלֵהְבוֹת, וְהֵם בָּאִים לַמְּדֻרָגָה הַנִּזְכָּרֶת. עֹמְדִים מִמַּעַל לוֹ, נִקְרָא הַמִּשְׁכָּה.

And they understand the higher brightness by means of the drawing down that brings life into the worlds, and they serve in the beauty of Atzilus.

וְהֵם מְבִינִים הַבְּהִירוֹת שֶׁל מַעַלָּה מִהַמִּשְׁכָּה שְׁנִמְשָׁךְ חַיִּים בְּעוֹלָמוֹת, וְהֵם הָעֹבְדִים בְּתִפְאָרֶת אֲצִילוֹת.

[NOTE Summary:

The Maggid explains that the vine with three branches symbolizes the spiritual structure of connection, drawing from the three Avos: love, fear, and beauty. Yosef embodies this structure when resisting the temptation of Potiphar’s wife. He strengthens himself with fear of Heaven and with the beauty of Yaakov, which is the beauty of holiness. Even though Potiphar’s wife adorned herself in many ways, Yosef elevated the experience beyond the physical world, where beauty can tempt, to a level above the worlds, where true beauty belongs solely to the Holy One. There, worldly allure loses its force.

The Maggid teaches that beauty exists in two realms. In the created worlds, beauty reveals the greatness of the Creator by showing that even His servants reflect His splendor. In the higher realm of Atzilus, however, beauty is pure brightness, joy, delight, and life, too intense for created beings to endure. The seraphim, fiery angels, serve from that elevated radiance. They receive and understand this upper brightness through the divine flow that sustains all worlds, serving within the beauty of Atzilus.

Practical Takeaway:

Temptation loses its power when a person raises their perspective. Instead of fighting the lower attraction on its own ground, one lifts the mind to a higher place, where holiness and purpose shine more brightly than desire. When you remember who you are connected to, and what beauty truly is, you gain the strength to flee from situations that pull you downward. Elevation creates clarity, and clarity creates freedom.

END NOTE]