



An Introduction to the Torah of the Gaon and Tzaddik
Harav Yitzchak Meir Morgenstern שליט"א

Where the Sea Begins

• YOEL ROSENFELD •

Entering the Sea of Wisdom:

An Introduction to the Torah of the Gaon and Tzaddik R' Yitzchak Meir Morgenstern shlit"o

"Where the Sea Begins"

Yoel Rosenfeld

**לעילוי נשמת האשה הצדקנית מרת יוכבד סימא
מארגנשטערן ע"ה בת הרה"ח מוהר"ר אברהם
שמעון זצ"ל
נלב"ע כ"ז תשרי תשפ"א
תנצב"ה**

“The seforim that are written are in accordance with the lights that shine down, for in truth the seforim written below are in accordance with the lights that arrive from above.”

Ramchal (Adir BaMarom, p. 17)

“In truth the matter is exceedingly deep, and it should not be contemplated whatsoever, especially by a person like me. However, no one has control over their spirit, and as Chazal (Koheles Rabba 8:8) have taught, it is akin to the passuk (Yirmiyah 20:9), “I thought that I would not mention Him, no more will I speak His name, but His word like a raging fire in my heart, shut in within my bones, I could not hold it in, I was helpless.” For as the Rambam has written (Moreh Nevuchim, 2:37), this is the case with any teacher or author, that the spiritual influx that emerges from on high compels them to write their words in a book, for it is a matter of necessity that descends from Hashem to the point that it is impossible to stand up against the compulsion and conceal the ideas. And this is how it is with me today, for it is impossible for me to stop speaking and revealing these ideas.”

Baal Ha'Leshem Shevo v'Achlama (Dea"h 2: 4: 9)

“And now I must announce with a full voice, that although- with the help of Hashem- I am the author of all these books, nevertheless I know myself and I know that I possess neither Torah nor fear, no wisdom, understanding, knowledge or insight. I am an ashamed and lowly man. All of this is nothing but the kindness and goodness of Hashem Who has given over through me and through my hands, Who has given me the strength to author and to write all of these things, for Hashem carries out His plans through anything, and I am simply a pen in all of this. Should the tool glorify itself in the face of the worker, and should the pen glorify itself in the face of the scribe who writes through it? It is only through the wonders of Hashem for Whom nothing is impossible, and He who said that oil should light, He is the one who can say that vinegar should light...”

Baal Ha'Leshem Shevo V'Achlama (HaKado"sh, Introduction)

“And you should know my friend, that even if you were to think and wonder: who is it that in such a lowly generation, at the end of ikvisa d'mishicha, who wants to come and don a tallis they are unworthy of, to write and publish a sefer regarding the rectifications of the soul, you would be correct. But you should know, my dear brother, that it is brought down in books and it is apparent to the eye that the wise ones of previous generations were much greater than the ones in our generation, nevertheless we see that there are many forms of wondrous wisdom and insight that emerge into the world through those with minimal wisdom, without knowledge, with weakened minds and their sadness. For there is a time for everything, and a

time in which everything is set to be revealed in the world. And prior to the arrival of the time when a wisdom is set to be revealed in the world, even if all of the wise ones gathered together, they would still not have the power to create the wisdom whose prescribed time has not yet arrived. So too with regards to holy wisdom or the publication of a book, as it is written in the Sefer Galya Raza, that each person comes into this world with a particular task, and one who needs to write a book will be helped - even against their will- from on high, and the wise ones of the previous generation have deliberately left a space which needs to be filled. There are even times when these books are tremendous works of holiness, for it has been decreed from on high that these books be revealed specifically now, until the edge of time as we see in each and every generation. Even if it be by way of one impoverished and devoid of knowledge with a minimal mind. This will be the answer to your question.”

R' Aharon Roth (Taharas HaKodesh, Introduction)

“This matter is clear through a number of examples in our generation, where many have merited to author important and wondrous seforim in the revealed and concealed aspects of Torah, even though the authors themselves are not great enough to merit authoring these wondrous seforim based on their own particular standing. Rather, they have merited this through the merits of the Tzaddikim. For, through their unifications, prayers and purified intentions of raising the “Shechinah” from the dust and revealing the true light of Hashem, the Tzaddikim awaken the roots so that Hashem provides the help which allows for the Jewish people to author such wondrous seforim. The actual action [of writing itself] is simply given over to whomever desires within their hearts to do something holy for the sake of Hashem’s honor, at which point the “Shechinah” joins them, allowing them to merit success above and beyond their merits and actions, for they are nothing but a vessel and pipeline through which the work of the Tzaddikim comes to fruition. And if the person is wise and not arrogant about their successes, and if they remain aware that it is not their own strength but rather the merit of the Tzaddikim- in the end they will become partners with the Tzaddikim, and they will merit to be within their lot and their exalted chamber in Gan Eden. “

R' Yitzchak Meir Morgenstern, shlit”a (Yoma D’Hilula, Noach 5781, p. 63)

“One should not become arrogant regarding their spiritual progress or their positive actions, for everything is through the Tzaddik in the generation, and one is simply like a pen in the hands of a scribe.”

Rebbe Nachman (Sefer HaMiddos, Gaavah)

A Translation of the Rebbe's Introduction to She'aris Yaakov al Meseches Megillah

*"The words of the Rambam in **Iggeres HaShmad** are known, where he writes: "What is important to know is that a person should not speak or teach into the ears of the nation until they have reviewed what they want to say once, twice, three, and four times". Regarding the source of his words, see our mesechta (**Megilah 31b, Tosafos s.v. Klalos**) in the name of the Midrash Tanchuma where we learn that one is not permitted to read from the Torah until they have reviewed it three times, and see the **Shulchan Orech (O"C 139:1)** for what is written there regarding the words of Tosafos. See also **Eiruvin (54b)** regarding the order of Mishna etc. from here R' Elazar taught that one is required to teach his student four times, for perhaps this is the source for the Rambam who wrote that one must "review them well" and only afterwards speak them out. This is also taught by Chazal in Bereshis Rabba, where they bring a proof from the passuk in **Iyov (28:27)**, "Then He saw and counted it, prepared it, yea, and searched it out", and only afterwards (**Iyov 28:28**) "and He said to man". This is regarding what one should speak out with one's mouth, but regarding what one should inscribe with their hands and write within a sefer, it is appropriate for a person to review it one thousand times in the hopes that it may be fully prepared, until here are the words of our teachers. (See as well the introduction*

*written by R' Chaim Brisker's children to his **Chiddushim al HaRambam** that in spite of the fact that their father had many chiddushim on all of Shas, nevertheless he only published a small fraction of them because "he was always refining them in his mind, always reviewing his writings to fix them and edit them, clarifying them with one hundred strokes until he was able to uncover the purified quintessence of them in accordance with his vast mind." It seems that the source for R' Chaim Brisker's method is from these words of the Rambam.)*

*And see our mesechta (**Megillah 18a**), where R' Elazar said, regarding the meaning of the passuk "Who can speak the strength of Hashem, to hear all of His praise", Who has the right to speak the strength of Hashem? One who is capable of hearing all His praise; and there in **Piskei Tosafot (no. 35)** we see that it is only appropriate to teach in public when one knows the entire Torah, see what they write over there.*

Now, as a result of "avonasi ha'rabim" I know full well that I have come nowhere near this level, for the fact that I am lacking in my knowledge of Torah "b'avonasi ha'rabim", as well as for the fact that the chiddushim are not as refined as they should be, it would have been more appropriate to prevent the publication of

these teachings. However, from the other perspective, the words of the Chofetz Chaim brought down by his son in **Sefer Sichos Chofetz Chaim** stand in front of us, that if one writes down their chiddushim they must publish them, for if they do not then one must worry that they will be lost heaven forbid, creating a form of retroactive negation of Torah regarding the time spent writing the chiddushim. The holy gaon, our master and teacher **R' Eliazer Tzvi of Komarno zy" a** also writes in the introduction to one of his seforim that in truth, one who is of holy understanding should see to it that they publish their writings during their lifetime; and we also know what is written in **Shu"t Shev Yaakov (no. 49)**, that by writing down chiddushei Torah, one accomplishes the positive commandment of teaching your children- these are one's students. And this is brought down as well in my grandfather **R' Akiva Eiger's glosses to Shulchan Orech (O" C, 47) and Shailos u'Teshuvos Kammah (no. 29)**; and it is known that numerous Achronim have written that if R' Akiva Eiger brings a certain Shu"t in his glosses, it highlights the fact that the Halacha follows it. Similarly, the gaon and author of the Iglei Tal writes in the **Introduction to Shu"t Avnei Nezer** that writing down chiddushei Torah also accomplishes the positive commandment of teaching Torah to others.

And even though the Chasam Sofer has shut the door in front of us when he writes in **Shu"t Chasam Sofer (O" C, no. 208)**, "that any author who writes a sefer and

pollutes their mind which thoughts of self promotion, will be weighed down by the words written in Avos against etc., and they will not find success in bringing their thoughts into fruition as a result of those who seek to criticize, aside from the fact that they have transgressed the prohibition against writing down the words of the oral law, which was only permitted for the sake of a momentary suspension of the law for the sake of Hashem- and if they are not doing it for the sake of Hashem then the original prohibition remains in its place. In contradistinction however, one who knows within themselves that their entire motive is for the sake of Hashem, and that the only thing preventing them is the fear of criticism etc. they have a transgression on their hands, and just as one may receive a punishment for expression, so too one may receive punishment for withholding." Now seemingly, at first glance according to his words, who would ever be confident enough to enter into holiness and author a sefer? See also the **Introduction to Sefer Moadim u'Zmanim (Vol. 1)** where he speaks this out at length.

Now, according to my humble opinion, it seems that even the Chasam Sofer would agree that if ones intentions are for the sake of Hashem, for the sake of accomplishing the mitzvah of learning Torah with the main focus being to accomplish for the sake of Hashem's name, even if- against one's will- their mind is polluted with some intention or inclination that is not for the sake of Hashem, since their essential intention is for the sake of

Hashem, there is no prohibition in this. And even more than this, according to my humble opinion, if not writing a sefer causes one to negate their learning, and the act of writing a sefer and sharing it with the public pushes them to spend more time learning and analyzing their learning (as is written by my grandfather the **Chemdas Shlomo** in the introduction to one of his seforim in the name of a certain sefer on the passuk (Tehillim, 1) "For it is the Torah of Hashem where he places his desire and in His Torah he toils day and night". This is the explanation of "desiring Hashem's Torah", for if he only learns Hashem's Torah, his only desire is studying Torah, but if he writes his Torah then, meaning his chiddushei Torah, this causes one to engage day and night without breakage), then it is the opposite, for not writing a sefer is equivalent negating ones Torah, and when there is an actual prohibition involved, one should not pay attention to their thoughts, for the curses of Chazal are only applicable in a place where one is doing something that they are not commanded to do and they are only doing it for honor, but in a place where there is a commandment to do something, the curses do not apply at all. For would we ever say that one who learns Torah or puts on Tefillin with some insincere thought should refrain from learning Torah or wearing Tefillin heaven forbid? It is obvious that one is still commanded to accomplish the Mitzvah (as it is known that the **Yeitav Lev** said this over in the name of his grandfather the **Yismach Moshe**).

Therefore it is obvious that for one whom writing a sefer is in the context of a requirement as a result of the increased learning they will engage in, it is forbidden for them not to write a sefer and publish it just because of the intention of their thoughts remain uncleansed from ulterior motives, for they have a requirement to write and publish as a result of the increased learning they will engage in. And it is obvious that the words of the Chasam Sofer are only dealing with someone who will be learning all day either way, and writing a sefer will not force them to learn anymore than they already do; or even someone who doesn't learn all day but for whom writing a sefer will not force them to increase in their learning. This itself is the very reason that our master the Chasam Sofer published next to nothing during his life (other than a few glosses on the Chiddushei HaRamban), for he was concerned according to his tremendous level of humility that he had still not reached the level where he could publish his writings, but there was certainly no concern that it would lead to the negation of Torah learning as a result [of not writing]. Therefore, in combination with all the words of the Achronim brought earlier which claim that [if there is any element of bittul Torah] then one is commanded to write and publish, it appears that we can rely on this reasoning and publish seforim even if one is uncertain within their soul as to whether the writing of the sefer is wholly for the sake of Hashem alone.

Furthermore, it seems appropriate to add that for one who does not teach Torah to the public, then there is a requirement to publish Torah for the public in order to accomplish the positive commandment of teaching, as we wrote earlier in the name of the **Introduction to Shu"t Avnei Nezer**. And here as well, one should not recuse themselves from a positive commandment as the result of the refinement of their thoughts. The **Yaaveitz (Sefer Migdal Oz, Maamar Aliyas HaKesiva, p. 72)** writes, "If one writes chiddushei Torah and publishes them for the public, there is no limit to their reward and their righteousness will stand forever for there is certainly no spreading of Torah greater than this. The merit of the public depends on them for they will create many students and many will flow towards it and knowledge of Hashem will expand. This is especially true if one lives in a place where Torah is not beloved etc. for they have planted a fruit of growth etc. and they will ensure that the Torah is not forgotten from the mouth of the future generations." See as well the **Pelah Yoeitz (Erech Kesiva)**, where he writes that "through writing one reveals the matter, and it is as if they had taught it in front of thousands." This is also written in the **Aruch HaShulchan (O"C, 47:10)** that "the essential upholding of the Torah is through writing, and it is as if one has taught the Torah to many, for if it were not for writing then the Torah would have long been forgotten".

In addition, **Shu"t Besamim Rosh (No. 20)** (the Achronim have already argued

regarding whether its roots are pure, for **R' Akiva Eiger** wrote in his *Shu"t* that it is from our master the Rosh, and the **Sdei Chemed** recorded many Achronim who had it in their possession. On the other hand the **Chasam Sofer** referred to it as "Kasbi Rosh", and our master the **Avnei Nezer** wrote that it is permissible to burn it on Yom Kippur that falls out on Shabbos) writes in this language, "Someone who is involved with a particular inyan and through that they bring out a new din that is still caught up in doubt, there is no greater level of teaching Torah to the public than this, for they are teaching all of Bnei Yisrael etc.", and he adds something wondrous there, "and now for those of us who write seforim, any Talmid Chochom in their generation who reaches the level of writing chiddushim, answers, directives and learning of laws, this should not be interrupted even by Kriyas Shema, Tefilah or Tefillin, for it is of an even greater status than the scribes of Tefillin and Mezuzos without a doubt (see Sukkah 26)." (What the source means is that on **Sukkah 26a** it discusses how the scribes of Sta"m and anyone involved in the work of heaven are allowed to miss Kriyas Shema, Tefillin and any mitzvah described in the Torah, as it is brought down l'halacha in **Shulchan Orech, O"C, 38:8**). And even though this halachic ruling is not brought down by any Poskim, and it is obvious that one should not act in this way (especially because there is an argument amongst the Achronim regarding the veracity of this sefer), nevertheless we see from here the great value of writing chiddushei Torah

according to many of the Achronim. (We should also note what is brought down in **Hanhagos HaChafeitz Chaim** that when he was writing the Mishnah Berurah there were times when he missed tefillah with a tzibur, and perhaps his reasoning was in accordance with this ruling, but as we have already explained at length elsewhere there is a strong possibility that the matter of tefillah b'tzibur is not an actual commandment, as the poskim already discuss this.)

It is also known that the **Lubavitcher Rebbe zy" a** would encourage all young students to publish their chiddushei Torah, and he said not to spend too much time insuring its precision and perfection, for if that were the case then nothing would ever be published, and the publication of seforim is a tremendous source of strength for those who study Torah.

I was very glad when they showed me the **Sefer Pninei Rabbeinu HaKehilas Yaakov (Vol. 2, p. 11)** where the author R'M" M Shleizinger shlit" a brings what he heard from the Steipler Gaon zy" a, "Now in truth the Rambam has already written in his letter that "what a person inscribes etc. should be reviewed one thousand times", which basically amounts to slamming the door in the face of the authors of seforim from publishing their works, for who can claim that they have reviewed one thousand times. However, in the introduction to one of the volumes of "Avi Ezri", R' Shach explains the reasoning behind the allowance of it. This is the

language of the **Introduction to Avi Ezri (Nezikim)**, "Now every heart knows the bitterness of its soul, and who can claim that they have toiled enough and found, in particular with regards to spreading one's words to the public through the writing of a sefer, and the Rambam has already written in his letter "that one must review one thousand times" (see the golden language of the Rambam at the beginning of this introduction). It would seemingly be appropriate to retreat from this battle and to place one's hand over their mouths, However, the spirit of Hashem moves within man, and we do not have the strength to review one thousand times, and if we were to be this precise there would never be enough, and in our days it is a time to act for Hashem, for the losses are great, and in times of constriction we must scatter, as Rashi (Brachos 63a) explains, "scatter yourself to teach students", and regarding this we say that it is a time to act for Hashem with a momentary suspension of the law."

Now I am coming to all of this in order to accomplish that which is written in **Shu" t Nefesh Chaya (Y" D, 10:5)** that one who merits to publish a sefer, if there is even one din or real chiddush, or even glosses on other seforim that have already been published, automatically one has accomplished the positive commandment of "and now you should write this song for yourself to teach the Jewish people" etc. For the opinion of the **Rosh (Halachos Ketanos, Hilchos Sefer Torah)** is that nowadays the essential form of this positive

commandment is through writing a sefer that others will learn from or buying seforim that one will study. The Nefesh Chaya asks a question on this, that seemingly when a person buys a completed sefer, then one has not accomplished this mitzvah, for even regarding an actual Sefer Torah, if one buys it in the marketplace fully finished, the Gemara (Menachos 30a) tells us that one has not accomplished this mitzvah in the proper way. However, the Gemara also says there that if one rectifies or edits even one letter it is as if they have written the entire Sefer Torah, and it is as if they have received it from Har Sinai. Therefore, writes the Nefesh Chaya, that even according to the opinion of the Rosh and the Drisha that says that one accomplishes the mitzvah of writing a Sefer Torah in buying seforim to learn from, it is specifically when they note or reveal something novel. (It is known that the Poskim disagree regarding this, for the opinion of the **Rama (Y"D, 270:1)** is that one who buys does not accomplish the mitzvah, as it is written in **Darchei Moshe**. This is also the opinion of the **Mordechai** and **Tosafos (Menachos 30a)**. The **Rambam (Hilchos Sefer Torah, 7:1)** also writes this according to the understanding of **Shu"t Beis HaLevi (no. 6)** as well as the **Minchas Chinuch (Mitzvas Kesivas Sefer Torah)** and **Shu"t Rebbe Akiva Eiger (reprinted from manuscript, p. 73)**. But it is also known that the opinion of the **Gr"a** and many Poskim that one does

accomplish the mitzvah through buying alone, however it is not the fullest expression of the mitzvah, as it is implied in **Rashi (Menachos, 30a)** etc. as well as numerous places in the **Rambam (Sefer HaMitzvos, no. 18)** where he contradicts what he himself wrote in the **Yad HaChazakah** as pointed out in **Shu"t Beis HaLevi** we already brought, as well as **Imrei Binah (no. 11)**. It is also brought down in seforim that regarding Menachos (30a), that says one who buys a Sefer Torah is like stealing a mitzvah from the marketplace, that the **Gr"a** said "If only I could merit to steal mitzvos like this". Meaning to say that the intention of the Gemara is not to belittle the value of buying a Sefer Torah, rather the opposite is true, that one should push themselves to steal a mitzvah like this. For this is also an accomplishment of the positive commandment of "write for yourself" even though it is obviously not the fullest expression of the mitzvah. Hashem Yisborach should help us accomplish what is written in **Chochmas Shlomo** from the gaon **R' Shlomo Kluger zt"l**, on the passuk (Koheles, 12:12), "Producing books without end", that one should write many seforim because the end has still not yet arrived, meaning the geulah has not arrived, and through the writing of seforim one brings about the redemption. Therefore one must write seforim in order to awaken the redemption immediately in our days."

Entering the Sea of Wisdom:

An Introduction to the World of the Yam HaChochma

Where the Sea Begins

1. The Writings of the Ya"m HaChochma: 1- Yam HaChochma. 2- Deah Chochma L'Nafshecha/Likkutei Yam HaChochma 3- Nishmatin Chadatin 4- The Weekly Shiurim 5- K'Tzeitz HaShemesh (R' Shmuel Ehrenfeld)

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1. The Tzadikim that Influence the Torah of the Ya"m HaChochma: 1- The Arizal (R' Chaim Vital and R' Yisrael Sarug), the Rashash and the Toras Chochom. 2- The Baal Shem Tov, Rebbe Nachman and Rebbe Nossan. 3- The Alter Rebbe, R' Aharon HaLevi and the Rebbe Rashab 4- Komarno 5- Vilna Gaon, R' Menachem Mendel of Shklov and the Leshem Shevo V'Achlama 6- The Baal HaSulam

2. The Teachers and the Students of the Ya"m HaChochma: 1- Rav Moshe Schatz and the Torah of Rabbeinu Azriel of Gerona. 2- Kretchnif and Pshevorsk 3- Breslov 4- R' Shmuel Ehrenfeld and R' Akiva Erlanger

3. The Derech HaLimmud of the Ya"m HaChochma: 1- Binah, Chochma and Keser- The Part, The Whole and The Whole within the Part. 2- The Whole Entire Torah is One Thing 3- The Power of Effort in Torah Study 4- The Unity between the Revealed and Concealed Torah 5- The Spiritual Source of Opinions- Each Tzaddik and their Path 6- Chassidus and Kabbalah- Secrets and the Secret of Secrets 7- The Torah on Ancient Days

Entering the Sea

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2. ***“Directly to Him by way of His Traits”***: *Our Relationship with the Essence of Hashem and the “Secret of Faith”*
3. ***“Everything Depends on the Theory of Relativity Alone”***: *The Concept of “Archin” as the Foundation of Understanding*

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1. ***“The Power of the Limit Within the Unlimited”***: *Tzimtzum and the Revelation of the World*
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3. ***“After Things Revert Back to the Way They Were Before”***: *Adorning Perfection and the Elevation of this Worldliness*
4. ***“Something and Nothing at Once”***: *Keser and the Malchus that is Concealed in Radl”a*
5. ***“Everything is Contained in these Two Principles”***: *Descent from Above and Ascent from Below, or Running and Returning*

Finding Dry Land Within the Sea

1. ***“The Chamber of Changing Colors”***: *Seeing the Whole in the Part and the Part in the Whole, or the Unity of Opposites*
2. ***“Perpetual Pleasure is Not Pleasure”***: *Touching and Not-Touching at once, or the Power and Potency of Yearning*
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Walking Within the Sea

1. ***Mashiach Ben Yosef and Mashiach Ben Dovid: Two Paths that Comprise the Unified Whole, or The Two Step Dance of Geulah***
2. ***“When they can Perform Unifications like You”***: The Path of Kavaanah and the Path of Yichudim
3. ***The Laughter of Yitzchak: Simple Faith, or Finding Redemption within Exile***

Important Introduction from the Author

It is of utmost importance to keep in mind that everything written within these pages is the result of this author's humble understanding and interpretation of the subject matter. In no way are these writings meant to be seen as an authoritative approach to the Tzaddik's Torah, and any mistake or misunderstanding that may emerge from within these pages should be placed at the feet of the author, and not- heaven forbid- the Tzaddik and his holy group of students. Furthermore, any confusion or concealment that may emerge within the mind of the reader is a direct result of the author's inability to stand upon the true depth and precision of these teachings, and not- heaven forbid- a symptom of the teachings themselves. With that said, the words of the Zohar HaKadosh (1:103a) have been a candle illuminating our path, "Her husband is known at the gates (Mishlei, 31:23), each person according to the conjecture of their own heart."

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The Impossibility of Grasping the Essence of Hashem

When *Chazal* speak of the soul's natural desire to cleave to the "essence" of *Hashem's* presence, they simultaneously acknowledge the inherent impossibility¹ of gaining direct access, "*for is God not a consuming flame?*"². In order to settle this apparent contradiction at the heart of experience, *Chazal* inform us that in spite of the limit placed in front of the soul that seeks the "essence" of *Hashem's* presence, there is another, albeit circuitous path through which the soul may find what it so desperately seeks: the path of cleaving to *talmidei chochomim*³. For while the *talmid chochom*- no matter how holy or pure they may be- is also included within the general interdiction against assuming direct and immediate access to the essence of *Hashem's* presence⁴, nevertheless when the average individual connects themselves to those human vessels who refract the infinite light of *Hashem's Torah*, the interrelationship somehow, somehow bridges the gap that separates *Hashem* and his creations. While *Chazal* were certainly not implying any form of equivalency, *heaven forbid*, between cleaving to *Hashem's* presence and cleaving to *talmidei chochomim*, there seems to be a certain mechanism rooted in the paradoxical "secret of faith" (*raza d'mihemnusa*)⁵ that allows the desperate soul to traverse the distance that separates *Hashem* and His creations without negating the space between the two.

*Chazal*⁶ shed light on this concept when they inform us as to how exactly this secret operates: "*And you shall fear Hashem your God*". When this *passuk* was brought in front of *Rebbe Akivah* so that he could interpret the seemingly additional word "*es*", he responded that the word "*es*" in "*Es Hashem Elokecha Tireh*" is coming to include the directive of reverence towards *talmidei chochomim*. It turns out then, that the element that allows for the seemingly radical idea of relative equivalency between cleaving to *Hashem* and cleaving to *talmidei chochomim* is the psychological posture of awe and reverence. Just as the soul approaches *Hashem* with a deep sense of respect rooted in the awesome nature of His presence; so too must one approach the *talmidei chochomim* with a sense of awe and trepidation as a result of their relative proximity to *Hashem* which is rooted in their intimate relationship with His *Torah*. Moving deeper into the nature of *yirah*, or awe in the face of that which is qualitatively larger than the individual, we find that the impulse towards fear and reverence is ultimately rooted in the awareness that the person or concept towards

¹ *Yam HaChochma* (2018/5779), "No Thought Can Grasp Him"

² *Kesubos*, 111b

³ *Kesubos*, 111b

⁴ *Yam HaChochma* (2011/5772), "Light Sown for the Righteous"

⁵ *Iggeres Kodesh (Baal HaTanya)*, *Iggeres* 20

⁶ *Pesachim*, 22b

which I yearn to connect transcends the capacity of the minds limited grasp. The inability of reaching or understanding the true depth of something fills the mind with a sense of detachment and reminds one of the distance that separates that which is higher from that which is lower. Uncertain as to the essential nature of that which remains transcendent, the limited mind is filled with a sense of wonder and fear. Wonder in the face of the awesome greatness that exceeds the mind's capacity to think it, and fear in the face of the fact that ultimately I can never truly know the true nature, or desire that rests in the heart of that which is larger than me.

Connecting to Hashem Through the Tzaddikim

Rebbe Nachman of Breslov takes this idea even further. While it is of utmost importance to keep in mind the sharp distinction between the soul's inability to fully grasp the true nature of Godly presence versus the soul's ability to connect with *talmidei chochomim* in an almost surrogate manner; Rebbe Nachman⁷ points out that in spite of the necessary distinction, there is a unifying concept that aligns the desire to connect with God and the desire to connect with the *talmid chochom*. Just as the soul that yearns to fully grasp the "essence" of *Hashem* is forced to retreat in the face of the limit that will always separate the two⁸; so too with regards to the impulse that drives the hope of connecting to the *talmid chochom* or the *tzadik*. For when one attempts to behold the inner world of the *tzadik*, they will also encounter the limit point at which their mind is forced to retreat with the awareness that ultimately the mind of the *tzadik* transcends the mind of the student. Just as *Hashem* can only be grasped directly through the indirect grasp that acknowledges the impossibility of grasping the Infinite in any positivistic way⁹, so too, the student will ultimately come to recognize that the *talmid chochom*, or the *tzadik* transcends any positivistic grasp that seeks to limit and define the parameters of the inner world of the *tzadik*.

Now, it is of utmost importance to stress that the impossibility of grasping the "essence" when it comes to *Hashem* is of an entirely different order and kind than when it comes to the *tzadik*. The human mind cannot grasp the essence of God because of the very basic spiritual laws that are built into the structure of existence, namely that no matter how high the individual ascends on the ladder of spiritual growth, there will always be a gap that remains separating the finite from the Infinite, as *Chazal*¹⁰ have taught regarding this relationship, "*My holiness is above*

⁷ *Likkutei Moharan*, 2:52

⁸ *Likkutei Moharon*, 1:24

⁹ *Yam HaChochma* (2010/5771), "To Him and Not to His Traits"

¹⁰ *VaYikrah Rabbah*, 24:9

your holiness”: This gap that persists despite the perpetual effort to bridge it¹¹ is not symptomatic of some human failure or temporarily deferred state, but rather it is a fundamental element within the Divine/Human spectrum that constitutes the very possibility of relationship. R’ Shlomo Elyashiv¹², the *Leshem Shevo V’Achlama* emphasizes this point through the illustration of Moshe Rabbeinu’s relationship with God. Requesting immediate access to the essence of God, “*Now show me Your glory*”, Moshe is denied, barred access from the immediacy of the Infinite, “*You may not see me, for no human being can see me and live*”. For an ordinary individual, this request and ultimate denial could feasibly be attributed to human failure or behavioral consequence, but when it comes to Moshe Rabbeinu, the archetypal *tzadik*, this barred access cannot be the result of personal deficiency as no human being has come as close to perfection as Moshe. Rather, the *Leshem* continues, the denial of Moshe Rabbeinu’s request is the result of an unshakeable law that is woven into the very fabric of existence, namely that it is simply “*impossible for a created being to grasp the [essence] of the Creator*”. The distance that remains between *Hashem’s* infinite transcendence and the soul’s finite immanence is a difference of type as opposed to a difference of degree, for nothing other than *Hashem* is essentially infinite, and as such nothing but *Hashem* can grasp the true essence of Itself¹³. This is not the case whatsoever when it comes to the gap that remains, separating the mind of the student from the mind of the *tzadik*. For while the *tzadik* lives with such an acute awareness of the Infinite presence of God to the point that it is as if they operate on an entirely different wavelength than the mind of the typical individual; nevertheless the ascendancy of the *tzadik* is still in relative relation to the awareness of *Hashem* within the mind of the student. The distance between the *tzadik* in relation to the student may remain untraversable, but it is rooted in a difference of degree as opposed to a difference of type. When R’ Shneur Zalman of Liadi, the *Baal HaTanya* describes the tripartite typology of souls- *rasha*, *beinoni* and *tzadik*- he writes that while¹⁴ “the lot of most individuals is the status of the *beinoni*”, and that for almost everyone else the “status of *tzaddik*” is unreachable, nevertheless it remains a possibility “as the result of a free gift from on high in the aspect of *seeing one’s world in their days*.”¹⁵ We see then, that while the status of *tzadik* is almost always transcendently removed from the reality of most people, it nevertheless still remains in the realm of possibility. In other words, while the essential distance

¹¹ *Likkutei Moharan*, 1:64

¹² *Leshem Shevo V’Achlama: Drushei Olam HaTohu*, 1:5:7 (p. 165)

¹³ *Letters of the Leshem Shevo V’Achlama, First Letter*, printed in R’ Moshe Schatz shlit”a, “*Tarshish Shoham V’Yishpeh*”, p. 288; *Yam HaChochma* (2008/5768), “*Shiurim on Otzros Chaim*”

¹⁴ *Likkutei Amarim (Tanya)*, Chapter 14

¹⁵ *Likkutei Amarim (Tanya)*, Chapter 14; See also R’ Shmuel Ehrenfeld shlit”a, “*To Proclaim the Praise of Aharon*”, printed in his “*Yar’ucha Im Shemesh*”

between *Hashem* and man remains unbridgeable despite all of the soul's efforts to bridge it; the difference between the *tzadik* and the student is theoretically bridgeable, even if the conditions that would allow for a full manifestation of the relationship remain mostly inaccessible, thereby relegating the difference that exists between *tzadik* and student to an inessential, contingent form.

The Unity Between the Tzaddik and the Torah

The question that still needs to be answered is what *Chazal* meant when they stated that while the distance that exists between the "essence" of *Hashem* and the soul remains absolute, this absolute distance can be mitigated through attaching oneself to *talmidei chochomim*, or the *tzadik*. In order to open upon the path towards an answer, we must begin to understand the essential element which gives birth to the distance between the *talmid chochom* and the student, namely the *tzadik's* inherent bond with the will and wisdom of God as it is expressed, en clothed and unified within the *Torah*¹⁶. Anyone can study the *Torah*, and as such everyone has the natural ability to understand the words and ideas conveyed within the *Torah*. There is, however, a profound distinction between those who simply study and understand the *Torah*, and those whose lives are transformed by the *Torah*. The transformation that takes place when one unifies themselves with the *Torah* is not simply in terms of the quantity of knowledge, but rather it represents a qualitative transformation that turns the mind that studies *Torah* into a mind that is part and parcel of the *Torah* itself. When one reaches the level of saturation at which point the *Torah* ceases to be an external body of knowledge and is transformed to an integral part of the mind itself, the distance between the *Torah* as an object and the *talmid chochom* as a subject collapses and the mind of the *tzadik* is transformed into a part of the *Torah* itself. As the *Baal HaTanya*¹⁷ and the *Leshem Shevo v'Achlama*¹⁸ describe—following the words of the *Rambam*¹⁹—there is an element of impossibility inherent within the mind's relationship with the *Torah* which cannot be found anywhere else. When the mind (*sechel*) begins to contemplate (*maskil*) an idea within the *Torah* (*muskal*), a doubled connection begins to take shape. On the one hand, the idea (*muskal*) is encircled by the mind's (*sechel*) contemplation (*maskil*) thereby drawing the idea into the inner world of the mind. Enclosed within the mind, the idea is surrounded by the *talmid chochom* to the point that the distinction between the

¹⁶ *Deah Chochma L'Nafshecha, Ki Savo, 5765, p. 3*

¹⁷ *Likkutei Amarim (Tanya, Chapter 5)*

¹⁸ *Leshem Shevo V'Achlama: Hakdamos U'Shearim, 1:7 (p. 26); Biur HaGra L'Sefer Yetzirah (2a)*

¹⁹ *Rambam, Moreh Nevuchim, 1:68*

mind (*sechel*) and the information (*muskal*) is abolished. This unification takes place through the power of thinking (*maskil*) that serves as a connecting bridge between the thinker (*sechel*) and the thought (*muskal*). This unity between the *sechel*, *maskil* and *muskal*, however, is only one side of impossible unity between the *talmid chochom* and the *Torah*. For one may rightfully claim that this inherent bond between thinker, thinking and thought can be found with any form of information, even if it has no connection to the *Torah*.

The Torah as the Name of Hashem

But as our tradition and our *tzaddikim* have taught us, the *Torah* represents a singularly unique form of information whose essence, content and context places it in a category of its own. Furthermore, as we shall see, the unique nature of the *Torah* not only affects the content of the text, but the texture of the mind studying the text as well. While the interrelationship between the mind (*sechel*) and the idea (*muskal*) wherein the mind surrounds and encloses the idea through its power of thinking (*maskil*) remains true for any type of information irrespective of its origin; the *Torah* initiates a second, novel form of interrelationship between the idea (*muskal*) and the mind (*sechel*) and thinking (*maskil*) of the individual who studies it. For the *Torah* is no ordinary form of information, but rather it is the text through which the very texture of existence comes into being. Described in the words of *Chazal* as the “blueprint” of existence itself²⁰, it is clear that the concept of “*Torah*” as an inscription that opens into the written and oral teachings of Moshe and the subsequent generations of interpretation is only one aspect of the “*Torah*” in its most essential form. Just as a blueprint precedes the form it seeks to design, so too the “*Torah*” in its elevated and supernal root precedes the actual manifestation of the narrative, ideas and laws that form the body of information referred to as the *Torah*. As the “*residual remainder of the supernal wisdom*”²¹, the *Torah* that exists within the space of creation is simply the final link within a chain whose origin reaches back into the depths of the Infinite that exists prior to, during and after existence as we know it came into existence, exists and eventually ceases to exist²². As the finite manifestation of God’s infinite wisdom, the *Torah* retains its essential connection with its root source even as it descends and congeals into the *Torah* of creation as

²⁰ *Yam HaChochma* (2010/5771), “*Kitzur Drush HaMalbush*”; *R’Shmuel Ehrenfeld shlit”a* “*Hashem Melech Geius Lavesh*”, in “*Yir’ucha Im Shemesh*”; *Leshem Shevo V’Achlama: Hakdamos U’Shearim*, “*Shaar HaPoneh Kadim*”

²¹ *Bereshis Rabbah*, 44:17

²² *Yam HaChochma* (2011/5772), “*Shiurim on Sefer Eitz Chaim*”

we know it. Therefore, even when the mind (*sechel*) surrounds the idea (*muskal*) through the power of thinking (*maskil*), enclosing it within the boundaries of thought, the *Torah* also surrounds the mind of the thinker itself through the elevated and infinite source that it remains connected to. For while the mind of the *talmid chochom* surrounds and encloses the idea found with the *Torah*, the infinitely concealed root of the *Torah* which transcends human grasp surrounds the mind of the *talmid chochom* in its entirety. It turns out then that when the *talmid chochom* studies the *Torah*, there is a doubled unification wherein the mind surrounds the *Torah* and the *Torah* surrounds the mind, resulting in an almost impossible sense of unity which negates any sense of distance between the *talmid chochom* and the *Torah*.

The Tzaddik becomes Part of the Torah

It is specifically in the relationship that the *talmid chochom* has with the *Torah* that *Chazal* find the ability to express the connection between the individuals desire to cleave to the *talmid chochom* and the individuals desire to cleave to the essential presence of God. The *Torah* is not simply a form of information that reveals the will and wisdom of God into the world, but rather it is in and of itself the very manifestation of the will and wisdom of God within the world. It is not simply a text that conveys direction and law, but rather it is the textual manifestation of Hashem's name, as the *Ramban*²³ teaches us regarding the fact that when read against the punctuation and textual coherence, the *Torah* is nothing but the singular name of *Hashem* . And just as a name represents the person that is being named without being identical to that person²⁴, so too the *Torah* serves as the name of God who remains unnamable, yet despite His unnameability, He becomes accessible through the *Torah* itself. When the *tzaddik* unifies himself with the *Torah*, he transforms from a mere vehicle that carries the information of the *Torah*, into a vehicle that is part and parcel of the *Torah*, carrying its messages and light forth in a way that is now indistinguishable from the personality of the *tzaddik* themselves. Highlighting this delicate point at which the mind of the *tzaddik* and the light of the *Torah* became indivisible, Rav Tzadok HaKohen of Lublin²⁵ explains the shift in language that Dovid HaMelech uses to describe the nature of the *Torah*. The *passuk* in *Tehillim* (1:2) states that one should find "*his delight within (Hashem's) Torah, and that he should*

²³ Introduction to commentary on *Sefer Bereshis*

²⁴ Introduction to *R' Yosef Giktalia's Sefer Shaarei Orah; Leshem Shevo V'Achlama: Hakdamos U'Shearim, Shaar Alef*

²⁵ *Sichas Melachei HaShareis, 2:6*

study his (own personal) Torah day and night". The beginning of the *passuk* refers to the *Torah* as belonging to God, while the second half of the *passuk* refers to the *Torah* as belonging to the individual who is studying it. Based on *Chazal's*²⁶ understanding of this linguistic shift, he explains that before the *talmid chochom* toils and exerts the spiritual energy needed for engaging the doubled unity that the *Torah* offers, the *Torah* is still singularly within the supernal realm of God. After the effort is exerted however, and after the doubled unification is initiated, the *Torah* can now be said to belong to the *talmid chochom*, as it has become part and parcel of their spiritual and internal makeup. This, explains Rav Tzadok HaKohen²⁷, is why even the mundane speech of *talmidei chachomim* demands study, for it is not simply the *Torah* information the *talmid chochom* knows that makes their words worthy of study, but rather the fact that their very nature is transformed into an aspect of the *Torah* itself. To the extent that even their non-*Torah* language is transformed into content worthy of study. Representing a singularly unique relationship with the *Torah*, which as we have said is far more than a text that discloses the will and wisdom of God, the *talmid chochom* is seen as carrying the remarkable responsibility of serving as a human vehicle of Godly wisdom. And it is precisely this Godly wisdom as manifest in the *Torah* of creation as we know it, that enables us to call out by name towards the essence of God's presence that remains utterly unnamable due its Infinite and transcendent nature. By connecting ourselves to *talmidei chachomim*, we gain direct access to the *Torah* that is embodied within them, and by cleaving to the *Torah* that is within them, we connect to the source of the *Torah* that remains above in its infinite and ungraspable light. So, while it is still absolutely essential to remember that the distance between human beings and *Hashem* will always remain, nevertheless by cleaving to the *talmid chochom* who themselves have been transformed into an aspect of the *Torah* itself, we gain indirect access to that which remains inaccessible. As the *Baal HaTanya*²⁸ writes regarding the wondrous doubled unity that takes place through the study of *Torah*, that it is analogous to a king who descends into the public space to be received by his people. In order to present himself properly to the people, the king engarbs himself in royal garments. Although the people of the king can only behold the garments of the king, nevertheless, engaging with and experiencing the garments of the king is the closest they can come to beholding the king himself. So too when it comes to the king-*Hashem*- and his garments- the *Torah*. While we may not ever be able to behold the King in His essence, nevertheless we can cleave to His garments, and by cleaving directly to His garments, we gain indirect access to the essence of *Hashem* through

²⁶ *Kiddushin*, 32b

²⁷ *Tzidkas HaTzaddik*, no. 118

²⁸ *Likkutei Amarim (Tanya)*, chapter 5

the secret of faith which bridges the gap between the Infinite and the finite without undoing the distance that must always remain.

The Relationship between Rebbe and Student

Throughout the writings of *Chassidus* there are numerous metaphors utilized to convey the nature of the relationship between *Hashem* and the world, or the Infinite and unlimited light of *Hashem* and the finite and limited space of creation. One of the most significant analogies is the interrelationship between the *Rebbe* and the student. For just as *Hashem* needs to contract His infinite light, so to speak, in order to reveal Himself in a limited and measurable way; so too the *Rebbe* must contract and limit the depth of their knowledge and understanding in order to share and properly express their light into the mind of the student. Because anytime the higher level wants to give something over to the lower level, the higher level must ensure that what it is giving over is appropriate according to the vessels and the potential of the lower level to receive it. For if the higher level were to express itself according to its truest nature, the vastness and power of the higher level would overwhelm the lower levels capacity to receive it in any real and lasting way. Therefore, just as *Hashem* needed to contract and limit His infinite light so that the lower levels of creation could receive it properly; so too the *Rebbe* must limit and contain the idea that he is trying to express in such a way that the student is capable of truly understanding it. It turns out then that when *Hashem* reveals His infinite light on a level that is appropriate and manageable for limited creatures, He is not revealing His full essence, so to speak, but rather the revelation is in accordance with what limited creation can receive. In other words, it is in accordance with the perception of the limited creation and not, *heaven forbid*, from the perspective of the unlimited Creator²⁹. Therefore we must always bear in mind that when speaking about the “essence” or the “light” of *Hashem*, we are always already speaking about a revelation that is at least one step removed from the actual “essence” or “light” that remains in its essential nature as it did prior to the creation of anything other than *Hashem*³⁰. Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that what is revealed to us is always already contracted and limited so that it could truly be received by us, the limited expression of “essence” or “light”, for example, still retains an irreducible connection

²⁹ R' Chaim Voloszhiner, *Nefesh HaChaim, Shaar 3; Baal HaTanya, Shaar HaYichud V'Emunah; Yam HaChochma (2007/5778), “Shiurim on Otzros Chaim”*; R' Yitzchak Meir Morgenstern *shlit”a* letter of approbation to R' Avinoam Frankel's “*Nefesh HaTzimtzum*”

³⁰ *Leshem Shevo V'Achlama: Hakdamos U'Shearim, Shaar Daled; R; Shmuel Ehrenfeld shlit”a, “Tevuas Shemesh”, Inyan HaTzimtzum*

to the true nature of “essence” or “light” as it exists prior to the necessary contraction and limitation. So that even though we only have access to the limited expression of *Hashem’s* infinite light, when we access the limited expression, we are also somehow, somehow touching the true essence of the Infinite, as the *Baal Shem Tov* expressed³¹, “one who touches an aspect of the essence, is in truth grasping the entirety of the essence”. The same is true when it comes to the relationship between the *Rebbe* and the student. Whatever *Torah* or light is shared by the *Rebbe* is always already after the initial contraction and limitation that takes place within the mind of the *Rebbe* in order to ensure that the point of information can be properly received within the vessels of the student. Because as we have already stated, the *Rebbe*, by virtue of the doubled unity with the *Torah*, becomes the vehicle through which the light of *Hashem* as en clothed within the *Torah* is revealed. And it is for that very reason that the *Rebbe* must contract and limit the light being expressed so as not to overwhelm the student’s capacity. Nevertheless, even though the *Torah* that is shared by the *Rebbe* is always already at least one step removed from the essence of the *Torah*, an irreducible connection to the true essence of the *Torah* as it exists within the *neshamah* of the *Tzaddik* remains. So even though we only have access to the limited expression of the *Tzaddik’s Torah*, when we grasp this limited expression, we are also somehow, somehow touching the true essence of the *Tzaddik* and his *Torah*.

The Bond between the Tzaddik and Their Seforim

With this introduction in mind, we are now ready to take our first steps upon the path that will eventually lead us into the sea of wisdom. When it comes to studying the work of an author, it is reasonable to claim that once the work is revealed it no longer remains tethered to the original intention of the author. Having moved from the mind of the author into the revealed space of readability, the text begins to take on a life of its own, independent of what the originator of the text intended or meant. According to this perspective of the relationship between author and text, one could say that the birth of the book is at the same moment the death of the author. When it comes to words of *Torah*, however, the opposite is true. Any thoughts or ideas regarding the *Torah*- referred to as *Toras Chaim*- are part and parcel of a living text. As part of a living body of wisdom, the intentions of the author survive the culmination of the writing process, nesting themselves within the very texture of the

³¹ *Keser Shem Tov, Hosafos, no. 227*

book that has been authored³². Rebbe Nachman of Breslov³³ explains that therefore “a *sefer* represents the name of the author”, for it is not simply the expression of ideas but rather the “tears of the author themselves”³⁴ which comprise the book . And just as tears emerge from the inner space of the mind, so too does the *sefer* emerge from the depths of the *Rebbe’s* mind, to the point that even after the act of writing is completed, “the mind and the spirit of the author continue to live within the book.”³⁵ The interconnection between the *talmid chochom* and the *sefer* that holds their *Torah* is so strong that when the student studies the words of the *sefer* “they should imagine as if the author of the ideas themselves is standing in front of them”³⁶. Because in truth when the *Torah* of a *tzaddik* is studied with the proper intention, a bond is built between the soul of the author and the soul of the student, to the extent that when the written words are read in this world “the lips of the *tzaddik* begin to move within” the next world³⁷.

The Seforim of a Living Tzaddik

As we stated earlier, the bond between the *Rebbe* and their *Torah* is fashioned upon the bond between *Hashem* and the infinite light that He reveals. It should not be surprising then that when *Chazal*³⁸ describe the manner through which *Hashem* created the world, the analogy that they use is the relationship between the author and the book, as Rav Tzadok HaKohen of Lublin reports³⁹ “that I heard it said that creation is the book of *Hashem* and the *Torah* is a commentary on that book.” We are told that the world was created through the three-step process of “the book” (*Sefer*), the “author” (*Sofeir*) and “the narrative of the book” (*Sippur*). The *Sefer* (book) reveals the *Sippur* (narrative) which gives us access to the *Sofeir* (author); or the *Torah* reveals the essence and purpose of creation which gives us access to the will and wisdom of *Hashem*. Moving from the analogy of *Hashem* and His *Sefer*, to the actual relationship between the *tzaddik* and his *sefer*, we could then say that the *sefer* reveals the *Torah* of the *tzaddik* which gives us access to the soul of the *tzaddik*. Everything we have said until now applies to *seforim* whose authors are no longer in

³² For an incredible discussion regarding the interconnection between the *Tzaddik’s* intentions during an action and the retention of those intentions within the act even after the activity is completed, see *Yam HaChochma* (2008/5779), “*Teshuvos B’Inyanei Sta”m*”, *Anafim* 1-5

³³ *Likkutei Moharan*, 2:32

³⁴ *Likkutei Moharan*, 2:30

³⁵ *Likkutei Moharan*, 1:192; 1:173

³⁶ *Shekalim (Yerushalmi)*, 2:5

³⁷ *Bechoros*, 31b

³⁸ Opening to *Sefer Yetzirah*

³⁹ *Machshavos Charutz*, no. 11; *Tzidkas HaTzaddik*, no. 216

this world, namely that by studying the teachings with the proper intentions we enable ourselves to cleave with the “souls of those *tzaddikim* through whom *Hashem* chose to reveal his *Torah*.⁴⁰” The question that remains, however, is whether this interrelationship exists when the *tzaddik* who authored the *sefer* is still living within this world. Do we say that because the soul of the *tzaddik* still exists within the bodily vessel, it cannot be found within the *sefer*, or perhaps the interrelationship between the *tzaddik* and his *sefer* exists in spite of the fact that a more immediate form of interaction remains possible in the form of a face to face encounter.

Sefer, Sefer and Sippur: The Book and the Face

Rebbe Nachman of Breslov⁴¹ answers this question with resounding clarity. No matter how present the *Rebbe* may be within his writings, there is no comparison between experiencing the external side of the *Tzaddik* within the writings and beholding the internal side of the *Tzaddik* through a face to face encounter. For while the *Torah* contained within the *sefer* has the power to awaken the soul of the one who learns it towards *teshuvah*⁴²; the presence and the face of the *Tzaddik* has the power to immediately elevate the student out of their fallenness into a state of rectification. The secondary nature of the *sefer* which holds the *Tzaddik's Torah* is no replacement for the immediacy involved in the face to face encounter. In a similar way, the Vilna Gaon⁴³ interprets the threefold formula of “*Sefer, Sofeir and Sippur*” quoted above, but instead of reading the second phrase as *sofeir* (author), he sees the word as the second iteration of *sefer* (book), so that for the Vilna Gaon, the formula involved in the creation of the world was “*Sefer (book), Sefer (book) and Sippur (speech)*”. The Vilna Gaon sees these three stages as corresponding to the upper-three *sefiros* through which all forms of Divine creation and human creativity take place, *Chochma* (wisdom), *Binah* (understanding) and *Daas* (knowledge). *Chochmah* and *Binah* represent the internal process of thought formation- *Chochmah* representing the sudden burst of insight devoid of expression, and *Binah* representing the process of understanding the details contained within the original spark of wisdom. Both stages represent the inner process through which a thought emerges internally (*chochmah*) and begins to be expressed externally (*binah*). These two stages of *Chochma* and *Binah* correspond to the first two stages of *Sefer* and *Sefer*, for just as the formation of thought needs two separate stages for it to become

⁴⁰ *Anonymous Introduction to the Arizal's Sefer Eitz Chaim*

⁴¹ *Likkutei Moharan, 1:19; 1:120*

⁴² *Likkutei Moharan, 1:60*

⁴³ *Commentary of the Vilna Gaon to Safra D'Tzneyusa, p. 2a*

accessible, so too does the experience of learning *Torah* from within a book. At first the author writes the book prior to its readability, and only afterwards does the written text become a book of information for the one who reads it. This two-step process of writing the *sefer* and the *sefer* being read correspond to the two stages of *Chochma*- similar to the initial act of writing which remains internal-, and *Binah*-similar to the secondary act of reading which is external. This is not the case when it comes to the third stage of *Sippur* (speech) which corresponds to the *sefirah* of *Daas*. The experience of knowledge (*daas*) takes place in a single moment, when the information of the *Rebbe* combines with the intuition of the student, the *Torah* undergoes a transition from understandable knowledge (*Chochma and Binah*) into lived and felt experience (*Daas*). This process- whose exact mechanism remains unknown⁴⁴- is not a two-step process but rather a singular moment wherein the idea becomes part and parcel of the student's emotional experience. This stage of *Daas* corresponds to the *Sippur* (speech) which takes place through the speech of the *Rebbe*, and unlike the *sefer* which must first be written and only afterwards can it be read, the process of speech expresses an immediate relationship wherein the word is spoken and heard at the same moment. It turns out then that the immediacy available in the face to face speech encounter (*Sippur*) is of a loftier level than the two-step process of reading a written book (*Sefer and Sefer*)⁴⁵. We see then that for both Rebbe Nachman and the Vilna Gaon, the experience of receiving *Torah* in a face to face relationship with a living *Tzaddik* is of a loftier and more precise experience than learning the words of the *Tzaddik* from within the written *sefer*.

The Power of the Sefer in the Time of the Face

The question that we must now ask is what value is there in studying the *seforim* of a living *Tzadik*, when the face of the *Tzadik* is available. If the *sippur* of the *Rebbe* wherein the content is both conveyed and received at the same moment is a possibility, what insight is there to gain by entering into the *sefer* of the *Rebbe*, where the content being studied is always already one step removed from the immediacy of the face. The answer to this question rests at the core of what we are attempting to do with this book, a book that may serve as a guide towards entering the actual sea of wisdom which consists of the many holy writings of the *Rebbe shlit" a* and his

⁴⁴ In his commentary to *Safra D'Tzneyusa (2a)*, the Vilna Gaon explains that the singular process of *Daas* is simply the external disclosure of the loftiest aspect of *Keser*, referred to as the "unknowable head" (*Reisha D'Lo Isyada*) wherein human knowledge reaches its loftiest point, the point- as Rebbe Nachman taught so often- where we realize "*the apex of knowledge is to not know*", see *Yam HaChochma (2009/5770)*, "*Satisfied in the Thirst of Your Soul*"

⁴⁵ *Likkutei Moharan*, 2:36

students which we will discuss in detail. The answer to this question will take shape in two different forms. The first answer will be based on the realistic issues that may prevent one from experiencing the *Tzaddik* in a face to face encounter; and the second answer will be based on the idealistic notion that offers the possibility of finding certain benefits inherent within a *sefer* which cannot be found in the face to face encounter. The first answer is rooted in a deficiency which should ideally be overcome, thereby negating the value of a book like this. The second answer is rooted in an additional strength which remains even after the preventions blocking the face to face encounter with the *Tzaddik* are alleviated, thereby enhancing the value of a book like this⁴⁶.

The Sefer as a Response to Concealment and Preventions

Rebbe Nachman of Breslov⁴⁷ expresses countless times throughout his writings that when it comes to entering the gates of holiness, the individual will almost always encounter preventions, or *meniot* that block the path leading towards the inside. Far from being accidental symptoms upon the path towards holiness, these *meniot* emerge for the specific purpose of blocking the individual from moving forward. The measure and the intensity of these *meniot* is in direct correlation to the measure and intensity of the spiritual activity the individual seeks to accomplish. While at first glance these *meniot* appear to be natural impediments which can easily cast the spiritual seeker into despondency and despair, when looked at with a deeper, more penetrating gaze it becomes apparent that these *meniot* are for the sake of awakening an ever deeper yearning towards holiness than what was previously alive within the individual. When faced with a *meniah*, the individual is forced to recognize that the investment with which they approached their spiritual quest is no longer enough. Facing this limit, the individual has two paths open in front of them, they can either retreat from their quest as a result of the impediment, or they can move inwards in the hopes of uncovering a new form of desire, a passionate yearning which was previously inaccessible to them. Seen in this light, the *meniah* no longer represents a disruption to the spiritual quest, but rather an interruption for

⁴⁶ The two stages of answers may be aligned with the *Baal HaTanya*'s formulation of "subduing" (*iskafya*) and "transforming" (*ishafcha*) as two stages of confronting and dealing with an issue. The first answer represents an issue that would best be overcome, thereby making the value of a book like this contingent on the presence of a theoretically fixable issue; while the second answer represents an approach wherein the issue provides an opportunity of revealing a unique insight that would not have been possible without the issue, making the value of a book like this essential as opposed to contingent.

⁴⁷ *Likkutei Moharan*, 2:48; 1:115

the sake of a renewed engagement, or as Rebbe Nosson of Nemirov⁴⁸ writes, “the impediment serves to renew the desire”. One of the main places in which these *meniot* arrive is upon the path towards the *Tzaddik*. When embarking on the path towards the face of the *Tzaddik*, representative of the undying desire towards immediacy, the individual faces different forms of prevention. For some it may manifest in the fantasy of self-sufficiency that fights to retain its egocentric need to be the center of the universe; while for others it manifests as an unwillingness to accept that particular souls which “are planted within our world”⁴⁹ are endowed with a uniquely potent form of spiritual awareness. For some it may manifest in practical impediments such as varying responsibilities; while for others it manifests in the all too human cynicism which casts the shadows of doubt upon the possibility of true spiritual connection. In whichever way these *meniot* present themselves, their goal is not to arrest the development of spiritual movement, but rather to force the spiritual seeker to reinvest in their desire, thereby propelling themselves towards their original goal with a newfound ferocity and intensity. When the *meniot* prevent an individual from pushing forward along the path of seeking the face of the *Tzaddik*, there is a secondary mode of connection within which the person may find their spiritual sustenance, namely, the *seforim* that contain the teachings of the *Tzaddik*⁵⁰. For while the *sefer* can never truly replace the immediacy that the face of the *Tzaddik* provides, nevertheless the student can find some form of satisfaction from the teachings inscribed within the book. This secondary form of spiritual satisfaction that emerges from the *sefer* when the immediacy of the face seems inaccessible opens upon a beneficial option which remains intertwined with a potential threat. The potential threat is the mistaken belief that the *sefer* can provide everything the student needs, thereby negating the need for the immediate encounter with the face. When the student begins to feel saturated with the *Rebbe’s* teachings as they emerge from the book, there is a risk that they will abandon the quest towards that which exceeds the book. For while the book may successfully convey the *Torah* of the *Tzaddik*, the experiential encounter in all its nuance and context cannot be captured in the written word. If the *sefer* of the *Tzaddik* represents the “black fire” through which comprehensible ideas are revealed, the face of the *Tzaddik* represents the “white fire” through which the incomprehensible ideas are experienced. It is in this sense that while the *sefer* provides a valuable substitute for the face to face encounter, the ultimate goal is to overcome the *meniah*

⁴⁸ *Likkutei Moharan*, 1:66; *Likkutei Halachos, Rosh HaShana*, 2:6

⁴⁹ *Likkutei Amarim (Tanya)*, Chapter 10

⁵⁰ *Likkutei Moharan*, 1:120

that blocks the path so that one may overcome the need for the *sefer*, to move from a space of the book to the space of the face.

The Face of the Tzaddik Within the Sefer Itself

There is, however, another way of looking at a *sefer*, a way that affirms the spiritual value of a *sefer* even when the *meniot* blocking the path towards the face of the *Tzaddik* are removed. A way that sees beyond the distinction between the book and the face, allowing us access to the face of the *Tzaddik* within the *sefer* itself⁵¹. When describing the potential threat involved in taking the *sefer* as the primary vehicle of the *Tzaddik's Torah*, Rebbe Nachman of Breslov⁵² compares the face of the *Tzaddik* to "*lashon ha'kodesh*", and the *sefer* of the *Tzaddik* to the language of "*targum*". While these two levels typically describe linguistic categories, Rebbe Nachman sees them as representing two different modes of experience. "*Lashon HaKodesh*", or original language, signifies experiencing things in their immediacy, without any need for secondary modes of explanation. To behold something at the level of *Lashon HaKodesh* means to grasp it in its essence, to catch a glimpse of the "face" itself where nothing is withheld, and everything is revealed. "*Targum*", or translation, on the other hand, signifies experiencing things in the absence of their immediate presence, forcing one into the lower regions of thought where meaning is clouded and concealed⁵³. To behold something at the level of *Targum* means to try and understand it through the broken shards of language. To hear the echo of an idea after the original voice has ceased speaking. It is the opposite of the "face", it is the backside where things deceive the eyes of the beholder, forcing one to reassemble an image that was once whole from amongst the shattered pieces that contain a memory, or a dream⁵⁴ of the original state that is no longer available. And while it is clear that "*Lashon HaKodesh*" represents a loftier level of experience, as represented in the face to face encounter; nevertheless there remains a certain benefit hidden within the "*Targum*" experience- represented in the *sefer* as opposed to the face- which offers the student a hitherto unrevealed level of understanding⁵⁵. For while the face to face encounter of "*Lashon HaKodesh*" gives access to the immediacy of the *Tzaddik*, the clarity of that experience is also the site of its deficiency. When everything is revealed in an immediate manner, the student may fall into the

⁵¹ *Likkutei Moharan*, 1:192

⁵² *Likkutei Moharan*, 1:19

⁵³ *Arizal*, *Shaar HaMitzvos*, "*Shanayim Mikrah V'Echad Targum*"; *Likkutei HaGra*, *Erech "Shnayim Mikrah"*; *Beis Yaakov*, *Parshas Lech Lecha*

⁵⁴ As the *Arizal* points out, "*tardeima*" (slumber) and "*targum*" (translation) share a numerical value.

⁵⁵ *R' Avraham ben R' Nachman*, *Biur HaLikkutim*, 1:19; *Maharal*, *Tifferes Yisrael*, *Chapters 13, 46 and 65*

spiritual trap of assuming full and total grasp of what the *Tzaddik* is trying to convey. When beholding the purity of the face in all of its nuance and directness, the student may come to assume that they have received everything the *Tzaddik* has to offer. This is not the case when it comes to the *sefer* of the *Tzaddik*, for the *sefer* is always already one step removed from the immediacy of the face, and as such the student learning from the *sefer* is already aware of the fact the *Torah* within the book is not all that there is⁵⁶. In the absence of the nuance and directness of the face, the words within the *sefer* convey two contradictory senses. On the one hand the letters, words and sentences that comprise the book impart the content of the ideas so that the student reading the *sefer* becomes enlightened through the *Torah* of the *Tzaddik*. On the other hand, however, the words written within the book are a constant reminder of the absence of the author, for if the *Tzaddik* was present there would be no need for the *sefer*. These two contradictory impulses within the *sefer* create a paradoxical space wherein the student moves closer to the *Tzaddik* by reading and comprehending the *Torah*, while remaining distant from the *Tzaddik* in realizing that the *sefer* is nothing but the trace of some distant presence. But this sense of absence at the heart of the *sefer* is also the site of the *sefer's* unique power to awaken a newfound awareness within the student. By engaging with the *Tzaddik* through the *sefer*, the student is forced to recognize that even when the ideas are comprehended fully, there is always more to grasp. The pages, the cover and the binding of the *sefer* are a constant reminder that while everything is revealed in the book, nevertheless it remains covered and concealed, bounded within the boundaries of the limit born out of distance. The sense of distance that the student experiences when studying the *sefer* awakens within the soul a sense of distance, a removal from the immediacy of the face where everything is revealed. This distance forces the student to come to terms with the fact that while the *Torah* of the *Tzaddik* can be fully comprehend- each person according to their level of understanding⁵⁷- there will always be an untraversable gap that remains between the *Tzaddik* and the student. The *sefer* is the “*targum*” to the face of the *Tzaddik* which is “*lashon ha’kodesh*”. When the original language is no longer available, the student is forced into the darkened territory of translation where understanding is forced to build itself out of misunderstanding. If the face to face encounter represents the direct connection wherein the *Tzaddik* shares with the student from above to below, the *sefer* is where the student works to understand from below to above. When the face is inaccessible it is all too possible for the student to fall into the trap of despair, for without direct access how can a true union between the *Tzaddik* and the student take place? The redemptive answer to this question is the existence of the *sefer*. To enter the space of

⁵⁶ *Likkutei Moharan*, 2:36; *R' Menacham Mendel of Shklov, Mayim Adirim*, p. 79

⁵⁷ *Sichos HaRan*, no. 1

darkness and confusion born out of distance, and to discover that here too—specifically here⁵⁸—one can come to understand the *Torah* of the *Tzaddik*, is to affirm the possibility of connection and unity from within the very heart of disconnection and disunity⁵⁹. To witness the destruction of immediate presence, and instead of retreating in fear and despair, to surge forth into the wreckage of the original in hopes of discovering the possibility of renewed connection. Earlier, we showed that for our *Tzaddikim*, the world comes into being through the three-step process of *Sefer* (book), *Sefer* (book) and *Sippur* (speech). The “*Sippur*” represents the immediacy of the face to face encounter, while the two stages of “*Sefer*” represent the two-step process of writing and being read. Naturally, the singular process of “*sippur*” was shown to be of a loftier level than the two-step process of the “*sefer*” being written and the “*sefer*” being read. But when one comes to terms with the loss of the “*sippur*”, when the immediacy of the face is no longer accessible, the “*sefer*” is transformed into the site of encounter. And when the depth of the students’ gaze can penetrate the thickened stones and houses of the letters inscribed in the text, they come to behold the face of the *Tzaddik* hidden within the words themselves. At that point the distinction between the “*sippur*” and the “*sefer*” begins to stutter, as it becomes clear that “even when forgetfulness falls upon the person, and the face to face encounter is no longer present, the author places their face, soul and mind within the *sefer* itself”⁶⁰.

Entering the Sea of Wisdom

In order to understand the unique world of the *Rebbe shlit”a* and his *Torah*, we must first understand the framework through which his *Torah* is revealed. In his introduction of the collected teachings of his master and teacher Rebbe Nachman of Breslov, Rebbe Nosson⁶¹ allows himself to deviate from the description of his Rebbe in order to discuss the shape of his *Torah*. With the great unity of passion and precision that animates his writings, Rebbe Nosson describes the architectural shape of his Rebbe’s teachings, comparing his *Torah* to a home with many different entrances and exits, rooms within rooms where the shifting shapes of space carry the student along in the wondrous journey through the landscape of *Torah*. Only after describing the shifting landscape of Rebbe Nachman’s *Torah* does he then go on to instruct the novice as to how to properly approach the teachings themselves. We

⁵⁸ R’ Avraham ben R’ Nachman, *Biur HaLikkutim*, 1:19; *Likkutei Halachos, Chol HaMoed*, 1:2

⁵⁹ *Yam HaChochma* (2008/5779), “Dispelling Lowly Consciousness”

⁶⁰ *Likkutei Moharan*, 1:192

⁶¹ *Introduction to Likkutei Moharan*

see then that in order to properly understand the content of the *Tzaddik's Torah*, one must first describe the shape and space in which the *Torah* is revealed. Once we have a basic understanding of the architectural shape of the *Torah*, we will then be able to enter the teachings themselves. It is important to note, however, that while in the typical way of looking at the world there is a stark distinction between the external shape of things and the internal content of things, this is not the case when it comes to the *Tzaddik* and his *Torah*. Rather, when it comes to *kedusha* there is an inherent and essential connection between the external and the internal, to the extent that the external is simply a revealed manifestation of the internal. What this means for us is that when looking at the external form through which the *Tzaddik's Torah* is revealed, we must keep in mind that the external shape reflects the inner content of the *Torah*, just as the inner content of the *Torah* reflects the external shape. By developing a basic understanding of the external expression of the *Torah* we are at the same time preparing ourselves to receive the inner content of the *Torah* in the proper way.

The writings of the *Ya"m HaChochma* are difficult to codify for a number of reasons, all of which can be attributed to the sheer vastness of his *Torah* project. The speed with which the *Rebbe* teaches his *Torah* is simply too quick to keep up with, and as of the moment we write these words, there are new ideas coming out weekly which disrupt any attempt to offer any comprehensive view of the teachings. If the perpetual flow of *Torah* were simply a matter of quantity, then we would be able to identify unchanging categories, but the reality is that along with the growing quantity of teachings, there is also a remarkable growth in quality, so that the categorical boundaries are continuously shifting, making simple classification next to impossible. As we stated earlier, the external form of the *Torah* is at the same time an expression of the inner content of the *Torah*, and as such the erasure of categorical boundaries is not simply a symptom of the *Ya"m HaChochma's* system, but rather it is expressive of a fundamental element of the system. When it comes to dryland, the boundaries separating one part of the land from another is simple since the borderlines are clearly marked. When it comes to the sea, however, there is no concept of borders, for what was in the previous moment one element of water in its isolation, is in the next moment overtaken by waters from elsewhere. The flowing waves of the sea prevent any clear or definitive boundaries, for in truth the entire sea is a singular and immeasurable force. While the land offers itself up to territorial distinction and separation, the sea in its raging form nullifies any separation at the very moment one tries to classify and limit it. Nevertheless, certain categories of teachings can be described, arranged by the different forms of *seforim* that the press associated with the *Rebbe's beis medrash, Machon Yam HaChochma* has published.

The series of *seforim* as we will be discussing them are: 1. ***Yam HaChochma*** 2. ***Deah Chochma L'Nafshecha (R' A"E shlit"a)*** 3.. ***Nishmatin Chaditin*** 4. ***The Weekly Shiurim*** 5.. ***Additional Writings*** 6. ***The Writings of the Talmidim (R' Shmuel Ehrenfeld shlit"a)***

Conclusion

As the first of five parts, "*Entering the Sea*" will serve as an introduction to the writings of the *Rebbe* and his *talmidim*. After developing a basic understanding and framework behind the vast system of *Torah*, we will be prepared to move further into the sea of wisdom, encountering the particular ideas which comprise the *Rebbe's* system for the sake of applying them to the daily experience of everyday life. It is the humble opinion of the author that the *Rebbe's Torah* is not only novel and unparalleled in its depth and breadth, but rather the teachings offer a therapeutic approach to facing, experiencing and elevating the difficult elements of serving *Hashem* within the "doubled concealment"⁶² of this worldliness, wherein the light is hidden in the "darkness that is doubled upon itself"⁶³. As the *Rebbe's Torah* teaches us, it is specifically here within the "belly of the *nachash* itself"⁶⁴, in the "most particularized particular"⁶⁵ that we encounter the deepest power of *Hashem's* Infinite light. In his commentary of the *Tikkunei Zohar*⁶⁶, the Vilna Gaon wrote as follows: "*And this knowledge (daas) swims within the great sea, and that is where it grows, which is why it is referred to as a fish, for all of the Tzaddikim who study Kabbalah emerge from there...they are referred to as the fish of the sea who know how to swim within the sea of wisdom...and when it reaches the feminine [gradation of malchus] which is referred to as 'dryland', 'and the dryland was referred as eretz',⁶⁷ at that point 'the land will be filled with knowledge (daas) as water covers the seabed'⁶⁸ ...nevertheless even nowadays [it can be experienced] from time to time, for the Rishonim have taught us that everything that will be in the future can be experienced from time to time in the present, as well as when there is a Tzaddik in the generation like Rashbi and others [in their generation]...and the splitting[of the sea of Torah] is when the sea becomes like the dryland upon which each an every person can walk*

⁶² *Likkutei Moharan*, 1:56

⁶³ *Likkutei Amarim (Tanya)*, Chapter 36

⁶⁴ *Rashash, Nahar Shalom*, "Malbish Arumim"

⁶⁵ *Leshem Shevo V'Achlama; R' Shmuel Ehrenfeld shlit"a*, "Maamar HaKlal v'HaPrat", in *K'Tzeit HaShemesh (Siman Alef)*, Volume 3

⁶⁶ *Tikkun 21*, p. 42b-43b

⁶⁷ *Bereshis*, 1:10

⁶⁸ *Yeshayahu*, 11:9

without danger and with no need to struggle and swim, for it will all be revealed like dryland.” It is the humble hope of this author that these writings serve as a pathway towards the sea, preparing each person “according to the conjecture of their own hearts” for a time when the hidden teachings are revealed, and the sea is transformed into dryland.

As *Rebbe Shimon bar Yochai* taught regarding his holy *chevraya*, “*anan b’chavivusa talya milsa*” (*our connection is dependent upon love*). This work would not be possible without the support- *bein b’ruchani bein b’gashmi*- of friends who are teachers and teachers who are friends: R’ Moshe W, R’ Shmuel E, R’ Akivah E, R’ Aharon, R’ Ari M, R’ Leizer S, R’ Barry G, R’ Oliver G, R’ Meir R, R’ Yisrael A, R’ Ariel F, R’ Yanky K, R’ Issac’l L, R’ Dovid’l W, R’ Chananya, R’ Beri W, R’ Yoel, R’ Jake P, R’ Eli Z, R’ Shlomo G, R’ Issac K, R’ Josh H, R’ Aaron S, R’ Dovid B, R’ Josh R, R’ Eli K, R’ Michael W, R’ Raffi L, R’ Hillel B, R’ Adam F, R’ Micah G, R’ Josh W.

Yam HaChochma

The *Yam HaChochma seforim* occupy a unique place within the writings of R' Yitzchak Meir Morgenstern, both in terms of quantity and quality. These massive, encyclopedic yearbooks comprise various sections of *Torah* concepts, all of which were taught over by the *Rebbe* throughout the year of their publication. In the words of the opening page of the first- and all subsequent- hardcover volumes of *Yam HaChochma*, these *seforim* represent “*a profound collection of teachings from the shiurim of our Master and Teacher shlit”a, infinite waters that emerge from Eden to irrigate the garden, which is the Torah. To quench the thirst of the souls that yearn for the knowledge of Hashem in both the revealed and the concealed, according to the path of our holy teachers and the true Tzaddikim, the masters of Chassidus and Kabbalah who have been revealed to the light of the world.*” While there were smaller, paperback *Kuntrusei Yam HaChochma* printed as early as 1993, it was only in 2004 that the press associated with RYM”M’s *Beis Medrash Toras Chochom- Machon Yam HaChochma*- began printing hardcover yearbooks which contained much more than the original *kuntreisim*.

Published at the end of each year, on *erev Rosh HaShana* of the incoming year, the *Sifrei Yam HaChochma* typically contain upwards from 800 pages of *Torah* based on and transcribed from the *shiurim* that the *Rebbe* gives in the *Beis Medrash*, as well as *Torah* given over to private groups of select students and individual *chavrusa*’s. Since the original publication in 2004 (5765), new volumes of *Yam HaChochma* have been published in 2005 (5766), 2006 (5767), 2007 (5768), 2008 (5769), 2009 (5770), 2010 (5771), 2011 (5772), 2012 (5773), 2013 (5774), 2014 (5775) and then again in 2018 (5779). While the general framework of the *seforim* follow a similar pattern of content, as the years have gone on, more and more *Torah* has been added into the *seforim*.

In the original volume of *Yam HaChochma* (2004/5765), the students who worked on preparing the *sefer* in all of its facets wrote as follows: “*And now, how can we possibly express our gratitude to Hashem...Who in His great compassion has not kept us away from a redeemer, and He has drawn us close to his Torah, insuring that our feet not stumble. In His great kindness, we have merited to be amongst those who sit in our Beis Medrash, carrying us to this point when after much work and intense effort we can place upon the printing press the tremendous “Sefer Yam HaChochma”, which is a profound collection in the aspect of ‘the small that contains the large’ from the Torah of our Master and Teacher shlit”a. And it is split into four founts. The first is called “Davar Halacha”, which circles and flows through the laws of the holy Torah which is*

the garment of the King, along with His desire and wisdom. The name of the second river is **"Divrei Kabbalah"** which circles and flows through essays deeper than the sea in the Torah of our Master the Arizal, deeper than deep beyond what the mind can find, but even those who are just beginning in this wisdom will find comfort there. The name of the third river is **"Milei D'Chassidusa"** which flows through the royal path, the path of our holy Masters, like malachim, the students of the holy Baal Shem Tov, in which one will find storehouses of the fear of Hashem applicable to everyone, wherever they may find themselves. And the fourth river is called **"Yichud Hashem"**, which is the river that purifies all stains, in which there are untarnished waters, deep waters are the insight within the heart of man, which are drawn by the man of understanding. There one will find the path towards the unity of Hashem in this world, from the loftiest of levels down to the limit of the lowest level, until the point when one may arrive at peace and inheritance, "this is my calmness forever, this is where I shall sit for You are with me." And at the end, which testifies upon it, is the **"Tikkun Klali"** whose secret knows no depths, printed with the kavaanos and reformatted with additional chein and content."

While this fourfold breakdown of *Yam HaChochma* remains true for most of the *seforim*, the categories which make up the four parts of the *sefer* have changed from year to year. For example, *Yam HaChochma* (2007/5768) included a new section titled **"Pnimityus HaShas"** based on the *dafyomi* Gemarah *shiur* that the *Rebbe* gives, which would eventually become a series of separate *seforim* titled *"Shearis Yaakov"*; and *Yam HaChochma* (2008/5769) saw a new section titled **"Pnimityus HaKabbalah v'haChassidus"** which eventually replaced **"Milei D'Chassidusa"** as of *Yam HaChochma* (2010/5771). The **"Divrei Kabbalah"** section also shifted from the *Rebbe's shiurim* on the Arizal's *Sefer Otzros Chaim* found in *Yam HaChochma* (2004/5765), (2005/5766), (2006/5767), to the *Rebbe's shiurim* on the *Rashash's Hakdamas Rehovos HaNahar*, running from *Yam HaChochma* (2008/5769) through *Yam HaChochma* (2014/5775). In addition to the added sections within the *seforim* there are also sections which did not continue, for example, the section titled **"Yichud Hashem"** printed in *Yam HaChochma* (2004/5765), (2005/5766), (2006/5767), (2008/5769) did not continue, as it had reached its completion. Along with the fourfold section breakdown that serves as the main body of *Sifrei Yam HaChochma*, there is also the remarkable **"Hakdamat HaMechaber"**, wherein the *Rebbe* describes the unique significance of that specific year with regards to the burgeoning possibility of redemption. It is very important to stress that while the *Rebbe* speaks explicitly about the association of the specific year and *geulah* process-utilizing hints and allusions so beautiful that they inflame the heart of the student-nevertheless, it is never in the sense of a declarative statement regarding the specific

year or a prediction of *geulah*, but rather it is a call towards awakening the potential towards *geulah* that exists within each and every moment, with a particular focus on the unique spiritual qualities of that specific year. It is the humble opinion of the writer that while the *Sifrei Yam HaChochma* represent an unprecedented *Torah* project wherein *pnimiyus haTorah* in its depths are revealed for all to see, the “*Hakdamat HaMechaber*” remains the deepest, and most frightening level of the *Tzaddik’s Torah*, offering the student direct access into the inner world of the *Tzaddik’s* holy vision.

There is an unshakable law within holiness that the part is equal to the whole, so that even when something appears to be a part, when looked at from a closer angle it turns out to be a whole unto itself. One of the remarkable outgrowths of this idea is that when examining a part, one can rest assured that it contains everything else within it as well. Part of the power of the sea is that each drop of water contains the properties of the entire body of water, and the same can be said about *Sifrei Yam HaChochma*. When approaching the *seforim* from a linear and hierarchical viewpoint, then each of the four sections comprising *Sefer Yam HaChochma* appear to be distinct and separate from one another. But when viewed through the depth oriented perceptual viewpoint that the *seforim* themselves elucidate, each particular section of the *sefer* contains within itself all other sections as well, albeit in a nested and concealed way. For example, when studying a *halachik* responsa printed in “*Davar Halacha*”, one will encounter conceptual proofs brought from the teachings of *Kabbalah* and *Chassidus*; and when studying an explanation of a concept from the *Arizal* in “*Divrei Kabbalah*” one will encounter *halachik* prooftexts being used to support the particular novelty. The sections “*Pnimiyus HaShas*” and “*Biurei Shulchan Orech*” are perhaps the clearest example of this in that on nearly every page there is an unprecedented interaction and synthesis of *Torah* sources culled from both the revealed (*nigleh*) and concealed (*nistar*) elements of the *Torah*, revealing unifications and interrelations between parts previously assumed to be separate. There are countless examples which can be used to show this phenomenon of the equivalency between the part and the whole, but suffice it to say that one of the most significant concepts to emerge from within the *Yam HaChochma* is the illusory nature of the distinctions that typically compartmentalize the *Torah* and how in truth “*the entire Torah is a single entity*” as we will discuss later on.

While each volume of *Sefer Yam HaChochma* represents a world unto itself, nevertheless there is a significant sense of continuity that runs through all of them as expressed in the development of themes from year to year. Like we stated earlier,

the section of **“Yichud Hashem”** ran consecutively in *Yam HaChochma* (2004/5765), (2005/5766), (2006/5767), (2008/5769), while the *shiurim* on the Rashash's *Hakdamat Rehovot HaNahar* title **“Me”i HaNahar”** ran from *Yam HaChochma* (2008/5769) through *Yam HaChochma* (2014/5775). There has also been a sustained treatment of the *kavaanos* of the *Arizal*, as well as their further explanation and elucidation through the *Rashash* and the *Toras Chochom*. So far, these sections have included an indepth review of the *kavaanos* of *Pesach*, *Shavuos*, *Succos*, *Rosh HaShana*, *Chanuka*, *Purim* and *Shabbos*. *Yam HaChochma* (2018/5779) included a newer addition to the in-depth study of the *kavaanos* based on the *Rebbe's shiurim* on *Shaar HaKavaanos* which included multiple *yamim tovim* in unison. Beyond the consistent topics printed from year to year, the largest- and in this writer's humble opinion, most significant- section is **“Pnimityus HaKabbalah v'haChassidus”**. This section contains various *maamarim*, or discourses that the *Rebbe* had given over during that particular year. Often, they were given in different stages over an extended period, in the style of a *hemshech*, transcribed and elucidated by the inner circle of students who are responsible for the content within *Yam HaChochma*. These *maamarim* cover a remarkable range of subjects, from the nature of the Infinitude of *Hashem* to the particularities of the soul of *Mashiach*. These *maamarim* utilize sources from every imaginable corner of *Torah*, with a particular focus on the writings of the *Arizal*, the *Baal Shem Tov* and his students, the *Rashash* and his main disciple the *Toras Chochom*, The *Vilna Gaon* and his students, the *Ramchal* in addition to secondary texts that elucidate, analyze and engage with these pre existing systems of *Torah*, something we will discuss at length in part two of this work. What is most significant about these *maamarim* is that they offer the clearest view of the novelty inherent within the writings of *Yam HaChochma*. If the other sections represent the *Rebbe's* explanation and elucidation of the *Tzaddikim* who came before him, the *maamarim* represent the *Rebbe's* movement through the previous *Tzaddikim* towards a comprehensive conclusion that is greater than the sum total of the parts that make it up. In order so that we may gain a clearer insight into the width and the depth of the *Yam HaChochma* we will now list all of the particular *maamarim* and their corresponding year, along with a very brief overview of what they are coming to discuss.

Yam HaChochma (2005/5766):

“The Rectification of Adam HaRishon’s Transgression Through the Yamim Tovim”-

In the words of the students, this *“maamar was said over by the Rebbe around the time of Purim, and at the time it was transcribed by one of the participants. The reader will see that although the beginning and the end of this maamar are connected to the topic of Purim, which at this point is a positive commandant that is dependent upon its particular time, nevertheless it opens up into numerous topics, and from it we find essential points needed to understand with wisdom many deep and concealed concepts associated with the daily kavaanos which many traverse on a daily basis. Here the matters are explained according to the deep and frightening path of our master the Toras Chochom zy”a, towards whose memory we all yearn and upon whose name we have established our Yeshiva here in the holy city of Jerusalem. In addition, this serves as an introduction to briefly explaining the pathways in the avodah of Chassidus which have been passed down generation to generation, and from the minimal amount written here one may infer the general principles in their entirety. One will also understand from a distance how deeply connected and unified the pathways of Kabbalah are with the pathways of Chassidus, to the both that both are interwoven together like two inseparable lovers, and how one without the other is unsustainable.”*

The students continue with a word of context regarding the nature of the *maamar* and how it was written. This type of announcement is not uncommon, and something similar is typically printed at the beginning of each *maamar*. The students stress that no matter how clear and comprehensive the *maamar* is, it is still only the students' understanding and reception of the teachings from the *Rebbe*. Any and all misunderstanding or perceived lack of clarity is to be placed at the feet of the student, and not heaven forbid, the *Rebbe*. The students continue, *“Now this maamar was published before undergoing the proper editorial process, and it has been many years since these ideas were spoken in their time, and in that time many more chiddushim and wondrous ideas have been added to the concepts. In theory we should have connected and tied those new ideas with the ideas expressed in this maamar, but the lack of time and the many distractions prevented us from doing so. Furthermore, it is important to keep in mind that because these ideas were not properly edited in their time, it is still difficult as we prepare to publish this maamar to distinguish old from new. Nevertheless, we have said that we cannot withhold the good and therefore we are publishing the maamar based on the way it was written in the past, almost without*

any arrangement or editing and elucidation that a maamar like this is deserving of. With Hashem's help there will come a time in the future, but for now if there is any deficiency or mistake found, heaven forbid, we are making a clear announcement for the honor of the Torah that the mistake should be attributed to the writers of the maamar etc."

This *maamar* reviews the status of the worlds- as expressed in the writings of the *Arizal*- as they existed prior to *Adam's* transgression, as they were meant to be had *Adam* not transgressed, and how they exist after *Adam's* transgression. In the context of the *giluyim* of *Purim* which represent a unique moment of Godly revelation, the *maamar* discusses the various stages through which the soul can ascend out of its natural deficiency upwards towards the ideal state of things as they were meant to exist prior to the descent of the worlds, a significant outgrowth of *Adam's* transgression. This *maamar* describes the inner mechanics of *Hashem's* relationship with creation as rooted in the loftiest levels of what the *Arizal* describes as the *seder ha'hishtalshlus*, or the way in which the worlds unfold, descending from the most spiritually refined down towards the limit wherein spirituality is in the greatest mode of concealment possible. In the context of this *maamar*, the loftiest heights are associated with the world of *Adam Kadmon* and lowest limits are associated with the worlds of separation, *Briyah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah*. It is through the process of time, and in particular the specific moments of spiritual influx referred to as "*partzuf ha'zmanim*" that the worlds of separation in their post transgression state are elevated back up to their originally intended space in the loftiest parts of *Adam Kadmon*. After explaining how- according to the *Rashash*- the clarification, ratification and elevation of the lowly state of things back upwards, takes place through the specific *yamim tovim* which make up *partzuf ha'zmanim*, the *maamar* continues to describe how this general process also takes place on a particular level as well through daily period known as "*kad shaot*" (24 hours), highlighting the ever present truth that what takes place in the general shape of things is taking place in the particular shape of things as well. After describing the particularities of ascension, the *maamar* continues in describing the purpose behind all of this, namely the original purpose of *Adam* and the reason why *Adam*- on a certain level- needed to bring about the tremendous degradation of the worlds through his transgression. The *maamar* moves towards its conclusion by illuminating concepts that rest at the heart of the *Yam HaChochma*, the need for wholeness and perfection to descend into states of apparent brokenness and imperfection, so that we may then ascend out of imperfection and darkness, back up to a level of wholeness and light that would not have been accessible without the initial descent from the original, albeit limited expression of wholeness. One of the

most unique elements of this *maamar* is that it offers one of the clearest and most comprehensive interpretations of the *Tzimtzum* topic found within *Sifrei Yam HaChochma*.

Yam HaChochma (2006/5767):

“Divrei Chassidus- Expert in Running and Expert in Returning”

In this short *maamar*, the *Rebbe* reviews the concepts that emerge from within the sixth teaching in the first volume of Rebbe Nachman’s *Sefer Likkutei Moharan*. Within the tradition of Breslov *Chassidus*, as explicitly stated at the end of the recorded teaching, the sixth teaching “*Call to Yehoshua*” is directly associated with the month of *Elul* and the work of *teshuvah* that is beginning. For the *Rebbe* the value in studying this particular teaching in depth is the reality that “*when the holy days of the month of Elul begin to arrive, each Jew thinks to themselves: who will guarantee for me that this time I will go a return to my first love, for I have struggled so much from day to day, month to month, to return in teshuvah, but nevertheless I still find myself even more distant from transforming my actions towards good*”. This *maamar* is an in depth reading of Rebbe Nachman’s teaching where the ideas as they are expressed in *Likkutei Moharan* are shown to be rooted in the writings of the *Arizal* and other *mekubalim*. In doing so the duality of experience that is felt in “running towards *Hashem*” (*ratzo*) and “returning to oneself” (*shov*) is shown to not only be the lived reality of the soul in *teshuvah*, but also part and parcel of the very fabric of existence as explained in the writings of the *Arizal*. This *maamar* highlights the *Rebbe’s* approach in studying *Sifrei Chassidus* where it is revealed that not only do the writings of *Kabbalah* and the writings of *Chassidus* not contradict one another, but rather they are both inseparable sides on the very same truth.

Yam HaChochma (2007/5768):

1. “A Three-Part Kedusha”

This *maamar* is a profoundly comprehensive treatment of the three-part breakdown of specific times discussed in the writings of the *Arizal- Shabbos, Yomim Tovim and Rosh Chodesh*. The main point of discussion are the particular modes of *mochin*- or spiritual modes of consciousness- that are drawn down and revealed within the souls of the Jewish people, identified by the two most accessible *partzufim Ze’ir Anpin* and *Malchus*, or the feminine counterpart to the masculine tendencies inherent with the six *sefiros Chesed, Gevurah, Tifferes, Netzach, Hod and Yesod* which comprise the *partzuf* of *Ze’ir Anpin*. After describing the intricate details and differences defining the distinctions between the *mochin* of *Shabbos, Yomim Tovim and Rosh Chodesh*, the *maamar* continues in describing how the specific details that determine these three stages of time, map directly onto the three stages inherent in everything, namely the levels *Binah, Chochma* and *Keser*- understanding, wisdom and the crown that sits above the two thereby unifying them. These three stages are also representative of the three elements inherent within every spiritual process, namely, the backside of the backside (*achorayim d’achorayim*), the frontside of the backside (*panim d’achorayim*) and the frontside (*panim*). Because this *maamar* is dealing with the three part breakdown of existence from the perspective of time (i.e. *Shabbos, Yomim Tovim and Rosh Chodesh*), it goes to great lengths in describing these stages through the lens of the original “diminution of the moon” (*Kitrug HaLevanah*) which is the temporal equivalent to the psychospiritual stages of *Adam’s* original transgression. After describing the three stages of descent associated with the “diminution of the moon”, the *maamar* continues to describe the three parallel stages of ascent- which take place daily- through which the deficiencies associated with the moon’s lost light are rectified.

After preparing all of the necessary framework to move deeper, the *maamar* then continues in aligning these three stages with the redemption process which can take shape in three different ways, “in its time” (*b’ittah*), “prior to its time” (*achishena*) and “in its time prior to its time” (*b’ittah achisehna*). At this point in the *maamar*, the *Rebbe* enters the frightening discussion regarding the differences amongst our *Tzaddikim* as to the preferred way of bringing about *geulah*. In typical fashion, the three possibilities of redemption are mapped onto the three stages inherent within everything, namely *Binah, Chochma* and *Keser*. Once these associations are made, the *maamar* continues to connect the three stages of *geulah*, which in turn are connected to the three stages of *Binah, Chochma* and *Keser*, to the three different

stages of the worlds, namely- the worlds of *Briyah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah*, representing the worlds of separation; the world of *Atzilus*; and the world of *Adam Kadmon*. The *maamar* ends with a remarkable process of applying these three levels onto the inner experience of connection and *deveikus* which every person has access to according to their own particular spiritual level.

2. “The Heel of Humility is the Fear of Hashem- An Explanation of the Thirty-Eighth Teaching in Likkutei Moharan”

This *maamar* is a running discourse on the thirty-eighth teaching in *Sefer Likkutei Moharan* which discusses the aspects of the *partzufim* of “*Leah and Rochel and their arrangement during the day and at night, as well as the process of Tikkun Chatzos and the order of the evening. (It also discusses) the descent of Malchus into the worlds of Briyah, Yetzirah and Asiyah and its eventual ascension in various ways, all of which are described in the writings of our master the Arizal, and applied to the pathways of avodah according to the teaching of our holy master (Rebbe Nachman) in the thirty-eighth teaching of Likkutei Moharan.*” This *maamar* is very significant in the sense that it introduces two essential elements within the *Torah* of the *Arizal* which become foundational concepts in the writings of the *Yam HaChochma*, namely the two forms in which we relate to *Malchus*, or the *Shechina*- the *partzufim* of *Leah* and *Rochel*. In the *Yam HaChochma* the teachings of *Kabbalah* and the teachings of *Chassidus* are deeply intertwined, and one without the other is lacking an essential part of itself. Therefore, here the *Rebbe* is taking concepts from the *Arizal* regarding the way in which the elevated worlds operate and teaching them through the *Torah* of *Rebbe Nachman* to show us how these concepts are applicable in the daily spiritual life of each person according to their own particular level. The different “*zivuggim*”, or interconnections between the *partzufim* in the loftiest worlds are shown to be essential elements of the inner experience of *avodas Hashem*. After quoting the *Arizal* describing the need to know and contemplate the intricacies of the upper worlds and all that they contain, the *maamar* opens with the announcement that “*we learn from the his (i.e the Arizal) words that each person must be proficient regarding the order of interrelationships and tikkunim which take place on a daily basis so that we may properly engage our intentions with them, for this is a profoundly elevated state with nothing higher than it. And while it is certainly not a simple thing to be counted amongst those who have entered into the secret of Hashem for the sake of the proper kavaanos and yichudim in all of their particular and general form, nevertheless it is incumbent upon everyone to study and understand them so that they may deepen their grasp of the foundations of wondrous avodah*

which emerge from the order the tikkunim of the day and night, to the extent that it is possible for everyone to understand the pathways of avodah for themselves. It is certainly true that even by understanding a minimal amount from within the pathways of avodah which can be learned out from these teachings, the person has performed something tremendous to the extent that they will be considered as partners in all of the tikkunim and yichudim which take place at all times. We will learn from this how to serve Hashem with a whole heart so that we may connect ourselves to Him at every moment in accordance with the shifting aspects of each particular moment and situation, whether it be the general transition of time throughout the day and night according to the rectifications that are taking place above in the higher worlds, or according to the particulars of each individual in their own lives according to the transitions and shifts, for we must learn to find the path of avodah and connection with our whole heart and soul so that we may draw ourselves closer to Hashem.”

After explaining the need to understand the intricacies of the *partzufim* and their interrelationships on the practical level of *avodah*, the *maamar* continues to explain in great detail the various formations and arrangements that *Leah* and *Rochel* go through on a daily basis within the supernal realm of *Atzilus*, as well as the descent of *Rochel* into the worlds of *Briyah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah* which comprise the worlds of separation. These two levels of *Leah* and *Rochel* are then explained in terms of their significance to *avodas Hashem*, as the *Rebbe* describes how there is no spiritual experience that does not find itself either within the space of *Leah* (*teffilah*) or the space of *Rochel* (*torah*). These two modes of *avodah* are then described according to the emotional states of humility (*Leah*) and fear (*Rochel*). After setting up the apparent binary of *Leah* and *Rochel*, and everything they represent in the worlds and souls, the *maamar* continues to show how these two elements are deeply intertwined with one another, and that while both are essential in their own right, the main goal of *avodas Hashem* is to uncover the inherent unity between these two elements so that one may move beyond the world of apparent duality where *Leah* and *Rochel* operate in isolation, and elevate themselves into the space of *yichud* where the apparent duality is revealed to be part of a singular and unified process.

Yam HaChochma (2008/5679)

1. “The Secret of Expelling Lowly States of Consciousness (Mochin D’Katnus)”

This remarkable *maamar* focuses on a seemingly incidental aspect within the *kaavanos* of *teffilah*, showing how even the slightest *machlokes* between the Kabbalists of *Yeshivas Beit El* and the *Toras Chochom* reveals a new path of understanding the fundamental concepts that rest at the core of *pnimiyus haTorah*. The *minhag* under discussion is at which point one should direct their attention and intention towards the fact that as we draw “lofty states of consciousness” (*mochin d’gadlus*) we must first expel the “lowly states of consciousness” (*mochin d’katnus*) that were previously filling the space where the new *mochin d’gadlus* have come to occupy. In order to understand the significance of this *machlokes* regarding when one need be *m’chavein* to the “expulsion of lowly states of consciousness” (*d’chiyas mochin d’katnus*), the *maamar* offers a clear explanation as to the nature of these *mochin d’katnus*. The two forms of *mochin* correspond to varying names of *Hashem*, which in turn symbolize varying ways of grasping the reality of *Hashem* within the world and our lives. *Mochin D’Gadlus* symbolize an expansive and lofty state of awareness and as such they are represented through the four-letter name of *Hashem* (*Y-H-V-H*), referred to as “*havaayot*” in their plural form, for each and every mode of consciousness is represented by a new iteration of the four-letter name of *Hashem*. *Mochin D’Katnus*, on the other hand, symbolize a constricted and lowly state of awareness and as such they are represented through the name *Elokim*, a name associated with limitation and measurement rooted in the severity of *gevurot*. Typically speaking the essential purpose and goal of the *kavaanos* of *teffilah* as revealed and clarified within the writings of the *Arizal* and the *Rashash* is to draw down the “*havaayot*” associated with *Mochin D’Gadlus* which represent a deeper and more clarified way of perceiving *Hashem’s* presence. When it comes to the names of “*Elokim*” associated with severity and *Mochin D’Katnus* however, the typical approach as clarified in the writings of the *Arizal* is to refrain from engaging them too deeply due to the fact that they represent a more constricted and concealed sense of *Hashem*, which according to the inner mechanics of *pnimiyus haTorah* brings with it potential spiritual harm and confusion.

After an extensive discussion based on the writings of the *Leshem Shevo V’Achlama* regarding the first instantiation of the name “*Elokim*” and *gevuros* within the *seder ha’hishtalshlus*, the *maamar* continues to discuss the fact that the *machlokes* as to when one should focus on the *kavaanah* of expelling the *Mochin D’Katnus* is not an either/or type of question, but rather it reveals two separate approaches and levels

regarding the type of *Tzaddik* engaged with the *kaavanos*. In other words, the *machlokes* between the *mekubalim* of *Yeshivat Beit El* and the *Toras Chocham* are not two ways of looking at the same thing, but rather one way of approaching two separate things. In order to understand the difference between the *Tzaddik* who is capable of focusing on the expulsion of *Mochin D'Katnus* and the *Tzaddik* who is incapable of that *kavaanah*, the *Rebbe* describes the three-part breakdown of the worlds described in the *Arizal*, namely: the worlds of *Briyah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah* which collectively represent the worlds of separation associated with the level of *Binah*; the world of *Atzilus* which is associated with the level of *Chochma*; and the world of *Adam Kadmon* which is associated with the level of *Keser*. The worlds of separation are directly associated with concealment, severity and the general broken nature through which things appear in day to day life, or *Mochin D'Katnus*. The world of *Atzilus* is associated with clarity, calmness and the unlimited unity of *Hashem*, or *Mochin D'Gadlus*. Typically speaking the clarity and calmness of *Chochmah* and *Atzilus* cannot tolerate or acknowledge the concealment and severity of *Binah* and the worlds of *Briyah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah*. This apparent distinction is expressed in the placement and arrangement of these worlds with the *seder ha'hishtalshlus* in that the worlds of *Briyah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah* are situated underneath the world of *Atzilus* without any revealed connection between the two of them, highlighting the fact that the delicate unity of *Atzilus* has no tolerance for the apparent duality of *Briyah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah*. There remains the third level of *Adam Kadmon*, associated with the level of *Keser*, however, which abolishes this apparent separation and distinction. For while the world of *Atzilus* has no tolerance for separation and as such the worlds themselves have no interrelationship, the world of *Adam Kadmon* stretches from the loftiest heights down to the lowest limits, engarbing itself within the world of *Atzilus* as well as the worlds of *Briyah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah*. The reason for this is that the holiness and unity associated with *Keser* and the world of *Adam Kadmon* is so profound and wondrous that it can descend into the worlds of separation, not only tolerating their apparent severity and concealment, but elevating and transforming their hiddenness and egoism into vessels that can now reveal the power of *Hashem's* unity in an even deeper way than that which is revealed at the level of *Chochma* and *Atzilus*.

With this distinction between *Chochama* and *Atzilus* on the one hand, and *Keser* and *Adam Kadmon* on the other, the *maamar* continues to reveal the true depth of the *machlokes* regarding the expulsion of *Mochin D'Katnus*, representative of the concealment of severity within the worlds of *Briyah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah*. The opinion that limits the possibility of focusing one's energy on the *kavaanah* of expelling *Mochin D'Katnus* is associated with the *Tzaddik* on the level of *Chochmah*

whose unity cannot tolerate even the slightest implication of concealment and multiplicity. While the opinion that expands the placement of the *kavaanah* is associated with the *Tzaddik* on the level of *Keser* whose profound unity allows it to descend into the worlds of apparent separation and the lowly states of consciousness, thereby revealing that they too bespeak the unity of *Hashem*, revealing the additional adornment (*tosefes kishut*) that is revealed when unity shows that even separation is part of unity itself.

2. “Everything that is Called by My Name”

This frighteningly deep *maamar* is an extensive and comprehensive treatment of the loftiest levels within the *seder ha'hishtalshlus* described in the writings of the *Arizal*. The primary focus of the *maamar* is to describe the placement and role of the apex of the system known as “*Reisha D'Lo Isyada*”, or the unknowable head, often referred to as “*Radla*”. The *maamar* begins and is based upon a textual discrepancy within the *Rashash's* interpretation of the words of the *Arizal*. In describing the initial transition from the complete infinitude of *Hashem* where nothing other than *Hashem* was present, into the stages of finite creation wherein the annihilating presence of *Hashem* is concealed, the *Arizal* uses three different words to identify three different stages, namely: “*Efes*” (Nothing); “*Tohu*” (Unformed); and “*Bohu*” (Void). The *Arizal* explains that the loftiest level of “*Efes*” represents the light of the Infinite (*Ohr Ein Sof*) which exists prior to and beyond any possibility of definition or grasp; the next level of “*Tohu*” represents the level of “*Atik Yomin*” which is described as “the lowest level of the higher”, or the upper part of *Keser*, at which point the ungraspable and undefinable *Ohr Ein Sof* becomes accessible to creation by way of a negative grasp in that we become aware of our inability to know it; and the third level of “*Bohu*” represents the level of *Arich Anpin*, or the lower part of *Keser*, which is described as “the highest level of the lower” in that it is the first point where we as creations have direct access. And because the level of “*Bohu*” represents the beginning of grasping the presence of *Hashem* by way of a positive knowledge, it includes within itself all subsequent levels that will be revealed within and as creation, namely, the roots of *Chochma*, *Binah*, *Tifferes* and *Malchus*. In order to properly understand the textual discrepancy found within the writings of the *Rashash* regarding this three-part breakup of “*Efes; Tohu; and Bohu*”, the *maamar* continues to describe the nature of *Atik Yomin*, which according to the *Arizal* represents the “lowest level of the higher”, or the upper half of *Keser* referred to as “*Tohu*”. Like all *partzufim*, or configurations within the *seder ha'hishtalshlus*, the *partzuf* of *Atik* is comprised of two separate elements, namely the upper three *sefiros* within it known as the “*Gimmel Resihin*” (*Ga”R*, or the three-heads) and the six lower *sefiros* within it known as “*Vav Kitzavos*”

(*Va"K*, or the six-edges). What is unique with regards to the *partzuf* of *Atik* is that because it represents the stage of "*Tohu*", or the first instantiation of measurability in the form of the "lowest level of the higher", the upper-three *sefiros* within *Atik* occupy the almost impossibly delicate space wherein the *Ohr Ein Sof*- referred to as "*Efes*" due to its utter incomprehensibility both by way of positive or negative knowledge- transitions from its pure infinitude into the space of measurable infinitude known as "*Tohu*" where the prospect of knowledge by way of negation is possible. The upper three-heads of *Atik*- from lowest to highest- are referred to as "*Mocha Sti'maah*" (the concealed mind), "*Gulgalta*" (the skull) and "*Reisha D'Lo Isyada*" (the unknowable head). The highest point of *Atik* is the aspect of "*Radla*" and it is the first moment in which the light of the Infinite (the level of *Efes* according to the *Arizal*) becomes graspable by way of negative knowledge (the level of *Tohu* according to the *Arizal*) in that we know what we cannot know. With this information all set up, the *maamar* continues in pointing out the apparent discrepancy within the writings of the *Rashash*. According to the *Rashash* the three-part breakdown of "*Efes, Tohu and Bohu*" is as follows: "*Efes*" represents the highest level of *Atik* known as "*Radla*"; "*Tohu*" represents the level of *Arich Anpin*, or "the lower part of *Keser* which is the highest of the lowest"; and "*Bohu*" represents the subsequent stages which manifest in and as graspable creation, *Chochmah, Binah, Tifferes* and *Malchus*. The discrepancy is summarized as follows:

	<i>Efes</i>	<i>Tohu</i>	<i>Bohu</i>
<i>Arizal</i> (<i>E" C</i> , ch. 42)	<i>Ohr Ein Sof</i> - <i>Removed from both positive and negative grasp</i>	<i>Atik Yomin (Radla)</i> - <i>Graspable by way of negative knowledge</i>	<i>Arich Anpin</i> and the roots of <i>Chochma, Binah, Tifferes and Malchus</i> - <i>Graspable by way of positive knowledge</i>
<i>Rashash</i> (<i>Hg" S</i> , <i>E" C</i> , ch. 13:2)	<i>Atik Yomin (Radla)</i> - <i>Removed from both positive and negative grasp</i>	<i>Arich Anpin</i> - <i>Graspable by way of negative knowledge</i>	Roots of <i>Chochma, Binah, Tifferes and Malchus</i> - <i>Graspable by way of positive knowledge</i>

For the *Rebbe* it is axiomatic that the *Rashash* is always in direct agreement with the teachings of the *Arizal* and as such any apparent discrepancy between the two *Tzaddikim* needs deeper investigation in order to reveal retroactively that there was never a disagreement in the first place, but rather two correct ways of perceiving a singular truth. The *maamar* now continues to show how with the proper understanding, this apparent discrepancy is not only resolved, but propels the student into a new space of understanding which reveals a remarkable *chiddush* that rests at the core of the *Arizal's Torah*. At first glance, the *Rashash's* identification of "*Radla*" as the level of "*Efes*" appears deeply problematic in that "*Efes*" represents the infinite presence of *Hashem* as it exists prior to any distinction and measurement, or the way in which *Hashem* expresses Himself prior to the disclosure of all worlds (*Adam Kadmon*; *Atzilus* and the worlds of *Briyah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah*). "*Radla*", on the other hand, in spite of its profoundly lofty level as the first instantiation of limitation that is graspable by way of negative knowledge, is still an expression of measurement and within the system of the worlds, and as such it cannot be described as the true negation of existence associated with "*Efes*". This *maamar* makes it emphatically clear that this is not simply a matter of semantics and language, *heaven forbid*, but rather an investigation into the very boundaries which separate the depths of the "secret of faith" (*Raza D'Mehimnusa*) from the depths of heresy and foreign worship. If one comes, *heaven forbid*, to identify an element of measured existence- no matter how lofty- with the truly unlimited and infinite light of *Hashem*, then they are guilty of assigning limitation to the *Ohr Ein Sof* thereby transgressing the very delicate, but all important boundaries of the "*Sod HaYichud*", or the secret of *Hashem's* true and incomprehensible unity. It is with this problem in mind that the *maamar* continues in terms of clarifying the true understanding of the *Rashash's* apparent identification of "*Radla*" as the level of "*Efes*".

The *maamar* continues with introducing the key that holds the *Rashash's* system of understanding together, namely the concept of "*Archin*", or the relative and perspectival reality that informs all truth. Instead of looking at the system of worlds and concepts that the *Arizal* describes in his writings as absolute terms that define the position and role of each concept without any possibility of change, the concept of "*Archin*" introduces the possibility of concepts and terms meaning different things depending on the point of perspectival observation. In other words, terms and definitions used to describe the makeup and interaction between *partzufim* and worlds undergo a shift in description depending on the specific situation under discussion. While typically speaking "*Efes*" represents the unlimited infinitude of *Hashem* prior to any distinction and measurement, and "*Radla*" represents the first moment of measurement and limitation, that is only when looking at "*Radla*" from

the perspective of that which is above it. For in relation to the true “*Efes*”, “*Radla*” is already part of creation and as such all the rules of creation apply to it, namely that it is not truly infinite. But when looking at “*Radla*” in relation to that which is below it, then on a certain level “*Radla*” is viewed as the loftiest possible level and as such can be correctly described as “truly infinite” or “*Efes*” in relation to that which is below it. And while “*Radla*” still retains its essential definition as a part of creation, and not *heaven forbid* the Creator Himself; from the perspective of that which exists below it it appears to be the highest possible grasp of *Hashem* and as such it can be described as a relative form of “*Efes*”. With this foundational concept set up, the *maamar* continues to untangle the textual discrepancy found within the *Rashash*. According to the typical position of perspective described in the *Arizal*, “*Efes*” represents the true form of the Infinite which is completely removed from grasp, and as such the next level- which is the first point at which creation can grasp something by way of negative knowledge- described as “*Tohu*” is identified with “*Radla*”. But when looking at the system from a different perspective, “*Radla*”- which because of its profoundly lofty nature negates any possibility of positive knowledge- can be identified as the level of “*Efes*” in that it is the farthest that one can reach through contemplation. When the *Rashash* identifies “*Radla*” as the level of “*Efes*”, something that at first glance appears to transgress the fundamental laws of unity, we are simply dealing with a perspectival shift at which point “*Radla*” borrows and takes on some of the terminology and descriptions typically associated with the true level of limitlessness and infinity.

The *maamar* continues with a profound discussion regarding the level of “*Radla*” and the delicate boundaries of language allowable at such a place. One gets the sense that the language used in this *maamar* is an attempt to describe the indescribable without falling prey to the all too human desire to classify terms in an absolute way. There are passages from this *maamar* that go to some of the farthest lengths in expressing the impossibility of properly expressing the impossible interface wherein the truly infinite level of *Hashem* prior to limitation and measure (“*Efes*”), merges with the first instantiation of finitude that still expresses itself by way of being infinite (“*Radla*”). Based on the insights of the Vilna Gaon in his commentary of *Safra D’Tzneyusa* (“The Book of Modesty”), the *Rebbe* points out that the modesty and concealment associated with the teachings of “*Radla*” is not because these matters demand secrecy and concealment, but rather the only way they can be properly conveyed is through a language that remains concealed and modest even after it has been expressed, highlighting the ultimate truth that the apex of knowledge is coming to a place of not-knowing. The *maamar* ends with a lengthy textual based discussion

regarding the point of *Malchus* that is contained and hidden within “*Radla*” and the various levels of the ascension of *Malchus* throughout history and after history ends.

Yam HaChochma (2009/5770)

1. “My Days I Have Never Had Kavaanah”

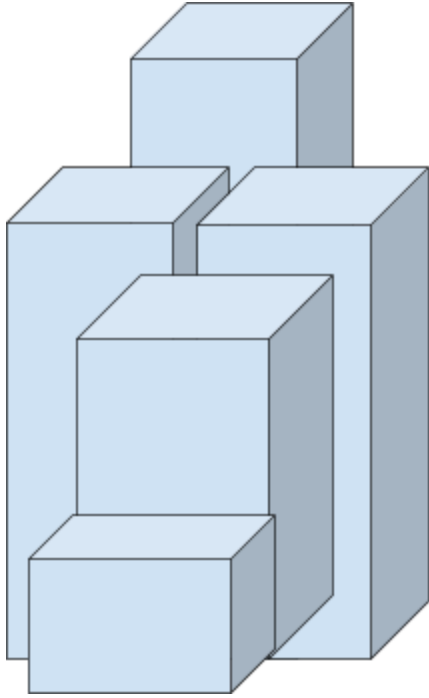
This *maamar* elucidates and clarifies the essential concepts needed in order to properly enter into the world of the *kavaanot* of *Tefillah*. While there is no singular concept at the heart of this *maamar*, all of the different ideas contained under the title “*Various Investigations Regarding the Kavvanot*” aim towards clarifying the major issues and questions that surround the difficult path of the *kavaanot* as described in the writings of the *Arizal* and expanded upon in the writings of the *Rashash* and his students. Of utmost importance in the *maamar* is the emphasis placed on certain essential elements of the *kavaanot* without which the attempt to engage with the proper intentions is not only doomed to failure, but runs the risk of throwing the individual from the heights of holiness and *emunah* down into the dangerous territory of heresy and foreign worship. Aside from clarifying different questions such as whether one should engage the *kavaanot* from within a *siddur* or by heart; whether one may focus on one particular aspect of a *kavaanah* without focusing on the rest; whether the *kavaanot* must be engaged as they are expanded and clarified in the writings of the *Rashash* or whether one may engage with them as they appear in the writings of the *Arizal*; whether the extended time needed for *kavaanot* represents a break in *teffilah* itself, and many more questions of this sort; the *maamar* also engages in a lengthy discussion regarding the fundamentals of *emunah* and *yichud* which must remain present in the mind of the individual throughout the entire process. The fundamentals are described through the acronym “**KoL TzaMOh**” which represents 1. **Keilim** 2. **Levushim** 3. **Tzlamim** 4. **Mochin** 5. **Orot**, which are the five stages that the individual must keep in mind when engaged with *kavaanot* of *teffilah*. These stages are not five separate and individual levels, but rather five inseparable parts that constitute the proper *kavaanah*. When the individual *davening* seeks to engage with the particular mode of spiritual consciousness available at that moment, they must first draw down the vessels (*keilim*) to contain the *mochin*; then they must draw down the garments (*levushim*) which conceal the *mochin* so that their light remain accessible to lower levels without overwhelming the vessels; then they must draw down the images or forms (*tzlamim*) which represent the residual presence of the loftier levels of *mochin* so as to connect the lower levels with the higher levels which represent their most immediate source; then they must draw down the spiritual modes of consciousness (*mochin*) themselves which represent the capacity towards newfound spiritual

engagement; and finally they must draw down the light of the Infinite (*orot*) which alone has the ability to disclose something new into creation in that it represents the Infinite and ungraspable source of all things. Utilizing the writings of the *Rashash* and his students, this *maamar* goes to a very great length in describing the utmost necessity of drawing down the fifth level of “*oros*” without which the entire experience of *kavaanot* runs the risk of creating an apparent distinction and separation between the first four levels and the light of the Infinite (*Ohr Ein Sof*), a seemingly inconsequential mistake which in truth separates the secret of faith (*raza d’miheminusa*) from the abyss of heresy. In typical fashion this *maamar* does not only utilize the sources associated with the *Rashash* and his *Beis Medrash* to accentuate this all important point, but rather the world of *Chassidus* as well as the *Vilna Gaon* and his students are used to validate, elucidate and clarify these essential points.

2. “The Secret of Shabbos”

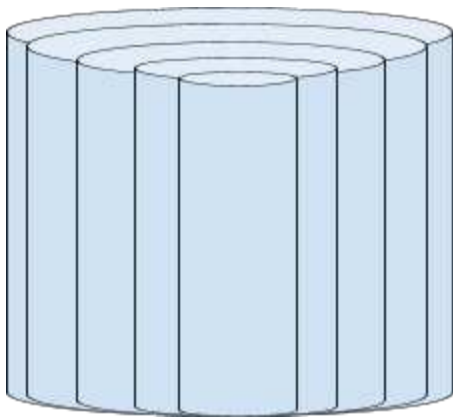
This remarkable *maamar* discusses the essential nature of *Shabbos* and the mechanisms which endow *Shabbos* with its unique quality. Utilizing the system of the *Rashash* and his student, the *Toras Chochom*, the *maamar* introduces the concept of time’s progression and elevation. For the *Rashash* and his students the temporal reality of history is one of perpetual elevation in which each day represents its own individual system that begins with *Maariv* the night before and ends with *Mincha* on the next day. These three stages of the day (*Maariv, Shacharis, Mincha*) and the spiritual potencies that exist within them are stand alone entities and the spiritual work that begins at night finds its completion at the end of the next day. After the spiritual work of the day is completed, that stand alone entity of time ascends upwards along the chain of being, drawing itself one step closer to the light of the Infinite (*Ohr Ein Sof*) which serves as the source, end and anchor of the entire process of history, referred to in the writings of the *Arizal* and *Rashash* as the “six millena in which the world exists”. While each and every day within the weekly system is comprised of the same spiritual content, each new day represents a new entity of spiritual work that stands one step beneath the spiritual work of yesterday which has now ascended one step higher along the chain of being, and one step above the spiritual work of tomorrow which in relation to today will be one step lower in terms of proximity of the light of the Infinite. If each and everyday is ascending however, that leaves us with a question regarding the status of *Shabbos* at the end of the week. For while it is axiomatic that *Shabbos* represents the apex of the spiritual potency of the week, offering spiritual access hitherto inaccessible, according to the *Rashash’s* conception of the constant progression of time it would

turn out that the first days of the previous week that precede the *Shabbos* would be endowed with a loftier spiritual potency than *Shabbos* itself, reversing the essential hierarchy of profane and holy days. In order to answer this difficulty, the *maamar* introduces the *Toras Chochom's* explanation of the inherent holiness of *Shabbos*, namely that on *Shabbos* there "is a revelation of the light of the Infinite". It turns out then that while according to the typical progression of time wherein each passing day ascends to a loftier point along the great chain of being, leaving the incoming day always already a step below it, when it comes to *Shabbos* there is an additional revelation of the light of the Infinite which endows it with a spiritual status that exceeds even the spiritual potency of the days that preceded it. The *maamar* continues to discuss the apparently novel nature of the *Rashash's* conception of time wherein every individual day contains essentially the same properties as every other day, thereby calling into question the very possibility of difference and distinction. In other words, if all days are equal in their essential makeup, how does each day differ from its other? In order to understand this, the *maamar* introduces another novelty of the *Rashash* rooted in the writings of the *Arizal*, namely the concept of "*ovi*", or "depth perspective". According to the typical, two-dimensional reading of the *Arizal* the worlds and days that comprise reality are structured in a linear and hierarchical pattern (*orech*) in which the higher level is higher and the lower level is lower, and where the differences between the higher levels and the lower levels are absolute. There is a clear beginning, middle and end, and each one represents itself and not some other thing. What the *Rashash* reveals within the system of the *Arizal* is that while the two-dimensional perspective (*orech*) is true, there is a deeper three-dimensional perspective (*ovi*) that is also true at the very same moment. While the **linear perspective of *orech*** sees the the chain of being as being comprised of interconnected levels one above the other, with each higher level containing more than the lower level:



A. Partzufim in the linear perspective of 'orech'

the **depth perspective of ovi** allows us to view the chain of being as a series of concentric circles engarbing each other from the top to the bottom:



B. Partzufim in the depth perspective of 'ovi'

From the perspective of *orech*, for example, each of the five *partzufim* relate to one another by way of a linear and hierarchical relationship wherein each upper *partzuf*

represents a level of wholeness above and beyond the part that precedes it, *Keser* remains higher than *Chochmah* and *Binah*, while *Chochmah* and *Binah* remain higher than *Ze'r Anpin* which remains higher than *Malchus*. From the perspective of *ovi*, however, each of the five *partzufim* engarbs one another, disclosing an inherent wholeness that exists within each and every part. The only thing that maintains the boundaries of difference separating one *partzuf* from the other at the level of *ovi* is their proximity to the light of the Infinite (*ohr ein sof*) that rests at the center of the system. With this understanding of *ovi*, the *maamar* continues to describe how these two interconnected levels of linear *orech* and depth of *ovi* exist simultaneously, allowing for two different perspectives of the same phenomenon. For the *Toras Chochom* the linear perspective of *orech* represents the essential “quality” (*eichut*) of the days and worlds, while the depth perspective of *ovi* represents the essential “quantity” (*kamut*) of the days and worlds. From the perspective of *ovi* every possible day or world within the “six millennia of creation” are essentially equal with regards to the “quantity” and amount of spiritual possibility within them, and it makes no difference as to whether one is higher or lower than the other. It is only from the perspective of *orech* that every possible day or world within the “six millennia of creation” are distinct and separate from one another with regards to the revealed “quality” of that spiritual possibility. With this we can begin to understand the essential difference that remains between the holiness of *Shabbos* and the mundanity of the weekdays, for as the *Toras Chochom* described, the holiness of *Shabbos* is due to the “revelation of the light of the Infinite”. On a “quantitative” level *Shabbos* and the weekdays are of equal spiritual footing and as such it is possible to mistakenly perceive the preceding days of week as holier than the *Shabbos* which follows them as a result of the previous days proximity to the light of the Infinite (*Ohr Ein Sof*) that grounds and upholds the entire chain of being; but on a “qualitative” level wherein the value of each day is determined not by its latent potential towards wholeness as disclosed in the depth perspective of *ovi*, but rather the overt actualization of wholeness as revealed in the linear perspective of *orech*, the sanctity of *Shabbos* will always transcend the spiritual power of the weekday in that the “light of the Infinite is **revealed** on *Shabbos*.” After elucidating the concepts that allow us to understand the nature of the difference between *Shabbos* and the week, as well as *orech* and *ovi*, this *maamar* continues in trying to understand the purpose of all of this. In other words, if ultimately all differences are undone and unified at the level of their “quantity” which is revealed through the depth perspective of *ovi*, then why must we continue to operate according to the differentiated levels that persist at the level of “quality” which is revealed through the linear perspective of *orech*? If ultimately the gradations of levels (*chilukei dargin*) are revealed at depth to be nothing but the same, why not just operate according to

the true unity of all? Here the *maamar* returns to the fundamental idea that rests at the core of the *Yam HaChochma*, namely that the secret of unity that emerges from within the inclusion of difference is of a much more profound level than the unity that emerges from the negation of difference. By revealing that the gradations of levels themselves reveal the undifferentiated light of the Infinite, the potency of the secret of unity (*Sod HaYichud*) is magnified through the additional adornment (*tosefes kishut*) that is revealed by way of its opposite.

3. “The Full Ascension of Zu”N (Ze’ir Anpin and Nukvah) on Shabbos and Shavuos”

This *maamar* discusses the differences and ultimate similarity between the ascension of *Ze’ir Anpin* and *Nukvah*- representative of the collective Jewish people and their individual souls- at *Mincha* on *Shabbos* as well as the *yomtiv* of *Shavuos*. Both times are essentially similar in that *Ze’ir Anpin* ascends upwards towards *Arich Anpin*, experiencing the loftiest ascension available to *Ze’ir Anpin* and *Nukvah*. After reviewing all of the primary and secondary sources which discuss the specific dynamics of these ascensions, the *maamar* takes an accounting of all the textual discrepancies and reveals a novel way of understanding the *sugya* wherein all varying opinions regarding the ascension of *Zu”N* and the point towards which they ascend come together to create a sum total of understanding that is greater than the sum of its parts. After discerning that the loftiest point that *Zu”N* reach are the “heads” of *Arich Anpin* referred to as “*mocha stimaah*” and “*gulgalta*”, the *maamar* reveals that while limited in its ascendancy to *Arich Anpin*, nevertheless the level of *Atik Yomin*, specifically the lower seven *sefiros* of *Atik*, referred to as “*Za”T D’Atik*” is concealed and engarbed within *Arich Anpin*, showing how even though *Zu”N* only reach the “heads” of *Arich Anpin*, nevertheless they experience a true, albeit indirect connection with the loftiest level of *Atik Yomin*. The *maamar* ends off with a remarkable discussion regarding the spiritual significance of *Zu”N* ascending to the “heads” of *Arich* in which the lower-seven *sefiros* of *Atik*- specially the *yesod* of *Atik*- is enclosed. The *Rebbe* brings down from the *Vilna Gaon* and his students how the *yesod* of *Atik*, which is one of the lowest aspects of *Atik*, is in truth the foundation and root of the *Reisha D’Lo Isyada* which is the highest point of *Arich Anpin* above and beyond the “heads” (*mocha stimaah* and *gulgalta*) of *Arich Anpin*, for in the upper worlds “*the foundation of the building stands above the building*”. This point of “*yesod d’Atik*” represents the ability of yearning towards *yichud* while maintaining the

spiritual patience that is needed prior to the consummation of *yichud*. For the *Rebbe*, this “patience towards the *yichud*” is the spiritual experience one encounters when they finally ascend to the loftiest possible point along the ladder of spiritual ascension. And while identifying the loftiest level of *yichud* with the “patience towards *yichud*” which at first glance appears to be the polar opposite of *yichud* seems counterintuitive, the *maamar* continues to highlight the foundational idea that it is specifically within the levels and experiences that seem to speak against *yichud* that the truest nature of *yichud* can be revealed, namely the experience of *Reisha D’Lo Isyada*. For it is one thing to identify the culmination of *yichud* with a moment of consummation and satisfaction, but it is an entirely different thing to identify the promise and hope towards *yichud* within the very patience needed in its apparent absence, thereby disclosing the additional adornment of *Emunah* which uncovers the light of *yichud* even, and specifically in its apparent opposite.

4. “Discourse on the Three Lines”

This *maamar* is “based on the Kabbalah of the holy master, the Baal HaSulam zy”a” and it represents the *Rebbe’s* deepest textual investment into the writings of the Baal HaSulam. The *maamar* is focused on the “aspect of the three-lines upon which the Baal HaSulam based his commentary of the Zohar. The general concept is that there is a great argument between the right-line and the left-line, and the middle-line which is the lower Tzaddik comes to make peace between the two of them. And because this matter is a foundational concept within Kabbalah in general, the the Torah of the Baal HaSulam specifically, we said that we would come and clarify the essence of this argument in a shortened manner.” Because of the complex and technical nature of the Baal HaSulam’s writing, this *maamar* engages with the very specific particulars of the system without which the *sugya* cannot be understood properly. The precision needed, however, to properly convey the framework of the concepts creates within the student the sense that this is the **only** way of understanding the subject. For that reason, and in order to make clear that these specifics are not necessarily the singular way of approaching these concepts, the *maamar* begins with a beautiful announcement regarding the manifold ways through which one may approach the *sugya* of the three-lines, “nevertheless, we already know that the Torah can be interpreted in numerous ways, for we find that there are 13 hermenutical principles through which the Torah is interpreted, and we also find that there are “seventy faces” to the Torah. Furthermore, Chazal have taught us that “Hashem spoke once and we heard twice, one passuk opens unto many paths etc.”, like the Tanna Rebbe Yishmael taught us “like a hammer that splinters the stone, just as the hammer breaks it open

into many sparks, so too the passuk emerges in many ways." The same is true regarding this sugya, for the Torah in this sugya can be understood in multiple ways, one nesting within the other, for there are multiple paths towards the destination, and so too with the shiurim of our holy master the Rebbe shlit"a, where he has spent a lot of time explaining and clarifying these concealed matters in multiple ways, all of them are beloved and all of them are clear, but as a result of the lack of time we have taken the small amount and decided to explain it in one singular way, without recourse to other paths, may the wise one take heed and expound in wisdom." The maamar discussed the two polarized forms through which Hashem reveals himself to creation, which represent two polarized forms of avodah, namely the "right-line" and the "left-line". The right-line is associated with the state of Chochmah which reveals itself by way of the "lights of pleasure", giving birth to the "desire to receive" expressed in the state of Malchus; while the left-line is associated with the state of Binah which reveals itself by way of the "lights of chassadim", giving birth to the "desire to give" expressed in the state of Ze'ir Anpin. After explaining the "reversed relationship" between Ze'ir Anpin and Malchus which explains why Chochma is the internal source of Malchus and the external source of Ze'ir Anpin, while Binah is the internal source of Ze'ir Anpin and the external source of Malchus, the maamar continues to explain how the argument between the right-line (Chochma/Lights of Pleasure/Desire to Receive) and the left-line (Binah/Lights of Chassadim/Desire to Give) is in truth the underlying argument at the heart of all argumentation throughout existence, like the argument between Mashiach ben Yosef and Mashiach ben Dovid as well as the argument between Yichud Illah and Yichud Tattah. The maamar continues to describe the "peace treaty" offered by the middle-line represented by the lower Tzaddik, between the right and the left lines. The "peace treaty" takes place when Malchus decides to receive a minimized form of the "lights of pleasure" from Chochmah and take on some of the "lights of chassadim" associated with Binah. This self sacrifice on behalf of Malchus which translates into her willingness to engage in a mode of avodah typically associated with the left-line of Binah and Ze'ir Anpin, enables the aspect of Ze'ir Anpin to engage with the "desire to receive" which is the polar opposite of its true desire which is the "desire to give". This interconnection that gives birth to the shalom between these polarized lines creates a newly revealed hybridity between the right and the left wherein the "lights of pleasure" expressed in the "desire to receive" and the "lights of chassadim" associated with the "desire to give" join together so as to allow a new space of spiritual maturity. The maamar continues in describing how this three-stage process of argument, compromise and peace that exists between the right and left lines, corresponds to the three-stage process of yenika, back-to-back and face-to-face relationships between Ze'ir Anpin and Nukvah. The Rebbe highlights a very

important point when he shows that the intermediary stage of “back-to-back” relationship which corresponds to the stage of “compromise” between the right and left lines seems to contain a deeper and more profound level of “lights of pleasure” (or *mochin of Chochma*) than when the relationship is at the “face-to-face” level, a seemingly difficult notion wherein the lower would be higher and the higher would be lower.

5. “And He Shall Satisfy You in the Thirst of Your Soul”

This *maamar* is remarkable both in its quantity and quality. Regarding the quantity, this *maamar* examines the essential building blocks of the construction and development of the world of *Atzilus* and the *partzufim* which constitute that world, and moves upwards from there into the particulars of the highest level of *Atzilus*, namely the *Reisha D’Lo Isyada*. Once the ideas regarding the “*Radla*” are clarified, the same models of understanding are then applied to an even earlier, higher level of *Hashem’s* revelation within the worlds, the *sugya* of “*Igullim*” (circular existence) and “*Yosher*” (linear existence). Regarding the quality, this *maamar* delves deeply into some of the most complex elements of the *Arizal’s* system with astonishing precision, ending with a remarkable discussion as to the practical spiritual application of these ideas through the delicate writings of *Chassidus*. Because of the length as well as the depth of this *maamar*, the students introduced it with the all important context in which the *Rebbe* revealed these teachings, which we will now quote in full: *“This holy maamar was delivered by our holy teacher and master, the Rebbe shlit”a last year at the elevated time- the hilula of our master, the holy Arizal zy”a- in proximity and within eyesight of his holy resting place in the holy city of Tzfas. In [this maamar the Rebbe] was filled with trembling and seized by light in order to reveal concealed matters regarding the secrets of creation, opening things concealed by ancient days, to clarify all that is hidden within the discourse of the doubts of Atik Yomin (Sfeikos D’Atik Yomin) from within the “unknown and unknowable head” (Reisha D’Lo Yada V’Lo Isyada). Ascending to profound heights, speaking words directed above to serve as a positive advocate on behalf of the scattered sheep of the Jewish people who are stuck in darkness with thirsty souls within embittered bodies. This maamar digs deep to reveal the inner depths of the Jewish soul in its illumination and shining light like the sun of the day, pure and clean from all transgression and mistakes. And while this matters are hidden and concealed, with minds too constricted for true understanding, all the more so to record them with writing on a page, nevertheless we have said that we should not withhold the good, and we have decided to record some of the words according to our impoverished grasp of these matters*

which rest at the heights of creation. Anyone who studies [this maamar] in earnest will behold internally that these ideas are exceedingly deep, reaching the loftiest limits of the heavens. And they will naturally understand within their souls how exceedingly careful they must be when ascending the walls and associating themselves with this great tree, for one who is wise is the one who recognizes their place, and a hint is enough for the wise one, and with this [introduction] we have protected our souls. “

Because this *maamar* ascends to the heights of the particulars within the writings of the *Arizal* and descends to the depths of practical advice as revealed in the writings of *Chassidus*, the students expressed that *“the student who is not proficient in the sugyot of “the doubts of Radla and the doubts of Igullim v’Yosher” as they are revealed in the writings of the Arizal, should skip forward and begin learning the maamar from the second chapter and on, where the doubts are expressed according to the pathways of pnimiyus and Chassidus. Afterwards the student can return to these doubts in a way that the concepts will be clear in front of them.”*

The *maamar* begins with describing the formation of the *partzufim* which comprise the world of *Atzilus*. After the shattering of the vessels which took place within the world of *Nekudim*, the lights that had originally comprised the primordial kings who died, ascend and begin merging together towards the formation of the rectified *partzufim* which become the world of *Berudim*, or *Tikkun*. Because these *partzufim* are formed by both the shattered elements of “feminine lights” referred to as “*Be”N*” (the numerical value of 52 associated with the feminine manifestation of the four-letter name), as well as the rectified elements of “masculine lights” referred to as “*Ma”H*” (the numerical value of 45 associated with the masculine manifestation of the four-letter name), it is the interrelationship between these two polarized elements that constitutes and shapes the very texture of the *partzufim*. With regards to the *partzufim* of *Malchus*, *Ze’ir Anpin*, *Immah*, *Abba* and *Arich Anpin*, it is clear which elements of “*Ma”H*” and “*Be”N*” united in their formation, but when it comes to the *partzuf* of *Atik Yomin*, in particular the feminine aspect within *Atik Yomin*, we encounter the numerous doubts regarding which specific elements of “*Ma”H*” and “*Be”N*” engaged in the formation of the *Atik*. R’ Chaim Vital zy”a records that he was *“uncertain as to what he heard from his Rebbe the Arizal regarding the parts involved in the formation of Atik...and for that reason these upper heads of Atik are referred to as Reisha D’Lo Isyada, the unknowable head...for while we know that the head exists we are uncertain as to which elements operate within the head...and there are many more doubts and uncertainties that I have not yet merited to receive.”* In total there are three doubts associated with *Radla*, with the last of the three doubts opening unto another two, bringing the total of doubts associated with *Radla* to five. As we

will see, R' Chaim Vital zy" a associates these doubts of *Radla* with the prophecy of *Yeshayahu (58:5)* "And He shall satisfy you in the thirst (*tzach'tzachos*) of your soul", for the *tzach'tzachos* represent the loftiest heads of *Atik* wherein these *sfeikos* are expressed.

After describing all of the manifold doubts referred to as the "*sfeikos of Radla*" in precise detail, the *maamar* moves forward into the remarkable territory of describing the nature of these doubts. For the *Rebbe*, the most important question regarding these doubts, is what role do they play? Are we as students just to assume that R' Chaim Vital zy" a did not remember what his teacher the *Arizal* taught and as a result he was uncertain as to the essential truth; and if that is the case, then what value is there in recording these doubtful statements? Furthermore, if doubts- as they are typically understood- represent ambiguity born out of the absence of clarity, then what does R' Chaim Vital zy" a mean when he writes that "*there are many more doubts and uncertainties that I have not yet merited to receive*", for what sort of merit is involved in grasping doubts? Would it not have been better, so to speak, for the doubts to have simply been excluded from the holy writings, what purpose is there in including them within the recorded teachings? With these questions driving our understanding, the *maamar* collects and clarifies the teachings of our *Tzaddikim* and *Mekubalim* who address these very issues. Utilizing the writings of the *Kohsznitzer Magid*; *Ramchal*; the *Baal Toame'ah Chaim Zachu* and the *Baal HaSulam*, the *maamar* continues to describe the true nature of the *sfeikos of Radla*. As opposed to the typical conception of doubt wherein the ambiguity regarding whether something is one way or the other gives birth to a certain undecidability between option 1 and option 2; the doubts associated with *Radla* are the opposite, they do not stem from ambiguity regarding option 1 and option 2, but rather from the simultaneity of option 1 and option 2 operating at the very same moment. At the lofty of level of *Radla* within the *partzuf* of *Atik*, all possibilities express themselves in their potential at the exact same moment, creating a flow of "images" and "colors" whose inseparability prevents the mind's eye from discerning the exact location and movement of each one. The doubts that emerge are not with regards to which element and interrelationship is present, for all of them are present, rather they emerge from the inability to discern with any precision which specific element takes on the role of determining the valence and position of *Radla* in a revealed way at that very moment. Because the doubts of *Radla* stem from the presence of possibility as opposed to the absence of clarity, the doubts take on the nature of "essential doubts" which are not subject to clarification, but rather represent the very nature of *Radla* itself. As such, these doubts not only belong within the holy writings of the *Arizal*, but there is a specific measure of "merit"

necessary in grasping these doubts, as expressed in the exact phrasing of R' Chaim Vital zy" a.

After describing the true nature of these "essential doubts", the *maamar* descends even deeper into the recesses of this *sugya* when it connects the five doubts associated with *Radla* to specific elements in *avodas Hashem* according to the path of *Chassidus*. One of the common denominators amongst the manifold doubts is that what R' Chaim Vital zy" a seemed to be uncertain about was whether a certain counterintuitive shift takes place regarding the elements of "Ma" H" and "Be" N" that comprise the *partzuf* of *Atik*. Whether the specific example is the ascendancy of the "ohr pnimi" over and above the "ohr makif"; or the intensity of "Binah" above "Chochma", the doubts of *Radla* all symbolize the possibility of that which is typically considered lower and more severe being revealed to be higher and more expansive. This possibility of the "lower" being revealed to be "higher" is an incredibly delicate path of understanding that has a significant impact on the way we view concepts of *teshuvah*, *bechirah* as well as other essential elements of our daily *avodah*. As usual, the *Rebbe* is meticulous in the precision of the language he uses to describe these spiritual possibilities, as well as ensuring the failsafe mechanisms at play within the heart of the *Yam HaChochma* which allow these profound ideas to be held and engaged while at the same point remaining distant and unrealized.

6. "To Enlighten You With Understanding"

This remarkable *maamar* is an "explanation of the fifty gates of understanding (*nun sharei Binah*) based upon the forty-two letter name in the prayer "Ana B'Koach", and an explanation of the forty-two journeys as well as the fifty questions in *Iyov*." The *maamar* begins with an explanation as to how the seven verses, and the forty two letters of *Ana B'Koach* represent the collective experience of every person throughout the week. The *tefillah* is shown to align with the seven days of the week, each day corresponding to a particular verse. First, the *maamar* clarifies the three stages which represent the totality of all spiritual processes, namely "Ibbur, *Yenika* and *Mochin*", which correspond to "Achor, *Panim* and *Yichud*". According to the laws of spirituality, each and every part contains the whole within it and as such the stage of "Achor" which represents the initial stage of immature development contains within itself its own subset of "Ibbur, *Yenikah* and *Mochin*". The same is true regarding the particular subset of "Ibbur, *Yenikah* and *Mochin* " within the stage of "Panim" which represents the subsequent stage of mature development. The first

three days of the week (sunday, monday, tuesday) represent the particular stages of “*Ibbur, Yenikah and Mochin*” within the general framework of “*Achor*”; while the next three days of the week (wednesday, thursday, friday) represent the particular stage of “*Ibbur, Yenikah and Mochin*” within the general framework of “*Panim*”. Each of these days are represented by the first six stanzas of *Ana B’Koach*, with the last stanza representing the seventh day of the week (shabbos) which symbolizes the transition from “*Achor*” and “*Panim*” into the culmination of “*Yichud*”. The forty two letters of *Ana B’Koach* along with the seven general stanzas brings us to forty nine, representative of the forty nine gates of understanding, which when counted along with the collective representation of all the letters together (*the “kollel”*) brings us to fifty, revealing the sum total of the “fifty gates of understanding.” The *maamar* continues with a description of the “forty two letter name” and the spiritual mechanisms it represents. This “forty two letter name” is the catalyst behind spiritual movement from below born out of the deep desire to ascend above. The yearning (*teshukah*) associated with this name is what propels the “lower level” forwards and upwards any time the moment of ascension to a “higher level” comes about. For this reason, the name is associated with all manners of “ascension” dependent on the deep seeded sense of yearning and longing. It is for this reason that the “forty two letter name” is also directly associated with the process of “*birurim*”, or clarifications, which represent the purification and elevation of the *nitzotzot* that have fallen into the husks of impurity and concealment. The *maamar* continues with explaining the deep connection between the “forty two letter name” and the forty two journeys that the Jewish people went through on their way out of *galus Mitzrayim* towards *Eretz Yisrael*. These journeys, according to the *Baal Shem Tov* and his students- do not only represent the historic processes of the Jewish people, but rather the processes and journeys that every individual goes through in their inner lives. Like the “forty two letter name”, these journeys represent the movement upwards from within the lowly experience of preventions and concealments, thereby aligning the name and the journeys in a profound and precise way. The *maamar* then continues to align the “forty two letter name” and the “fifty gates of understanding” with the fifty questions posed to *Iyov* by *Hashem* as they emerge “out of the whirlwind”. Like the journeys, the questions represent the spiritual progress that is born specifically out of concealment and confusion. These questions do not simply represent the queries posed to *Iyov* at the heart of his personal suffering, but rather they represent the antinomies that all human beings experience at the heart of their lives. As the *maamar* expresses based on the recently published commentary on *Sefer Yetzirah*, “*Raza D’Yetzirah*”, “*all of this is an important teaching for every person according to their own circumstances that they experience, which align with the forty two journeys each person goes through. For*

everything that is written in the Torah takes place within each and every individual, as the Vilna Gaon writes in his commentary to *Safra D'Tzniyusa*. The same is true regarding the fifty questions posed to *Iyov*, for they all represent pathways through which the individual is capable of traversing the suffering and concealment within their lives. It also represents the pathways of contemplation in the secret of unity which is the *avodah* of the *Tzaddikim*, as well as the pathways of faith that are expanded through the gates of understanding". While this *maamar* goes through many of the forty two journeys and their alignment with the fifty questions posed to *Iyov*, the students are careful to write that "it is important to recognize that everything we have written here is in short form, and there is much more that we have heard which we were not able to write, but because of the lack of time and the multiple preventions that took place we were unable to complete this project as it deserves to be completed. Furthermore, this *maamar* has not been edited in the proper way, but through the very little we have presented one is capable of finding many pathways in *avodah* as well as the foundational roots of *yichud*, may the wise one expand it in wisdom." The *maamar* ends with a remarkable treatment of the fiftieth gate of understanding (*shaar nun*) as expressed by the "roof of the *kodesh hakedoshim*" and the deep *avodah* of yearning that transforms all action into vessels capable of cultivating more yearning, *ad infinitum*.

7. "Discourse on the Secret of Foreknowledge and Freewill"

This short but profound *maamar* discusses the apparent contradiction between *Hashem's* foreknowledge (*yediah*) and human freewill (*bechirah*). Utilizing the writings of the Vilna Gaon *zy" a* and other *Tzaddikim* and their utilization of the Kabbalah of R' Yisrael Sarug *zy" a* regarding the originary *Tzimtzum* within the "worlds of *Malbush*" which exist above and beyond the *Tzimtzum* of the "world of *Adam Kadmon*" explicitly described in the writings of R' Chaim Vital *zy" a*; the *Rebbe* introduces and clarifies the profound secrets of *yediah* and *bechirah* as expressed in the writings of the *Rama M'Fano*. Working out of the three part breakup of *Mochin* associated with the word and concept of "**Tze"Le" M**", the *maamar* describes three levels within the spectrum of *yediah/bechirah* which correspond with three levels of awareness. The first level, associated with the *mochin* of the "**Tzadi**" of "*Tzelem*" which are the internalized lights (*pnimi*) of *neshamah*, or *Binah*, represents pure *bechirah* without any contradiction to *yediah*. The second level, associated with the *mochin* of the "**Lamed**" of "*Tzelem*" which are the surrounding lights that descend inwards before ascending upwards (*makif chozer*) of *chaya*, or *Chochma*, represents a level of *bechirah* that is influenced by the surrounding drives which inform the

heart's deepest desire thereby creating a situation of inner compulsion which can be referred to as an aspect of *yediah*. The third level, associated with the *mochin* of the “**Mem**” of “*Tzelem*” which are the surrounding lights of *yechidah*, or *Keser*, represents pure *yediah* without any contradiction to *bechirah*.

<i>Tzadi</i>	<i>Pnini</i>	<i>Neshama</i>	<i>Binah</i>	<i>Bechira</i>
<i>Lamed</i>	<i>Makif Chozer</i>	<i>Chaya</i>	<i>Chochma</i>	<i>Bechira/Yediah</i>
<i>Mem</i>	<i>Makif</i>	<i>Yechidah</i>	<i>Keser</i>	<i>Yediah</i>

At the level of “***Tzadi***” wherein the lights of consciousness are fully enclosed within the individual, free and volitional behavior is the only possibility. The fact that *Hashem* “knows” the outcome of the choice does not contradict freewill, for the very reality of freewill at this level is the result of *Hashem*’s desire and will for freewill. At the level of “***Lamed***” wherein the lights of consciousness enter into the individuals mind for but a moment before reascending upwards, finally settling as surrounding lights which both relate to the inner experience of the individual while simultaneously hovering above the inner experience, the actions of the person are influenced by the forceful drives that surround their consciousness and as such the actions carried out cannot be considered purely volitional. It is at this level that the apparent contradiction between *yediah* and *bechirah* takes place for in truth they both operate in unison, described in the words of *Chazal* as “*all is foreseen but permission is granted*”. While this level represents a state of compulsivity that can be considered as outside the purview of self control, with effort and deep work the compulsory drives can be mitigated thereby revealing the possibility of freewill within the very drives which seek to negate it. The level of “***Mem***” represents the true level of surrounding lights which have no direct relation with the inner experience of the individual. At this level, one’s freewill is mitigated by the annihilating and ever present light of *Hashem*. This is the frightening level at which all actions are retroactively revealed to be part and parcel of *Hashem*’s desire, and as such the guilt and culpability typically associated with transgressive activity is limited. This level is the height of the *Torah* revealed by the *Baal Shem Tov HaKodesh* and it represents the true work of the *Tzaddik* wherein one “chooses to live at the level beyond choice” (*bechirah b’yediah*). While short in length, this *maamar* contains frighteningly deep matters which are expanded upon in earlier as well as later discourses, in particular the *maamarim* regarding the Kabbalah of R’ Yisrael Sarug zy”a and the “worlds of the *Malbush*”.

Yam HaChochma (2010/5771)

1. “Three Approaches to Torah Learning”

This remarkable *maamar* is in fact an introduction to the next *maamar* “*Derech Eitz Chaim*”. Before descending into the general idea of this massive essay, we will introduce the words of the students themselves regarding the placement of this *maamar* as an introduction to “*Derech Eitz Chaim*”. The students write as follows: “*Because we have merited, with Hashem's help, at this time to hear “Divrei Elokim Chaim” from the holy mouth of our Master and Teacher, the holy Gaon shlit”a, who has spread out his hands to explain the essence of Toras HaChassidus, and the order and transmission of the secrets of Torah through the singular ones of the generations, as well as the revelations of our teachers, the masters of secrets, the Baal Shem Tov and his students; the Rashash; the Ramchal; the Gra; the Baal HaSulam, as well as the specific places where the Torah they drew down is rooted within the order of the general “partzuf”. Above and beyond all of this is how in that maamar (“Derech Eitz Chaim”) the Rebbe shlit”a gathers and unifies all of the different approaches and pathways within a singular tree in the secret of a “partzuf” wherein all of them act together in unison. In order so that the eyes of those “children of Binah” - who typically see each path as standing on its own without any integration with the other- not be left wondering and confused when they see how all of the different paths lead to the same place, we have decided to preface with a maamar that we heard from the holy mouth of the Rebbe shlit”a at a time of desire, whose content is filled with love regarding the three approaches to Torah learning: the path of Binah wherein every approach is analyzed in isolation; the path of Chochma wherein all approaches are unified in such a way that distinction and particular boundaries are no longer discernible; and the path of Keser where all of the approaches are unified in total unity, yet they maintain their ownmost particularity and distinction in all of its strength which are included within the holiness of unity itself, like the aspect of light that is subsumed within the luminary (Ohr B’Meor), and it is specifically through them that the additional adornment and pleasure take place within the simple unity, as the student will see in the maamar. Once one ascends within this maamar, they will understand within their souls the true path of engagement with the Torah in its proper way, and the soul will take deep pleasure through it.”*

The essence of this *maamar* is an extensive treatment of three approaches to Torah study. Each of the approaches represents not only a model of intellectualization and

study, but rather a different way through which the individual may view the entirety of existence. In order for the *Rebbe* to show the deep roots of each of these three approaches, the *maamar* aligns the models of study with the spiritual concepts they each represent. In other words, these three modes of *Torah* study do not simply represent methods through which one may come to understand the *Torah*, but rather they represent three essential ways in which *Hashem* reveals Himself to creation, as well as three different ways the individual looks upon the entirety of creation. As such, the three methods of study will find specific and precise alignment with three different *partzufim* as well as the infrastructure of three different types of worlds, highlighting once again how that which may appear to be symptomatic differences without any rootedness in the essence of existence is in fact a fractalized expression of spiritual concepts that are rooted in the loftiest levels of existence down to the lowest levels of experience. The *maamar* introduces the three levels typically referred to as “*Gimmel Reishin*”, or “*Ga”R*”, in ascending order from lowest to highest: *Binah*, *Chochma* and *Keser*. These three levels are also directly associated with three infrastructures of worlds, in ascending order from lowest to highest: *Briyah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah*, or “*BY”A*”, known collectively as “the worlds of separation”; the world of *Atzilus*; and the world of *Adam Kadmon*.

<i>Partzuf</i>	<i>Binah</i>	<i>Chochma</i>	<i>Keser</i>
<i>World</i>	<i>BY”A</i>	<i>Atzilus</i>	<i>Adam Kadmon</i>

The level of *Binah*, like the worlds of separation (*BY”A*), represents the perspective wherein the world is composed by the multiplicity of different particulars. Each thing appears to be distinct and separate from every other thing, as the boundaries and limitations that define each thing ensure that each and every particular maintains its individualized existence. Associated with the sense of hearing, the fact that “two distinct voices cannot be heard at once” animates the general approach of the “revealed *Torah*” where conversations begin with the call to “come and hear” (*ta shema*). Generally speaking, this level of *Binah* is seen as a lower level in that it gives birth to a sense of separation and disunity, creating the possibility of self centeredness and confrontation. On the other hand, however, the level of *Binah* does provide a certain benefit that is rooted in its deficiency in that it forces the individual to examine each particular expression in isolation thereby magnifying the unique properties of each which differentiate it from every other thing. Like the worlds of

separation (*BY"A*), the level of *Binah* is susceptible to brokenness and severity as the result of the multiplicity which at its limit appears to occlude the light of *yichud* that exists within the heart of *pirud*, thereby propelling one into a state of concealment and hiddenness. As a model of *Torah* study, the path of *Binah* sees the multiplicity of approaches and ideas as representing stand alone paths without any general sense of unity underlying them. Within any given *machlokes*, for example, each opinion represents its own particular line of reasoning which often stands in opposition to the other opinion. While the concept of “*these and those are the words of the living God*” still operates in the sense that both opinions are rooted in viable and significant approaches to the *sugya*, nevertheless the basic difference between the two opinions remains clear and present. While the path of *Binah* allows the student to descend into the depths of particularity as it is expressed throughout the myriad approaches to a specific element of *Torah*, the general outcome is one of multiplicity, distinction and separation.

The level of ***Chochma*** like the world of *Atzilus*, represents the perspective wherein the world consists of a singular and unified wholeness which negates the possibility of multiplicity and difference. All various pathways are seen as working together towards a unified whole which erases all separation and distinction. Associated with the sense of sight, the holistic vision that sees all things at once animates the general approach of the “concealed *Torah*” where conversations begin with the call to “come and see” (*ta chazi*). Generally speak, this level of *Chochma* is seen as a higher level in that it gives birth to a deep sense of unity and wholeness wherein the individual is drawn towards the possibility of self annihilation, or *Bittul* which emerges from an awareness of the all encompassing presence of *Hashem's* unity. One the other hand, however, the level of *Chochma* does bring with it a certain sense of deficiency that is rooted in its benefit in that the all encompassing unity and wholeness negates the possibility of descending into the particularity of all things, thereby forcing one into the imprecise and nondescript unity of everything which lacks the nuance of particularity and difference. Like the world of *Atzilus*, the level of *Chochma* reveals a profound unity wherein the typical difference between “lights” and “vessels” is negated, disclosing a *yichud* that forces all difference back into the undifferentiated light of unity. As a model of *Torah* study, the path of *Chochma* sees a deep and abiding unity at the heart of every *machlokes*, and any apparent disagreement and difference is revealed to have been untrue or imagined. The unified vision that sees all approaches as comprising a singular approach which transcends the level of apparent separation is what allows the path of *Chochma* to view the entire history and development of *Torah* as expressing one singular thing.

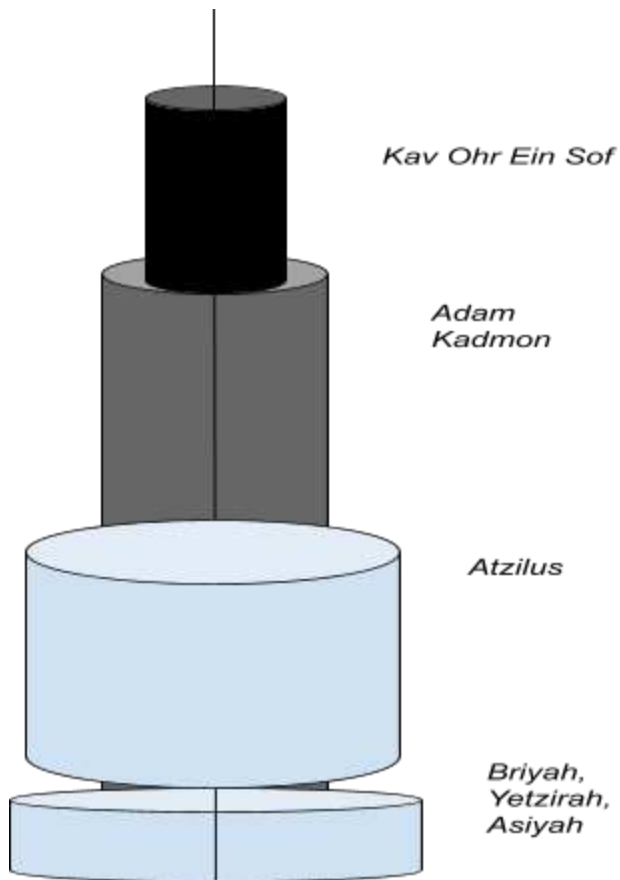
The level of *Keser* like the world of *Adam Kadmon*, represents the wondrous perspective wherein the fragmented particularity of *Binah* and the integrated wholeness of *Chochma* work together in unison to reveal an impossible level wherein difference and unity operate at the very same moment. At this level, not only do the particulars of *Binah* not disrupt the wholeness of *Chochma*, but rather the particulars are transformed from their separateness to the point that they now serve as vessels for the intensification and potentiation of wholeness itself. It is important to clarify the delicate nature of this point: at the level of *Keser* it is not that the particularity of *Binah* is subsumed and negated within wholeness as it is according to the path of *Chochma*, rather the particulars remain in their particularity but in such a way that they enhance, as opposed to detract, from the wholeness of unity. As a model of *Torah* study, the path of *Keser* acknowledges and respects the difference and distinction that exists within approaches, yet the difference of approaches reveals a wholeness that is greater than the sum total of its parts. As opposed to the monolithic unity of *Chochma*, the vibrant unity of *Keser* emerges in and through the shifting colors of difference themselves, revealing a wholeness that is so full that it can contain particularly within itself.

<i>Partzuf</i>	<i>Binah</i>	<i>Chochma</i>	<i>Keser</i>
<i>World</i>	<i>BY"A</i>	<i>Atzilus</i>	<i>Adam Kadmon</i>
<i>Path of Study</i>	<i>Particulars without Wholeness</i>	<i>Wholeness without Particulars</i>	<i>Particulars within Wholeness</i>

When looked at without an understanding of the level of *Keser*, the path of *Binah* and the path of *Chochma* appear to be in direct opposition to each other and as such the possibility of unifying these two distinct paths seems all but impossible. The *maamar* continues to show how this apparent irreconcilability between the path of *Binah* and the path of *Chochma* is expressed in the infrastructure of the worlds represented by these paths. Like we stated earlier, the level of *Binah* corresponds to the worlds of *BY"A*, the level of *Chochma* corresponds to the world of *Atzilus*, and the level of *Keser* corresponds to the world of *Adam Kadmon*. According to the structure and interconnection of the worlds as expressed throughout the writings of the *Arizal*, the “ray of Infinite light” (*kav*) which descended and reentered the “vacant space” (*chalal ha'panui*) that was left as a result of the “initial contraction” (*tzimtzum*) of the “light of the Infinite” (*ohr ein sof*), rests at the center of existence,

anchoring, animating and maintaining the vitality of all things. The order of worlds- from *Adam Kadmon* down to the separate worlds of *BY"A*- engarb themselves on top of the "ray of Infinite light" (*kav*) so as to receive from the everpresent light of the Infinite that is expressed in and through the *kav*. As a nested order of worlds wherein each world engarbs itself upon the world that preceded it, the first world of *Adam Kadmon* associated with *Keser* engarbs the *kav*, while the world of *Atzilus* associated with *Chochma*, and the worlds of *BY"A* associated with *Binah* engarb themselves upon the world of *Adam Kadmon*. It is within this structure of the order-of-engarbment (*sefer ha'hislabshus*) that we find the distinctions that exist within these three levels of *Binah (BY"A)*, *Chochma (Atzilus)* and *Keser (Adam Kadmon)*.

The world of *Adam Kadmon* engarbs the *kav*, starting just underneath the entrypoint of the *kav* into the vacant space revealed through the *tzimtzum*, down to the limit point at which the *kav* ceases to expand. Next, the world of *Atzilus* engarbs the world of *Adam Kadmon* from the "navel" (*tibbur*) and downwards up until the "heels" (*akvayim*), leaving the lowest limits of *Adam Kadmon* uncovered. The worlds of separation, *Briyah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah* engarb the "heels" of *Adam Kadmon*, beginning at the point where *Atzilus* ends, down to the limit point at which *Adam Kadom* ceases to engarb the *kav*.



What we see from this is that the structure of the three levels of worlds (*Adam Kadmon, Atzilus and BY"A*) are directly aligned with the three paths of *Torah* study they represent (*Binah, Chochma and Keser*). The worlds of *BY"A* associated with the path of *Binah* are situated at the lowest limit of the *kav*, the point where separation and fragmentation threaten to conceal the light of unity that exists even there. The world of *Atzilus* associated with the path of *Chochma* is situated above the worlds of *BY"A*, engarbing the world of *Adam Kadmon* from the "navel" down to the beginning of the "heels". What is most important to note is that the world of *Atzilus* does not descend into the worlds of *BY"A*, but rather stands above them at a distance. What this represents is that the delicate unity of *Chochma* wherein all things are revealed to be the same cannot tolerate the existence of particularity and difference as represented in the worlds of separation, *Briyah, Yetzirah* and *Asiyah*. Because of its monolithic unity, the path of *Chochma* removes itself entirely from the path of *Binah* whose multiplicity threatens the delicate expression of unity inherent within the world of *Atzilus*. This is not the case, however, when it comes to the world of *Adam Kadmon* associated with the path of *Keser*, for as we saw the world of *Adam Kadmon*

engarbs the *kav* from right below its entrypoint down to the limit of its expansion, and as such it descends not only into the world of *Atzilus* which garbs it from the “navel” down to the beginning of the “heels”, but rather it descends down into the worlds of *BY”A* which garb its “heels” down to the limit level of expression. This represents the unique and wondrous unity associated with the path of *Keser* which includes the particularity and differentiation of *BY”A* within its vibrant unity, revealing that the particulars of *Binah* serve to enhance the unity of *Keser* to a level above and beyond the delicate unity of *Chochma*. For while *Chochma* is a unity and wholeness that negates all separation and particularity; *Keser* is a unity and wholeness that includes and elevates separation and particularity, utilizing the vessels of fragmentation to enhance the power of unity whereby the parts of *Binah* reveal the additional adornment (*tosefes kishut*) that is disclosed when wholeness is shown to be within the particulars as well.

2. ***“The Path of the Tree of Life”***

This remarkable *maamar* is as groundbreaking as it is powerful. Described as a discourse “*regarding the essence of Toras HaChassidus*” this *maamar* clarifies three aspects: 1. *The benefit that Toras HaChassidus brought to the study of Kabbalah*, 2. *The essence and the essential nature of Toras HaChassidus*, and 3. *The historical process through which the secrets of Torah have been revealed through the ‘singular ones of the generations’ (yechidei ha’doros)*. In order to properly understand the novelty of this *maamar*, we need to first understand the context as described by the students themselves: “*In honor of the 250th anniversary of our master, the light of the seven days of creation, our teacher R’ Yisrael Baal Shem Tov’s zy”a passing, we decided to publish a maamar which we heard from the holy mouth of our teacher, the Rebbe shlit”a, where he spread out his hands to clarify the essence of Toras HaChassidus and what Chassidus added to the study of Kabbalah in addition to the path of Kabbalah study that existed before hand, as well as the historical process through which the secrets of Torah have been drawn down and revealed through the singular ones of the generations, along with the revelation that was continued through the masters of secrets, the students of the Baal Shem Tov, the Ramchal, the Gra and the Baal HaSulam and the particular points of origin the Torah they revealed is rooted in within the general configuration (partzuf) of Torah. In addition there are many other concepts which all point towards the deep holiness of engaging with the secrets of Torah. However, as a result of the limited amount of time allotted to us, we have not completed the task of publishing anything other than a small part of the maamar, and even this small part is shortened, tracing only the embers of the coals in the aspect of*

“give to the wise so they may expand in wisdom”. In addition we have not had the ability to edit and prepare it in accordance to the honor that is becoming of the Torah. Nevertheless, we have decided to publish it as is, for even this miniscule amount has the power to revive the spirit, and with Hashem’s help there will come a time when we can complete the remainder of this maamar.”

The first part of the *maamar* describes the process and the transmission of *pnimiyus haTorah* throughout the generations, starting with *Moshe Rabbeinu* and culminating in the *Baal Shem Tov* and his students. This section is based primarily on the historical process of transmission as expressed in R’ Gershon Henoch Leiner’s *Hakdamah u’Psicha l’Sefer Beis Yaakov*, and it seeks to show beyond a shadow of a doubt that the inner teachings of *Torah* were, are and always will be an integral part of the *Torah* with tradition and chain style transmission that can be traced all the way back to the moment of receiving the *Torah* at *Har Sinai*. After describing the impossibility of the human mind discerning and revealing the inner teachings of *Torah* through its own intellect and how any revelation of secrets must come about through the influx of light from above, the *maamar* continues with a lengthy discussion as to why the inner teachings of *Torah* were revealed in the specific times they were revealed, not before and not after. Highlighting the psychohistorical framework of the time period surrounding the disclosure of *pnimiyus haTorah*, the *maamar* moves through numerous sources describing how the darkness and concealment that existed at that time was the very condition necessary for the disclosure of these teachings which alone have the power of elevating the darkness and transforming it into the seat for *emunah*.

After describing the ultimate purpose of *pnimiyus haTorah* as enabling the human being to grasp the secrets of elevated unity, thereby becoming a vehicle (*merkavah*) for the revelation of *Hashem’s* presence within the world, the *maamar* continues to describe how in spite of the lofty and wondrous nature of the *Arizal’s* teachings, they were not yet conveyed in a way that had the power to transform the lived and lowly experience of the human being within their emotional and intellectual states of *avodah*. For while the teachings of the *Arizal* gave unprecedented access to the configurations (*partzufim*) and worlds (*olamot*) that compose the upper realms of being, they were not yet made accessible to the human experience as it is lived in the lower realms of being. In addition to the untranslatability of these lofty concepts into a language that could be understood and integrated into the lived human experience of *avodah*, the form of the literal metaphors (i.e. “*mamesh, kavyachol*”) expressed throughout *Rashbi’s Sefer HaZohar* and the *Arizal’s Sefer Eitz Chaim* introduced the very legitimate fear that the novice student may come and interpret

the concepts as literal depictions of the Infinite (i.e *hagshama*), a threat that cuts to the very core of *Penimiyus HaTorah's* goal. It must be stated that the *maamar* is exceedingly clear in pointing out that these two issues- namely, the untranslatability into a language of *avodah* and the threat of *hagshama*- are not, *heaven forbid*, issues related to the *gilluyim* of the *Arizal*, but rather issues that stem from the fact that the minds of the students were not yet ready to discern the true and essential depth of these teachings. And as the *maamar* points out in the name of the *Emek HaMelech*, had the world been deserving, the *Arizal* would have had more time to reveal the secret pathways of *avodah* which rest at the core of his teachings.

It is specifically these difficulties that potentially emerge from within the writings of the *Arizal* that made room for the new revelation of *pnimiyus haTorah* associated with the *Baal Shem Tov* and his students. The *maamar* is aware of the line of argument that can be made, theoretically claiming that the difficulty and lack of clarity associated with the *Arizal* is not a flaw, but rather a feature. Meaning to say, perhaps the inability to map the ideas of the *Arizal* onto clear coordinates of *avodah*, or the apparent imprecision of the *Arizal's* language, are representative of the exact way the *Arizal* wanted his teachings to be revealed, a concept that would somewhat weaken the idea that the *Baal Shem Tov* and *Chassidus* came to “rectify” or reveal a new, hitherto unrevealed element of *pnimiyus haTorah*. Regarding this, the *maamar* draws from multiple sources in order to show how this is not the case, and that the essential desire behind the disclosure of *pnimiyus haTorah* is the ability to engage in new pathways of *avodah* as well as a clear, uncomplicated grasp of the depths of the secrets of *yichud*. If that is the case, then the limitations associated with the writings of the *Arizal* as interpreted by the students is the very ground upon which the light of the *Baal Shem Tov* is sown.

Before beginning to describe the essential nature of *Toras HaChassidus*, the *maamar* continues to explain how the revelation of the *Baal Shem Tov* and the deepening of *pnimiyus haTorah* that came along with him and his students represented the true desire of *Hashem's* creation, illuminating the world with the deep joy of purpose and *tachlis*. In terms of what the *Torah* of the *Baal Shem Tov* came to correct, the *maamar* lists three elements: 1. To protect the students from the threat of misinterpreting the *partzufim* and worlds of the *Arizal* by way of *hagshama*. 2. To clarify the essential secret of unity as disclosed in the writings of the *Arizal* by way of precise metaphors and concepts which allowed the paradoxical secret-of-faith (*Raza d'Mihimnusa*) that rests at the center of *pnimiyus haTorah* to be grasped in such a way that it may be received and understood properly. 3. To draw the emphasis of *pnimiyus haTorah* away from the supernal realms which represent the ideal state of things, towards the

lower realms with represent the real state of things, or as opposed to the *Arizal* who brought “earth” up to “heaven”, the *Baal Shem Tov* brought “heaven” down to “earth”.

The *maamar* continues with describing how in spite of the fact that *chassidus* can be seen as an attempt to rectify the three potential issues that emerge from the writings of the *Arizal*, nevertheless it is of utmost importance to recognize that in addition to those elements, *Chassidus* also represents a new level of revelation that was previously inaccessible. Not only that, but this additional element that was revealed in and through *Chassidus* represents the essential nature of *Chassidus* itself. The *maamar* then introduces an essential concept which runs throughout the writings of the *Yam HaChochma* in order to properly express the essence of *Chassidus*, namely the concept of the “five singular historical *Tzaddikin*” (*yechidei ha’doros*), or the five souls through which *Torah* has been revealed: *Moshe Rabbeinu*; *Rebbe Shimon bar Yochai*; *the Arizal*; *the Baal Shem Tov*; and *Rebbe Nachman*. Each of these *Tzaddikim* represent a new level of disclosure of *Torah* to the extent that what is revealed with each subsequent *Tzaddik* was “inaccessible” to the preceding *Tzaddik*. In addition these “five singular *Tzaddikim* represent the five parts of the general configuration of *Torah*, identified as the *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, *Neshama*, *Chaya* and *Yechidah* of the *Torah* in ascending order.

<i>Yechidei HaDoros</i>	<i>Moshe Rabbeinu</i>	<i>Rebbe Shimon bar Yochai</i>	<i>Arizal</i>	<i>Baal Shem Tov</i>	<i>Rebbe Nachman</i>
<i>Parts of the Soul</i>	<i>Nefesh</i>	<i>Ruach</i>	<i>Neshama</i>	<i>Chaya</i>	<i>Yechidah</i>

In order to make certain that there be no misunderstanding, the *Rebbe* makes clear that while each subsequent *Tzaddik* from within the chain of the “five singular *Tzaddikim*” discloses a new, even deeper aspect of the *Torah*, this is not because they are of a loftier status than the unique *Tzaddikim* who preceded them, heaven forbid, for that would lead to the mistaken, and almost heretical notion that there are *Tzaddikim* greater than *Moshe Rabbeinu*. The *maamar* clarifies this mistaken possibility with two answers: **1.** While each of the five singular *Tzaddikim* represent different expressions and revelations of the *Torah*, nevertheless each of their particular souls are deeply rooted in the general soul of *Moshe Rabbeinu*, so that even if one claims that the later *Tzaddikim* reveal more profound levels of *Torah* than

the earlier *Tzaddikim*, it is still all within the general configuration of the “soul of *Moshe*” which expresses itself in and through these five transgenerational expressions **2**. When it comes to the relationship between the lights that descend (*oros*) into the vessels that contain them (*keilim*) we find an inverse relationship: as the lights descend from above, they begin descending from their lowest level with their highest level descending in the end, for example the “*mochin of Nefesh*” descend first, followed by the subsequent “*mochin of Ruach*” etc., culminating in the descent of the “*mochin of Yechidah*”. When it comes to the vessels which receive and contain the lights, however, the direction is the opposite. The first vessels are of the loftiest level, subsequently descending in status. For example, the first *kli* is the “*Kli of Yechidah*”, and in descending order we encounter the “*Kli of Chaya*” etc., culminating with the “*Kli of Nefesh*”. It turns out then that when it comes to *Oros*, the order moves from lowest to highest, and when it comes to *Keilim* the order moves from highest to lowest.

<i>Keilim</i>	<i>Oros</i>
<i>Yechidah</i>	<i>Nefesh</i>
<i>Chaya</i>	<i>Ruach</i>
<i>Neshamah</i>	<i>Neshamah</i>
<i>Ruach</i>	<i>Chaya</i>
<i>Nefesh</i>	<i>Yechidah</i>

What this means for us is that while *Moshe Rabbeinu* represents the *Nefesh* of the configuration of *Torah* revealed through the “five singular *Tzaddikim*”, nevertheless this revelation of the level of *Nefesh* descends into the loftiest level of *keilim* which is the *Kli of Yechidah*. The same is true for the subsequent *Tzaddikim*, the seemingly inverted order wherein the earlier *Tzaddikim* are shown to represent a lower level of *oros* is in truth because their *oros* occupy a loftier level of *keilim*, representative of the fact that they are an inherently more powerful level of revelation than the *oros* which descend afterwards.

<i>Yehidei HaDoros</i>	<i>Moshe Rabbeinu</i>	<i>Rebbe Shimon</i>	<i>Arizal</i>	<i>Baal Shem Tov</i>	<i>Rebbe Nachman</i>
<i>Oros</i>	<i>Nefesh</i>	<i>Ruach</i>	<i>Neshamah</i>	<i>Chaya</i>	<i>Yechidah</i>
<i>Keilim</i>	<i>Yechidah</i>	<i>Chaya</i>	<i>Neshamah</i>	<i>Ruach</i>	<i>Nefesh</i>

After this all important introduction, the *maamar* continues to explain how the revelation associated with the *Baal Shem Tov* and the essence of *Chassidus* is the disclosure of the lights of *Chaya* and *Yechidah*, the two levels of “surrounding lights” (*makifim*) which transcend the conscious awareness of human beings, represented by the “inner lights” (*pnimim*) of *Nefesh*, *Ruach* and *Neshamah*. As such, and in accordance with the spiritual potency associated with the two luminaries of *Chassidus*- the *Baal Shem Tov* and his great grandson *Rebbe Nachman*- the essential *chiddush* and essence of *Chassidus* above and beyond the teachings of the *Arizal* is the disclosure and subsequent accessibility of the transcendent lights of *Chaya* and *Yechidah*.

This fivefold breakdown of the “soul” in its general shape also applies to the *Torah* itself. As we are familiar with, the *Torah* is generally broken up into four aspects: *Pshat*, *Remez*, *Drush* and *Sod*, which in turn correspond to the four letter name of *Hashem Y-H-V-H*. *Pshat*, or the simple meaning is associated with the last *Hei* of the name; *Remez*, or the allegorical meaning is associated with the *Vav* of the name; *Drush*, or the homiletical meaning is associated with the first *Hei* of the name; and *Sod*, or the hidden and secret meaning is associated with the *Yud* of the name. In turn, these four levels of *Torah*, along with the four letters of the name correspond to the first four levels of the soul, *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, *Neshamah* and *Chaya*. However, we also know that along with the four letters of *Hashem’s* name- *Y-H-V-H*- there is also a fifth level which corresponds to the top point of the *Yud* (*kutzo shel Yud*), which in turn corresponds to the fifth level of the soul, the level of *Yechidah*. If that is the case, then there must also be a fifth level of *Torah* not included within the typical fourfold breakdown of *PaRDeS* (*Pshat*, *Remez*, *Drush*, *Sod*). The *maamar* continues in revealing that the level of *Torah* associated with the *Yechidah* within the soul, and the top point of the *Yud* within the four letter name, is the level of *Chassidus*, referred to as “the secret of secrets” (*Raza d’Razin*). It must be understood that the four fold breakdown of *PaRDeS* applies to each and every element of *PaRDeS*, for the laws of unity dictate that the whole (i.e *PaRDeS*) can be found within each part (i.e *PaRDeS of Pshat*; *PaRDeS of Remez* etc.). As such, the *maamar* is only discussing the particular subset of *PaRDeS* within the particular element of *Sod*, so that the five

levels of *Torah* revealed by the “five singular *Tzaddikim*” are all within the subset of the “secrets of *Torah*” themselves.

<i>Four-Letter Name</i>	<i>Top Point of Yud</i>	<i>Yud</i>	<i>Hei</i>	<i>Vav</i>	<i>Hei</i>
<i>Parts of the Soul</i>	<i>Yechidah</i>	<i>Chaya</i>	<i>Neshamah</i>	<i>Ruach</i>	<i>Nefesh</i>
<i>Parts of the Torah</i>	<i>Sod of Sod</i>	<i>Sod of Sod</i>	<i>Drush of Sod</i>	<i>Remez of Sod</i>	<i>Pshat of Sod</i>
<i>Tzadikei HaDoros</i>	<i>Rebbe Nachman (Chassidus)</i>	<i>Baal Shem Tov (Chassidus)</i>	<i>Arizal (Drush of Kabbalah)</i>	<i>Rashbi (Remez of Kabbalah)</i>	<i>Moshe Rabbeinu (Pshat of Kabbalah)</i>

If the first three expressions of *Pnimityus HaTorah* represent the general category of “*Razin*” (secrets); then the second two expressions associated with *Chassidus* represent the level of “*Razin d’Razin*” (secrets of secrets).

The *maamar* continues to describe the essential significance of *Chassidus* which is symbolized in and through the revelation of the levels of *Chaya* and *Yechidah*. Generally speaking the gradations of soul that are accessible to each individual on a particular level, as well as on a collective level, are the levels of *Nefesh*, *Ruach* and *Neshamah*. These three levels are collectively referred to as “*pnimim*” as they have specific coordinates and vessels within the individual wherein they may settle. The next two levels- *Chaya* and *Yechidah*- are referred to as “*makifim*” in that there is no space within the interiority of the individual that can contain the power and light of these soul levels. The same spiritual laws which dictate the inner experience of the “small world” which is the person themselves, also apply to the “big person” which is the world. Therefore, just as the individual cannot access the “*makifim*” of *Chaya* and *Yechidah*, so too the process of history can only gain access to the “*pnimim*” of *Nefesh*, *Ruach* and *Neshamah*, with access to the “*makifim*” of *Chaya* and *Yechidah* being reserved for the end of history and the redemptive arrival of the soul of *Mashiach*. This is where the *chiddush* of the *Baal Shem Tov* and the essence of *Chassidus* is revealed. For while according to the typical order of things, the surrounding lights of *Chaya* and *Yechidah*- whether it be on the level of souls or the expression of the *Torah*- should not be revealed until the arrival of *Mashiach* which stands outside of graspable history, through the power and *Torah* of the *Baal Shem Tov* and his

students the world merited to taste the light of the future within the present, to experience the *Chaya* and *Yechidah* of *pnimiyus haTorah* even before the *Torah* of the “ancient future” (*Atikah Stimaah*) is revealed.

3. “*Worlds, Souls and Godliness*”

This *maamar* is the third and final part in the three-part *hemshech* of “Three Approaches to *Torah* Study”, “The Path of the Tree of Life” and “Worlds, Souls and Godliness”. While “Three Approaches” represents the introduction to understanding “The Path of the Tree of Life”, this *maamar* represents a continuation and explanation of a particular aspect of the *gilui* of the *Baal Shem Tov* and the essence of *Chassidus*. In the words of the students, “*we saw it appropriate to bring this maamar here, drawn from the ‘words of the Living G-d’ which were given over at the time of ‘the desire of desire’ on Parshas Nasso of this year. And because this maamar was given over around the same time that “The Path of the Tree of Life” printed above was given over [we decided to publish it here]. It is based on the explanation of “Worlds, Souls and Godliness” (Olamos, Neshamos v’Elokus) revealed by our master the holy of holies, the Baal Shem Tov zy”a, and in it one will find a deep clarification regarding the aspect of the souls of Tzaddikim who are the aspect of the intermediary level (memuzah) which connects between the aspect of “worlds” and the aspect of “Godliness”, which is a matter described in great detail in the previous maamar as the student will see. This maamar adds various explanations which are deep and necessary regarding this profoundly deep and concealed concept. Therefore we have decided to publish them side by side, to concretize in writing this maamar as well so that the Mishkan should be complete for the benefit of those who examine it closely.*”

The *maamar* is primarily based on the deep point expressed within the *Baal Shem Tov*’s well known letter to his brother-in-law, R’ Gershon Kitover regarding the former’s soul ascent into the chambers of *Mashiach*. After describing the question he posed to *Mashiach* regarding his eventual arrival and the answer given by *Mashiach* regarding the wellsprings of *Chassidus* spreading forth outwards, the letter describes how one must never forget that “*within each and every letter there exists worlds, souls and Godliness*”. The *maamar* makes clear that while there are many ways in which the secret of “worlds, souls and Godliness” can be applied and understood, the main focus here will be regarding the correlation between the words of *Tefilah*, the souls of the *Tzaddikim* and the connection to the Infinite light of *Hashem*. Before descending into the heart of the *maamar*, the *Rebbe* makes clear just how

fundamental an idea this three part breakdown of “worlds, souls and Godliness” is by showing just a few of the coordinates these levels can be applied to:

<i>Worlds/Olamos</i>	<i>Souls/Neshamos</i>	<i>Godliness/Elokus</i>
<i>Body/Nefesh</i>	<i>Spirit/Ruach</i>	<i>Soul/Neshamah</i>
<i>Outside/Chitzon</i>	<i>Middle/Emtzah</i>	<i>Inside/Penimi</i>
<i>Pregnancy/Ibbur</i>	<i>Nursing/Yenikah</i>	<i>Independence/Mochin</i>
<i>Vessels/Keilim</i>	<i>Sparks/Nitzotzot</i>	<i>Lights/Oros</i>

The *maamar* continues and describes how these three levels of “worlds, souls and Godliness” correspond to the three elements that emerge as a result of the “shattering of the vessels” (*shevirat ha’keilim*). In the world of “chaos” (*tohu*) and “points” (*nekudim*) which preceded the “bounded” (*berudim*) world of “rectification” (*tikkun*), the light of the Infinite descended into vessels so that the lights could be contained and refracted in a measured and stabilized way. Due to the overwhelming presence of the “lights” (*oros*) however, the vessels (*keilim*) could not sustain themselves and they shattered, breaking apart into the residual pieces of holiness and light which would eventually form the lower worlds of separation (*Briyah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah*). In the process of this “shattering”, the lights ascended upwards back to their original space within the worlds of unity, while the vessels descended down into what would eventually become the worlds of separation. However, as a result of the spiritual law which dictates that anytime lights of holiness descend into vessels of concealment they leave an irreducible trace of leftover light, the broken vessels retained within themselves sparks of residual light (*nitzotzos*) which ultimately sustain and give life to the shattered and fragmented vessels themselves. These three levels of ***Oros***, ***Nitzotzos*** and ***Keilim*** (lights, sparks and vessels) represent the essential elements within which the process of *avodah* and *birurim* (clarifications) take place. Expressed in the language of *avodah* revealed through *Chassidus*, these three levels represent 1. The fragmented concealment of existence (*Keilim*) 2. The remaining potential of holiness and light within the concealment (*Nitzotzos*), and 3. The unity of holiness that exists above and beyond the possibility of fragmentation. These three levels also correspond to the three levels described in the letter of the *Baal Shem Tov*: 1. The concealment of existence as it appears to us (*Olamos*) 2. The souls of the *Tzaddikim* who reveal to us the pathways of connection

and *avodah* (*Neshamos*), and 3. The light of the Infinite that remains perpetually present without any concealment whatsoever (*Elokus*).

The *maamar* continues and applies these three levels of “worlds, souls and Godliness” to the *avodah* of *Teffilos* and *Yichudim*. The lowest level of “worlds” represent the letters of the names of *Hashem* which serve as the graspable and visible expression of *Hashem’s* presence within existence. The highest level of “Godliness” represents the light of the Infinite (*ohr ein sof*) which is drawn down from *Hashem* to illuminate the individual with renewed forms of spiritual awareness, without which the letters of the names themselves would be meaningless. The intermediary level of “souls” represents the pathways of *avodah* revealed through the souls of the true *Tzaddikim* which enable the lowly souls associated with the level of “worlds” to ascend upwards to the level of “Godliness” in a clear and unified way.

The *maamar* ends with a remarkable discussion about learning how to engage in the process of *yichudim* revealed through the “souls” of our *Tzaddikim* on all levels. The pathways of *yichud* revealed through the “souls” for the stated purpose of unifying the “worlds” with “Godliness” take place in one of two ways: the path of *Rochel* and the path of *Leah*. The path of *Leah* associated with the concealed lights of *Chesed*, *Gevurah*, *Tifferes* of *Ze’ir Anpin* represents the unfelt experience of *yichud* where the individual feels nothing yet continues moving forward; while the path of *Rochel* associated with the revealed lights of *Netzach*, *Hod*, *Yesod* of *Ze’ir Anpin* represents the felt experience of *yichud* where the individual feels connection and pleasure in their movement. In order to fully engage in the paths of *yichud* revealed through the “souls” and teachings of our *Tzaddikim*, we must embrace both paths- *Rochel* and *Leah*- in the hopes of revealing the fullness of *Kedushas Yisrael* that exists within each and every one of us, thereby revealing the true connection between “worlds” and “Godliness” through the power and intensity of the “souls”.

One of the essential elements of the *maamar* is the clarification of the intermediary level of “souls” which represents the souls of the true *Tzaddikim* as well as the *Torah* revealed through them. Hinted to in the text itself and expressed explicitly within the footnotes of the *maamar*, we are introduced to the concept of the “*Tzaddikim*” as vehicles of a profoundly lofty and precise expression of holiness referenced in the writings of the *Rashash*; *Leshem Shevo V’Achlama*; *Tal Oros* and more. The light drawn down in and through the *Tzaddikim* and expressed in their *Torah* open upon the pathways that enable the lower levels of concealment (*Olamos*) to ascend back upwards to their original source within the revealed light of the Infinite (*Elokus*). While this part of the *maamar* clarifies essential elements at the heart of the deep

and frightening *sugya* of the “souls of the *Tzaddikim*”, and attempt to summarize the ideas in this context would be too difficult, potentially blurring the delicate boundaries that separate the all important concept of “faith in the *Tzaddikim*” from its fallen and heretical applications.

4. “I Shall Build a World of Chesed”

This remarkable *maamar* could be a *sefer* unto itself, but as we will see, the students were not yet able to complete the project and as such we have only merited the beginning of what will eventually become a completed work. The essential body of the *maamar* is a running commentary of the *Rama m’Fano’s* “*Ayin-Beis Yedios*” (72 Points), in which the *Rama m’Fano* summarizes the Kabbalistic system of the Arizal’s student, R’ Yisrael Sarug zy”a. Because the *Rama’s* work comprises seventy-two subsections, the *Rebbe* descended into the depth of the work and revealed that the seventy-two subsections correspond directly to the “*Shem Ayin-Beis*”, or the 72 letter name of *Hashem*. Through this novelty, the *maamar* seeks to reveal the deep connection between the points expressed by the *Rama* and the three-letter aspects of the 72 letter name that correspond to it (the 72 letter name emerges out of three *pesukim*, each 72 letters long, resulting in 216 letters. These letters are broken up into three-letter fragments which are arranged by taking a single letter from each *passuk* and joining it together with singular letters from the other *pesukim*, arriving at 72 three-letter subsets which comprise the entirety of the 72 letter name).

The *maamar* begins with a discussion regarding the nature of the four-letter name of *Hashem* “*Y-H-V-H*”, and how this name represents the most essential expression of *Hashem’s* revelation within existence. Yet, as it is known, there are other names of *Hashem* described throughout our writings which also express essential elements of *Hashem’s* engagement with reality, namely the “42 letter name” (*Shem Mem-Beis*) and the “72 letter name” (*Shem Ayin-Beis*). To settle this apparent discrepancy regarding the essential names, the *maamar* makes clear that while the “42” and “72” letter names of *Hashem* represent essential elements regarding our relationship to the Infinite, nevertheless the inherent spiritual value of those names are ultimately rooted in the holiness of the four-letter name “*Y-H-V-H*”. Due to the “72 letter name” being rooted in the four-letter name “*Y-H-V-H*”, the *maamar* continues and shows how it must therefore also be explained and understood in and through the four-letter name of *Hashem*. Just as the four-letter name “*Y-H-V-H*” corresponds with the five interconnected worlds, five interconnected *partzufim* and five interconnected aspects of the soul, which in their totality represent the essential

building blocks of existence; so too the “72 letter name” can be seen as representing the basic building blocks of existence. It is this reasoning that animates the *maamar*’s novelty of aligning the “72 letter name” with the *Rama m’Fano*’s “72 points” which discuss the very concepts through which the light of the Infinite (*Ohr Ein Sof*) reveals Itself in and through finite existence.

Before entering into the depth of the *maamar*, there are two introductions which frame the *Rebbe*’s explanation and summary of the *Rama*’s “72 points”. The first is regarding the utilization of R’ Yisrael Sarug’s Kabbalistic system, and the second is regarding whether or not the *Rama m’Fano* himself intended for his “72 Points” to be aligned with the “72 letter name” of *Hashem* as expressed in this *maamar*. While a full treatment of the reception and acceptance of R’ Yisrael Sarug *zy”a* amongst our true *Tzaddikim* is beyond the scope of this short summary, we will review the basic idea as it is expressed at the outset of this *maamar*. Before the *Arizal*’s passing from this world, he warned and advised his students to cease from discussing and publishing the secrets that he had revealed. No one other than his main disciple, R’ Chaim Vital *zy”a* was allowed to record, write and share the teachings received from his *Rebbe* the *Arizal*. While all subsequent generations of authentic Kabbalistic interpretation followed this warning with full obedience, there was one general deviation from the rule, and that was the utilization of R’ Yisrael Sarug *zy”a*’s teachings. While no one disagrees with regards to the fact that he was a close disciple of the *Arizal* who spread his master’s teachings throughout Italy, the seemingly difficult concept is that he and his teachings were at first glance included within the general prohibition of studying anything other than the writings of R’ Chaim Vital. Furthermore, if the teachings recorded by R’ Yisrael Sarug were identical to the teachings recorded by R’ Chaim Vital that would be one thing, but the teachings of R’ Yisrael Sarug are very different from R’ Chaim’s teachings. While the teachings of R’ Chaim Vital, recorded within the holy *Sefer Eitz Chaim*, begin with the *tzimtzum* that preceded the world of *Adam Kadmon*; the teachings of R’ Yisrael Sarug begin at a point higher than anything *explicitly* discussed in *Sefer Eitz Chaim*, namely the three worlds of *Adam Kadmon Stimaah*, *Tehiru Ilaah* and *Mallbush*, known collectively as “*Olamos HaMalbush*”. While there have been certain *mekubalim* and *tzaddikim* who refrained from engaging with the teachings of R’ Yisrael Sarug *zy”a*, the *maamar* makes abundantly clear that not only are the teachings authentic and authoritative, but they also represent a level of secrets that on a certain level transcend the recorded teachings of R’ Chaim Vital. One of the main sources for an expanded treatment of R’ Yisrael Sarug’s teachings are the writings of his student the *Rama m’Fano*, as made explicitly clear is his *Sefer Ayin-Beis Yedios* (72 Points), and because this *maamar* is commentary of the “72 Points”, the first introduction clarifies the

proper approach to understanding the role R' Yisrael Sarug's teachings play in the unfolding light of *pnimiyus haTorah*.

The second introduction to this *maamar* is the question as to whether or not the *Rama m'Fano* intended for his "72 Points" to be arranged according to the "72 letter name". Instead of just ignoring the lack of precedence regarding the *Rebbe's chiddsuh*, the *maamar* spends a significant amount of space explaining how the possibility of aligning these two elements is in truth not dependent on the original intention of the *Rama*. While the *maamar* does point out that the associations and connections are so clear and precise that they do not need written proof to validate them, nevertheless the question of the original authors intentions is deeply significant when it comes to identifying the boundaries of future generations and their interpretation. Utilizing textual proofs from the *Rebbe's* ancestors- R' Yonason Eybeschutz and the Chassam Sofer- the *maamar* shows how any *sefer* written by a *Tzaddik* in holiness and purity contains even more than what is written in it, thereby enabling the possibility of a future student finding meaning and connection that was not originally contained within the mind of the author. For a *sefer* is not simply a closed text that was written in the past, rather the *sefer* represents a particular lens through which the light of *Hashem* and His *Torah* shines forth through the work of the *Tzaddik*, and as such anyone- even generations later- has the ability to uncover new elements of insight contained within that light. So while the *Rebbe* is not claiming that the connection between the "72 Points" and the "72 letter name" was explicitly contained within the intention of the *Rama m'Fano*, nevertheless the holiness and purity of the *Rama m'Fano* removes the *sefer* from the limited space of authorial intent and elevates it to the open space of the infinite possibilities contained within the light of the *Torah*.

After these two introductions, the *maamar* continues to work through the points described in *Sefer Ayin-Beis Yedios* while aligning them with the particular aspects of the "72 letter name" along with a running commentary describing the foundations of *yichud* contained within each teaching. While this summary will not attempt to convey the quintessential points revealed in each teaching, the general framework of the teachings are directed at clarifying some of the most delicate and significant aspects of the proper understanding of *Hashem's* unity with and within the finite and limited manifestations of existence and creation. Utilizing the precise and somewhat unique language employed by the *Rama m'Fano*, these teachings discuss the originary point of interaction between the light of the Infinite (*Ohr Ein Sof*) and the limits within which human understanding operates. Clarifying and revealing the deepest secrets of *yichud* in a language that can be understood, the points reviewed

in this *maamar* sit at the very top of the system and as such their proper understanding is essential for grasping any ideas or concepts which may emerge afterwards. While the *maamar* only reaches the thirteenth point with the *Rama's* "72 Points", the students show- utilizing earlier *seforim* which attempted to explain the 72 letter name- that there is an inherent value contained within even the slightest understanding of the name, and that the unfinished quality of the project does not detract in anyway from the depth of its purpose.

5. **"Discourse on the Faith in Unity"**

This remarkable *maamar* was given over by the *Rebbe* long before its year of publication, but because of its close connection to the essential ideas described in "*I Shall Build a World of Chesed*" it was printed here, or in the words of the students, "*This maamar as well as the maamar that proceeds it contain within themselves explanations on the roots, foundations and essentials of our purified faith, which is the simple faith we received at Har Sinai. It has been a very long time since we merited to hear these teachings from the holy mouth of our master, the Rebbe shlit"a, however, because we merited this year to publish the previous maamar that deals with roots of faith we said that [it is good to go from] one topic to another topic that is the same topic, and we decided to attach these two maamarim to the holiness, so that our understanding should be supported from both sides*". This all important *maamar* discusses the essential "*halachos*" needed to properly understand the "secret of unity" which describes the interconnection between the "essence" of *Hashem* and the levels and worlds that emerge and manifest as the finite space of existence. One could say that this *maamar* essentially addresses two absolute truths which stand in stark opposition to one another. **One the one hand-** as expressed in the writings of our *Tzaddikim*, the *Rishonim* through to the *Achronim*- when we speak of *Hashem* and the faith that we have in *Hashem's* presence, power and unity, we are speaking about *Hashem* Himself, so to speak, and not some revelatory power that *Hashem* revealed from within Himself, so to speak. In other words, when with our simple, almost childish faith we believe and affirm in the existence of *Hashem*, we are expressing our faith in *Hashem* Himself, for it is only *Hashem* Himself who has the presence, power and unity to impart any change, movement and intervention necessary within the worlds of limitation and concealment. This essential point is not only explicitly clear within the writings of the *Arizal* and the later systems of interpretation, but it is explicitly clear within the writings of the *Ramak* as well as the *Rishonei HaKabbalah*, namely the *Ramban* and his teacher *Rabbeinu Azriel of Gerona*. Furthermore, these *Tzaddikim* were not, heaven forbid, the originators of this

essential point of faith, but rather they were the ones who revealed the absolute truth of this point as revealed in the writings of *Chazal*, exemplified in the all important statement, “*Hashem is close to all those who call out to Him- to Him and not to His traits.*” **One the other hand**, however, we know that when it comes to human understanding, we are limited in what we can grasp and we are limited in what we can even attempt to grasp by way of language and thought. Nowhere is this prohibition of even claiming to grasp that which is above grasp clearer than when it comes to the “essence” of *Hashem*. To speak about *Hashem* Himself, so to speak, as He existed prior to the originary and wondrous *Tzimtzum* which opens up the possibility of thought is a theoretical transgression that puts the entire order-of-creation into danger. For if the finite creation claims that it can- even theoretically- grasp the “essence” of the Infinite Creator, then there is an implication that the finite creation is on a certain level equal to the Infinite Creator, heaven forbid, a transgressive thought that runs against the essential truth that the holiness of *Hashem* is infinitely removed and above the holiness of creation, as *Chazal* tell us, “*My Holiness is above your holiness*”. Faced with these two contradictory statements- the need to reach directly towards the “essence” of *Hashem* Himself on the one hand, and the awareness that we can never truly gain access to the “essence” of *Hashem* Himself on the other- forces us to uncover a third path of faith which transforms this apparent contradiction into a sustained paradox that rests at the core of the “secret of unity” (*Sod ha’Yichud*) and the “secret of faith” (*Raza d’Mihimnusa*). The aspect of “*the third verse that comes to determine the truth*” is the true “faith in unity” that the *maamar* now comes to explain. This paradoxical “faith in unity” is established upon the fact that *Hashem* reveals His infinite and ungraspable “essence” in and through His finite revelations known as the *Sefiros*, *Partzufim* and *Olamos*. And while these revelations are by no means considered “infinite” or “ungraspable”- terms that can only truly and absolutely to the “essence” of *Hashem* Himself, so to speak- nevertheless, the fact that these expressions and revelations are unified in all manners of unity with their Infinite source, they are able to borrow the qualities of their source so that they may be referred to as “infinite” and “ungraspable”. While it is utmost necessity to hold in mind that these revelations which emerge from within the “potential towards limitation within the unlimited” (*koach ha’gevul b’bilti gevul*) are not truly “Infinite”- a delicate mistake which opens upon the abysmal depths of heresy- nevertheless, due to the lofty nature and level of these revelations, on a certain level they can be referred to as “infinite”. Phrased differently- utilizing the language of the *Ramak*- there are two expressions of *Hashem’s* Infinite power; there is the ungraspable “essence” which stands removed from the possibility of human understanding, and there are the graspable “vessels” through which the “essence” is refracted. Each of these poles represents another side of the paradox that stands at

the heart of our relationship with *Hashem*- the “essence” represents our absolute inability to grasp the Infinite light of *Hashem* as it stands outside of creation, while the “vessels” represent our absolute need to cultivate a relationship with *Hashem* Himself. The “faith of unity” is the third element which transforms this static contradiction into a dynamic paradox that allows us to see how the Infinite “essence” rests within the finite “vessels” without either losing their essential status. And while we may not be able to grasp the Infinite “essence” that stands beyond the possibility of human grasp, we can grasp the “essence” as it is encloded within the finite revelations which compose limited existence. With this secret, both sides of the paradox remain in place- we remain aware of our inability to grasp *Hashem* Himself, while also being aware that when we touch and grasp His expressions and revelations, we are also touching His essence.

6. “To Him and not to His Traits”

This remarkable *maamar* continues in illuminating the ideas discussed in the earlier *maamarim*, namely the paradox at play within the heart of the “faith of unity” which on the one hand negates the possibility of grasping the “essence” of *Hashem*, while on the other hand demands a direct and immediate relationship with the “essence” of *Hashem*. Utilizing the basic ideas discussed in the “Faith of Unity”, this *maamar* applies the same concepts to the experience of prayer. Based on *Chazal's* interpretation of the *passuk* “To all those who call out to Him- to Him and not to His traits”, the *maamar* begins by stressing the absolute requirement of *davening* directly to *Hashem* and not, heaven forbid, *davening* to any of the revelations that emerge from within the Infinite light of *Hashem*. Aside from being a mistaken approach to the *avodah* of *tefilah* which demands that all prayers be directed directly to *Hashem* Himself, so to speak, the *maamar* points out that any attempt to *daven* directly towards a revealed aspect of *Hashem's* strength in the world, heaven forbid, is always already a descent into the heretical threat of *hag'shama*, or the application of limit and finitude to the Unlimited and the Infinite.

After explaining the absolute need of *davening* directly towards *Hashem*, the *maamar* then introduces the very real and significant sources that point out the impossibility of grasping the “essence” of *Hashem*, which includes the possibility of any feasible interaction, including *teffilah*. Utilizing the writings of the *Ramak*, *Ben Ish Chai* and the *Vilna Gaon*, the *maamar* continues to show how the essential act of *tefilah* needs to be directed to the fullest expression of *Hashem* within limitation, namely the *partzuf* of *Ze'ir Anpin* which is representative of the essential four-letter name of *Hashem* “Y-H-V-H”. And while the demand to direct one's *tefilah* to the

four-letter name as en clothed within the *partzuf* of *Ze'ir Anpin* at first glance appears to run counter to the demand to *daven* directly to *Hashem* Himself, the *maamar* reveals the delicate path of directing one's prayers to the "essence" of *Hashem* **through** the revealed traits of *Hashem* (*eilav b'derech midosav*). Phrased differently, the contradiction between only being able to reach *Hashem's* traits and the need to reach directly towards *Hashem* is settled through the recognition that one must reach immediately towards **Him**, but the reaching towards **Him** must be **through the mediation His traits**, revealing the paradoxical possibility of "mediated immediacy".

The *maamar* then continues to utilize numerous sources from within the writings of the *Baal HaTanya* and his students to show how these two elements of "**Him**" and "**His traits**" represent two aspects of *avodah*, namely "running forward" (*Ratzo*) and "returning back" (*Shov*). The impulse that demands one to move directly to *Hashem* "**Himself**" represents the "running forward"; while the awareness that one can only reach "**His traits**" represents the "returning back". These two movements are experienced during two particular moments in the *tefilah* process: the upper unity expressed in *Kriyas Shema* represents the "running forward" to "**Him**"; while the particular intentions of *Shemona Esrei* represent the "returning back" to "**His traits**". While there is an implication within the writings of the *Baal HaTanya* that the "running forward" to *Hashem* "**Himself**" represents unmediated access to the "essence" of *Hashem*, so to speak, the *Rebbe* makes it very clear that this cannot be taken as a literal grasp of the "essence"- an idea that runs against the very "faith in unity" described earlier- and that what it actually means is that in moments of "running forward" to "**Him**" is still only through "**His traits**", except the "**traits**" are completely nullified so that it is *as if* the individual is moving directly towards "**Him**". After discussing the particular ways in which the *kavaanos* express these two elements, the *maamar* concludes with a lengthy and remarkable discussion regarding the famous statement that "after all *kavaanos* I choose to *daven* with the awareness of a child". Far from implying a desire to cast away the awareness of "**His traits**" in the hopes of cleaning directly to "**Him**" like a child, the statement implies a lofty level on intention that truly understands the paradoxical secret of negating the necessity of "**His traits**" without actually negating them, moving through the limitation and touching the unlimited.

Yam HaChochma 2011/5772

1. “Holy Letters Regarding Matters of Unity”

While this 200 page section is different than the previous *maamarim* we have attempted to “summarize”, its placement within the section of “***Pnimiyus HaKabbalah v’haChassidus***”, as well as the context in which these holy letters were written places it within the purview of the *maamarim* wherein the *Rebbe* elucidates and clarifies the basic principles that rest at the very foundation of *pnimiyus haTorah*. As we will see from the language of the students, these letters were written in response to the series of *maamarim* printed in *Yam HaChochma (2010/5771)*, “*I Shall Build a World of Chesed*”, “*Faith in Unity*” and “*To Him and not to His Traits*” in which the fundamentals of faith and unity were expressed at length. In response to the ideas expressed and clarified in those *maamarim*, numerous people reached out to the *Rebbe* for further clarification regarding these essential building blocks upon which a proper and clear understanding of *pnimiyus haTorah* is built. Due to the precise and extensive nature of the ideas expressed in these letters, the students felt that publishing them for the public was not only beneficial, but necessary for a number of reasons.

In the language of the students, “*At the end of last year, we merited to publish a number of holy letters regarding matters of unity and faith in which our master and teacher, the Rebbe shlit”a responded with the grandeur of his hands to those asking regarding the word of Hashem. For since we merited to publish numerous maamarim in the previous Yam HaChochma dealing with the depths of the secrets of unity and faith, there have been many people knocking on the doors of teshuvah, requesting to hear “the word of Hashem- the secret of unity”, to accomplish the passuk, “and you shall know and place it within your heart”. And when these letters were received in the house of the wise one, he stretched out his hand to answer with wisdom and understanding, for he guides with compassion and he leads upon the pathways of water, may the wise hear and add wisdom.*” In explaining why the *Rebbe* felt it necessary to publish this letters in the form of a *maamar* for everyone to learn, the students continue in contextualizing these writings, “*The foundation [of these letters] is rooted in the actions of the great ones, our teachers the Rishonim who were like angels, the cedars of Lebanon and the pillars of Torah, for we have seen with our own eyes how much effort they put into smoothing out our hearts in the matters of faith and unity. Who is bigger than our master the Rambam z”l- from Moshe to Moshe there has been no other- from whose words we see how great the demand to clarify and*

explain matters of faith in a way that is received by the heart, like he himself wrote **“for it is incredibly valuable in my eyes to teach the essential matters of religion and faith above and beyond anything else.”** And anytime something regarding matters of faith arrives in his hands, he would exert great effort to explain it at length in a way that would be clear in all manners of clarity etc.” The student's introduction continues to describe the essential value of these letters in light of the *maamar* “*The Path of the Tree of Life*” which describes the essence of the *Baal Shem Tov's* revelation and the *Torah* of *Chassidus*. As is made abundantly clear in that *maamar*, one of the essential elements of *chassidus* is the attempt to take the essential foundations of faith and unity and draw them down into the lived experience of each and every individual in a clarified and direct way. By doing so, the *kabbalah* of the *Arizal* was protected from the natural tendency towards misinterpretation as well as made accessible to everyone. In line with the secret of *chassidus*, these letters offer a new level of clarity with regards to some of the most complex and delicate foundations of faith and unity.

After explaining why these letters are printed here, the introduction of the *maamar* continues to explain the specific content of the letters and what they are in response to. As a result of the proliferation of interest in *pnimiyus haTorah*, a wondrous development rooted in the burgeoning lights of redemption, many have reached out in written word to the *Rebbe* in hopes of clarifying the essential foundations of faith and unity. While the amount of letters and responses written far outweigh the framework of this *maamar*, the five letters chosen represent a clear and specific clarification of the foundational concepts of faith and unity. The first four letters were written in response to a current teacher of *Chassidus* and *Pnimiyus HaTorah* whose *seforim* discuss these topics, while the fifth letter is written to someone steeped in the teachings of *Chassidus* who nevertheless had revealed certain essential flaws in his understanding of the true nature of *yichud*.

The first four letters discuss the origin, purpose and creation of existence as expressed in the worlds that appear to be separate and apart from *Hashem*. The focus of **the first letter** is the interaction between the infinite light of *Hashem* and the lowly and concealed levels of *klippah* that exist at the lowest possible limit. Looking at the somewhat contradictory statements of the *Arizal* regarding this topic, the *Rebbe* utilizes the writings of the *Baal HaTanya* to show how the teachings of the *Arizal* are all pointing towards a singular conclusion. The letter also reviews the apparent differences between *Ramchal's* understanding of how creation took place and the *Tzemach Tzedek's* understanding. One of the more essential points elucidated in this letter is the clarification that although *Hashem's* presence and

existence permeate all things at every moment, to speak explicitly about the “godly” nature of this worldly existence from the perspective of “human perception” (*daas tachtan*) is tantamount to heresy and foreign worship. The first letter ends with a discussion regarding the difference between the *Nefesh HaChaim* and *Chassidus* in their approach to the requirement of contemplating the actual status of existence from the viewpoint of “Hashem’s perspective” (*daas elyon*). **The second letter** discusses the *Ramchal’s* description of the emergence of being, with the all important clarification that in spite of the fact the *Ramchal* implies that creation came into being through the “power of limitation and deficiency”, nevertheless it is always only the unlimited and full “essence” of *Hashem* so to speak that brings existence into being, except the way through which *Hashem* does this is through the “power of limitation and deficiency” which is rooted in the aspect of *Hashem’s* “essence”. The letter ends by showing how the approach of *Chassidus* is to unify all apparent differences of opinion, for *Chassidus* represents the loftiest level of *pnimiyus haTorah*, referred to as “the secrets of secrets”.

1. “Discourse on the Light Sown for the Tzaddik”

It is difficult to overstate the remarkable value of this *maamar* which- in an authoritative fashion- clarifies and expresses the highly specific parameters needed to properly understand the frighteningly deep *sugya* of “connecting to *Tzaddikim*” (*hiskashrus l’tzaddikim*). The main body of the *maamar* consists of three parts, **first** an exploration, examination and clarification of the great spiritual need of connecting to *Tzaddikim*, as well as the spiritual and theological rules that determine the viability and value of the connection. Of the more important elements of this first part, the *maamar* expends a lot of effort clarifying some of the typical mistakes made in this *sugya*, mistakes that at first glance appear to be harmless, but in truth represent the edge wherein the “faith of unity” steps beyond its prescribed boundaries and begins to fall into the abysmal depths of heresy and foreign worship. **Second**, the *maamar* describes in great detail and precision the nature of *tefillah* with the *Tzaddik*, clarifying the actual objective of connecting to *Tzaddikim* during prayer, as well as visiting *Tzaddikim* for the sake of prayer. While the second part of the *maamar* clearly defines the affirmative aspects of *tefillah* with the *Tzaddik*, the main focus is on rectifying the mistaken beliefs that surround this highly delicate and sensitive topic, righting wrongs and correcting mistakes to save those who have misunderstood from the abysmal depths of heresy and foreign worship, heaven

forbid. **Third**, the *maamar* discusses the spiritual activity of “prostrating” (*hish’tat’kus*) oneself at the graves of the *Tzaddikim*. The main ideas expressed in this third section discuss the value of praying at the gravesites of *Tzaddikim* and the encounter with the various gradations of “surrounding lights” (*makifim*) that the student may gain access to when engaged with correctly.

The *maamar* begins by collecting and gathering the various statements and teachings of Rebbe Nachman of Breslov regarding the importance of connecting to *Tzaddikim*. While the teachings vary in their specific point of emphasis, the general concept is clear throughout: connecting to *Tzaddikim* is not simply a spiritual tool or goal amongst others, rather it is the essential pillar upon which the path towards true *avodas Hashem* is built. After explaining how connection with *Tzaddikim* is the “benefit upon which all things depend”, the *maamar* continues to explain the spiritual mechanism behind this essential benefit. Based on teachings from *Chazal* and the *Rishonim* as well as sources within the direct tradition of *pnimiyus haTorah*, the *maamar* describes how the essence of connecting to *Tzaddikim* is built on the fact that the *Tzaddik* serves as the “vehicle” or “chariot” (*merkavah*) for the presence of *Hashem* in this world referred to as the “*Shechinah*”. And while the ultimate goal is for each and every person to connect and cleave with the “*Shechinah*” itself, *Chazal* have already made clear that the finite is incapable of grasping the Infinite, and as such the general populace is barred access from this direct encounter with *Hashem’s* revealed presence. Faced with the contradictory drives that on the one hand demand immediate access to the “*Shechinah*”, while on the other hand denying the possibility of immediate access, *Chazal* offer a middle path that transforms the contradiction of terms into a sustained paradox. Namely, while the typical individual cannot cleave directly to the “*Shechinah*”, they can connect themselves with *Talmidei Chachomim*, and by connecting the *Talmidei Chochomim* it is *as-if* they are cleaving to the “*Shechinah*”. Now, the *maamar* makes it abundantly clear beyond any shadow of a doubt that there is no equivalency being made between *Hashem’s* presence and the physical existence of the *Tzaddik*, heaven forbid, a mistaken concept that stands in stark contrast to the laws of spirituality, faith and unity; rather the *Tzaddik* as a result of their humility, self-nullification and annihilation of selfhood becomes a place where the “*Shechinah*” can rest in the secret of “*hashra’ah*”. It is of utmost importance to hold this absolute truth in mind at all times: the “*Shechinah*” does not unify itself with any form of vessels (*keilim*) in the worlds of *Briyah*, *Yetzirah* or *Asiyah*- from the most refined expression of spirituality to the thickest expression of physicality. What this means is that there can never be an immediate or absolute unity between the *Hashem’s* presence as expressed through the “*Shechinah*” and any revelation or expression below the world of *Atzilus*, and to say otherwise would be

to fall into the traps of foreign worship which attempt to unify and equate the worlds of separation with the light of the “*Shechinah*”. Once we have established the fact that the “*Shechinah*” does not unify itself with any form of *keilim* beneath the world of *Atzilus* wherein the paradoxical “secret of faith” gives way to the possibility of both “vessels” and “lights” being unified as one, we can then begin to understand the secret of “*hashra’ah*” in the worlds of separation- *Briyah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah*. The *maamar* continues to explain that the “*Shechinah’s*” ability to rest its presence is dependent on the level of “nullification” (*Bittul*) found by the *Tzaddik*. Like the *Beis HaMikdash*, the “*Shechinah*” does not unify itself with the physical presence of the *Tzaddik*, but rather it “rests” upon the *Tzaddik* as a direct result of the *Tzaddik* self-nullification and annihilation of selfhood. The intensity of the “*Shechinah’s*” presence varies in level- much like the ten levels of *kedusha* in space- according to the level of *Bittul* experienced by the *Tzaddik*. Because the *Tzaddik* has achieved the fullest level of self-nullification and nothingness, the presence of the “*Shechinah*” rests upon them without being unified with them, allowing all those who connect themselves to the *Tzaddik* to access the presence of the “*Shechinah*” that rests upon them. The *maamar* continues to stress without any shadow of a doubt that the essential aspect of connection to *Tzaddikim* is connecting with the presence of the “*Shechinah*” that rests upon them as a result of their utter self-nullification, and not heaven forbid with the *Tzaddik* themselves. By connecting to the presence of “*Shechinah*” which rests upon the *Tzaddik* as a result of their utter and complete *Bittul*, the students who connect themselves to the *Tzaddik* are like the branches that are connecting with their roots, for each true *Tzaddik* represents a particular mode of connecting with the “*Shechinah*”, and the root- which is the *Tzaddik*- connects to all of the branches- which are the students- that connect themselves back to their root. The *maamar* continues to explain- based on the analogy of the root and its branches- why Rebbe Nachman describes the essential mode of connection to the *Tzaddik* as loving the *Tzaddik*, for “love” (*ahavah*) is the secret of uniting to separate entities that are unified in their root, and it is through reuniting the branch and the root that the apparent separation is revealed to be a hidden form of loving connection. The first part of this *maamar* concludes with a remarkable teaching regarding the all important nature of connecting with *Tzaddikim*. Quoting from earlier *Mekubalim*, the *maamar* asks why this current exile has been longer and more difficult than previous exiles that were rooted in transgressions more significant than ours. In response the *maamar* describes how the heretical attempt to transform a human being into a “god” is of such a difficult level, that it takes countless *Tzaddikim* to rectify the issue. Therefore, when we come to properly understand the delicate and precise nature of connecting to *Tzaddikim*, always keeping in mind that the “*Shechinah*” is not heaven forbid unified with the *Tzaddik*,

but rather “resting upon” (*hasra’ah*) the *Tzaddik* as a result of their complete and utter self-nullification to the point of nothingness, we come to rectify the tragic mistake of equating any human being- no matter how lofty- with the presence of *Hashem*.

The second part of this remarkable *maamar* discusses the concept of praying by the *Tzaddikim*. While the *maamar* reviews the general concepts as well as the particular applications, the main point of this section is to emphasize that one is never praying to the *Tzaddik*, heaven forbid, but rather praying to the presence of the “*Shechinah*” which rests upon the *Tzaddik*. Like the *Mishkan* and the *Beis HaMikdash*, the sacred and consecrated locations served as a resting point for the presence of *Hashem*, but they were never, heaven forbid, identified with or as the “*Shechinah*” itself, a mistaken belief that is heretical. Those places represented the loftiest spaces of prayer because of the Divine presence that rested there, enabling all those who entered into their vicinity the possibility of cleaving and connecting with the “*Shechinah*” in such a way that was hitherto inaccessible. The same is true with *teffilah* with the *Tzaddik*, the benefit is not, heaven forbid, that the *Tzaddik* represents some physical expression of spirituality, but rather that the *Tzaddik* through his complete and utter *bittul* gives access to the “*Shechinah*” in such a potent way that the *teffilos* prayed together with or near the *Tzaddik* take on a different form of intensity. In addition to serving as a resting place for the “*Shechinah*”, the *Tzaddik* also plays a role in the efficacy of all other *teffilos*. Fully armed with the true intentions and *kavvanos* of the *teffilah*, the divine service of the *Tzaddik* serves as the vehicle through which all *teffilos* ascend upwards. This is not to say, heaven forbid, that the *Tzaddik’s teffilah* is the only one desired by *Hashem*, but rather the depth and intensity of the *Tzaddik’s avodah* serves as an additional motivation helping to elevate those *teffilos* which have not yet been able to ascend to their proper place. In this sense, the *Tzaddik* serves the role of “*shliach tzibbur*”, the prayer leader appointed by the congregation who completes and elevates the prayers of the congregation. What is of utmost importance when dealing with the question of *teffilah* with the *Tzaddik* is that one is never praying to the *Tzaddik*, heaven forbid, a transgressive mistake that enters the territory of foreign worship. The *Tzaddik* contains no independent power beyond the utter and complete *bittul* which allows him to serve as a resting place for the “*Shechinah*”.

The third and final part of the *maamar* discusses the nature of praying by the gravesites of *Tzaddikim* and the spiritual activity of prostrating oneself upon the graves of the *Tzaddikim*. After clarifying that the *teffilos* are never to the *Tzaddik* who is buried, but rather in the merit of the *Tzaddik* who is buried, the *maamar* continues

to discuss the spiritual benefit of praying by the graves of *Tzaddikim* with an in depth discussion regarding the various elements of the *Tzaddik's neshamah* that can be accessed at the resting place of the *Tzaddik*. Once these elements are clarified, the *maamar* concludes with a reprinting of the *Mitteler Rebbe's "Kuntreis HaHishtachvus"* which discusses, clarifies and elucidates every aspect of prayer and connection at the gravesites of *Tzaddikim*.

2. "*Shiurim on Eitz Chaim*"

This remarkable section is better described as a commentary rather than a *maamar*. It offers us a glimpse into the profound project of explaining the *Arizal's Sefer Eitz Chaim* according to the principles of unity and faith revealed within the teachings of *Chassidus*. While this lengthy discourse only touches upon a small part of the first gate of *Sefer Eitz Chaim*, the ideas discussed at length serve as a fundamental introduction to the *Rebbe's* approach towards the writings of *Kabbalah* as well as *Chassidus*. In addition to the profound nature of the ideas discussed, this *maamar* also hints to a lengthier project wherein the entire *Sefer Eitz Chaim* is explained according to the secrets of unity, or in the language of the students at the end of this *maamar*: "*It is finished but not completed, for the day has already passed and we have not merited to publish more than this small amount, and it is both painful and difficult for our spirits. Nevertheless blessed be the Supernal Creator Who has acquired both heaven and earth, for bringing us to this moment, for in this past year which has passed over us, the reservoirs of the heavens opened up and we merited to hear from the holy mouth of our master and teacher the Rebbe shlit"a, organized shiurim on the first four gates of Sefer Eitz Chaim according to the pathways of unity, based on the true foundations of the Torah of our master the holy Baal Shem Tov. However, as a result of our inequities we were unable to record and arrange these teachings appropriately, aside from this small amount that was printed above which is but a small amount regarding the inner essence of the first investigation at the beginning of Sefer Eitz Chaim, and there will come a time in the future when Hashem creates an opening for us to publish the rest.*"

As an introduction, the *maamar* describes the rationale behind explaining the *Kabbalah* of the *Arizal* specifically according to the teachings of the *Baal Shem Tov*. We are reminded- based on the *maamar "The Path of the Tree of Life"* (*Yam HaChochmah 2010/5771*)- that the *Torah* can be interpreted on five different levels, the typical fourfold breakdown of *pshat*, *remez*, *drush* and *sod*, with the additional fifth level of "*raza d'razin*" or "*neshamah*" as the *Emek HaMelech* and the students of

the *Vilna Gaon* point out. Each of these five levels of interpretation correspond to the five interconnected world's *Adam Kadmon*, *Atzilus* and *Briyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Asiyah*; which in turn correspond to the five aspects of the soul *yechidah*, *chaya*, *neshamah*, *ruach* and *nefesh*.

Torah	<i>Pshat</i>	<i>Remez</i>	<i>Drush</i>	<i>Sod</i>	<i>Sod of Sod</i>
World	<i>Asiyah</i>	<i>Yetzirah</i>	<i>Briyah</i>	<i>Atzilus</i>	<i>Adam Kadmon</i>
Soul	<i>Nefesh</i>	<i>Ruach</i>	<i>Neshamah</i>	<i>Chaya</i>	<i>Yechidah</i>

The teachings of the *Arizal* correspond to the soul aspect of *Chaya* and the world of *Atzilus*, while the teachings of the *Baal Shem Tov* correspond to the soul aspect of *Yechidah* and the world of *Adam Kadmon*. In order to gain proper access to the level of *Yechidah* and *Adam Kadmon* which due to its profound holiness and unity remains devoid of any true grasp, one must first gain access to the level of *Chaya* and *Atzilus*, a level that is graspable in relation to *Yechidah/Adam Kadmon*. Once a person has entered into the *Kabbalah* of the *Arizal* which corresponds to the *Chaya/Atzilus* level, they can then ascend to the *Chassidus* of the *Baal Shem Tov* which corresponds to the *Yechidah/Adam Kadmon* level. For this reason, if one truly wants to enter into the gates of unity revealed through the teachings of *Chassidus*, it must be by way of the teachings of *Kabbalah*,

The *maamar* discusses the first investigation (*chakirah*) brought at the beginning of *Eitz Chaim*, namely the question regarding *Hashem's* purpose for creating the world. According to the *Arizal* one of the essential reasons revealed to us was so that *Hashem*, so to speak, could reveal all the potential that lay dormant within the Infinite light of *Hashem*, represented by the different names and attributes used to refer to *Hashem's* governance and interaction with things which appear to be other than Him. In order for *Hashem* to reveal the full potency of expression, there needed to be something apparently separate and other than Himself upon which He could express His "qualities", for there is no relationship without two separate entities and difference. The *Arizal* continues to show how this purpose for creation takes shape in the three staged process through which *Hashem* reveals himself: the **past** prior to the manifestation of limitation, the **present** wherein limitation is revealed from within the unlimited, and the **future** wherein limitation returns back to its unlimited source after the completion of creation. To highlight the fact that this three stage process wherein *Hashem* is now capable, so to speak, of revealing His latent potency

into actualization rests at the core of existence, the *Arizal* shows that the four-letter essential name of *Hashem* (Y-H-V-H) represents these three stages of existence: **“Haya” (Past)**- what was prior to creation; **“Hoveh” (Present)**- what is during the time of creation; and **“Yiheyeh” (Future)**- what will be after things revert back to that which was prior to creation. It is on this point specifically that the *maamar* introduces its essential question: if the entire purpose of creation and the expression of limitation is for the sake of things returning back to their original state of unlimited and infinite perfection as they existed prior to creation, then what actual point is there in the act of creation itself? If the ultimate goal is for things to return to the original state from which they emerged, why go through the whole complicated and difficult process of creation (as expressed in the *Seder HaHishtalshlus*, the unfolding of worlds from the original *Tzimtzum* down to the lowest possible point of this worldliness), wouldn't it be simpler for things to have always remained within their original state of pure and utter negation within *Hashem's* infinite and annihilating light?

After setting up this essential question, the *maamar* begins to offer an answer that encompasses and informs so much of the *Rebbe's* approach and system, namely that the purpose of creation was so that the Infinite and unlimited light of *Hashem* as represented by **“Haya” (Past)**, could manifest its potential into actuality as represented by **“Hoveh” (Present)**, so that the measured and finite levels of existence could eventually reascend back up to their Infinite and unlimited source at the completion of existence as represented by **“Yiheyeh” (Future)**. The return of measurement and limitation back up to its source within the Infinite and unlimited light of *Hashem*, however, is not simply a return back to the way things prior to creation, but rather the return of limitation and finitude back up into the unlimited Infinite reveals an even stronger and more powerful expression of Infinity in the sense that the Infinite is now shown to contain within itself a doubled potency of both limitlessness as well as limitation. For prior to the creation of measurement and limitation (**Haya**) nothing existed other than the annihilating light of the Infinite, with no possibility of limitation or concealment. With the emergence of the levels and worlds- from the original *Tzimtzum*, down to the lowest expression of this worldly existence (**Hoveh**)- the original light of the Infinite was concealed, making it appear as if the only thing that exists is measurement and limitation. When the levels and measurements of existence eventually ascend back up into their original source (**Yiheyeh**), it will be revealed that the light of the Infinite is so wondrously powerful that it contains within itself the light of limitation and measurement as well, thereby revealing an additional adornment (*tosefes kishut*) for the Infinite

which was not present at the original stage of things prior to the creation of all worlds.

It turns out then that the essential purpose of creation was to reveal the additional adornment to the original perfection that existed prior to concealment. This adornment of perfection, wherein the imperfection of creation allows for the perfection that existed prior to creation to become more perfect in that it now includes both perfection and imperfection within it, takes place through the descent away from the original perfection into the present state of imperfection and the eventual elevation of imperfection back up into perfection. The *maamar* continues to align these three stages of past perfection, present imperfection and the future adornment of perfection with the three *partzufim* of *Binah*, *Chochma* and *Keser*. The level of Infinite perfection that existed prior to the creation of the world corresponds to the level of *Chochma*, which is the aspect of “*Ayin*” and the world of *Atzilus*. The level of imperfection present during the existence of the world corresponds to the level of *Binah*, which is the aspect of “*Ani*” and the worlds of *Briyah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah*. The level of perfection that includes imperfection within it which will be revealed in the future corresponds to the level of *Keser*, which is the aspect of “*Ani*” and “*Ayin*” at once and the world of *Adam Kadmon*.

<i>Haya</i> <i>(Past)</i>	<i>Perfection</i>	<i>Chochmah</i>	<i>Atzilus</i>	<i>Ayin</i> <i>(Nothing)</i>
<i>Hoveh</i> <i>(Present)</i>	<i>Imperfection</i>	<i>Binah</i>	<i>Briyah,</i> <i>Yetzirah,</i> <i>Asiyah</i>	<i>Ani</i> <i>(Something)</i>
<i>Yehiyeh</i> <i>(Future)</i>	<i>Perfection</i> <i>and</i> <i>Imperfection</i>	<i>Keser</i>	<i>Adam</i> <i>Kadmon</i>	<i>Ani v’Ayin</i> <i>(Something</i> <i>and Nothing)</i>

The *maamar* continues in describing another essential element of this three stage process of existence, namely the capacity for the Infinite and unlimited light of *Hashem* to be “grasped” by His creations, representative of the greatest possible bestowal of goodness contained within the original thought of creation. The problem, however, is that of the most essential laws dictating our relationship with the Infinite and unlimited light of *Hashem* is that “*thought cannot grasp Him at all*” (*leis machshavah tfisah beih klal*). For when it comes to the most elevated expression

of *Hashem's* Infinite light, any thought that attempts to grasp something affirmative is tantamount to applying measurement and limitation to that which exceeds all possible measure, a theoretical mistake that is considered heretical in the most delicate of ways. So if the "essence" of *Hashem's* Infinite light which was present prior to the creation of existence is completely outside the human possibility of grasp, then how can a human being ever experience "grasping *Hashem*" which is not only the greatest possible bestowal of goodness available, but also the ultimate purpose of creation? In order to arrive at an answer, the *maamar* introduces another statement regarding the ungrasability of the *Hashem's* Infinite light, except this time the conclusion is different, "thought cannot grasp Him at all, but He is grasped in the desire of the heart" (*itfas b'riusa d'libba*). From this statement- brought down numerous times in the writings of *Chassidus* in the name of the *Zohar*- we see that while the prohibition against assuming one can grasp *Hashem* with their thoughts remains in place, the possibility of grasping *Hashem* through the desire of the heart is revealed. This apparent contradiction is settled when it is mapped onto the three stage process of "**Haya**"- that which was prior to creation, "**Hoveh**"- that which is during creation, and "**Yehiyeh**"- that which will be after creation.

As the *maamar* has already made clear, the initial descent away from the Infinite perfection of *Hashem* that existed prior to the creation of the world ("**Haya**"), into the apparent finite imperfection of creation as it exists throughout the "six millena in which the world exists", is not simply so that things will revert back to the way they were in the beginning, for if that was the case then the entire process of creation and existence would appear to be meaningless. Rather, the ultimate purpose of creation is for the limited and measured expression of existence ("**Hoveh**") to ascend back upwards to the Infinite light of *Hashem* for the sake of revealing an "additional adornment" (*tosefes kishut*) whereby the Infinitude of *Hashem* is shown to be even more potent and powerful than the expression of the Infinite that existed prior to the creation of the world ("**Yihyeh**"). Prior to the creation of existence, the Infinite light of *Hashem* was completely removed from the possibility of human grasp, "for no thought can grasp Him". During the duration of existence, as the Infinite light of *Hashem* descends into measurement and limitation, we as the essential elements of existence have the ability to grasp and discern the measured expression of *Hashem's* Infinite light as it rests and expresses itself through the vessels and shapes of this worldly existence. And while the annihilating Infinitude of *Hashem's* light that existed prior to the creation appears to be removed and concealed from existence, it is still ever present within the deepest recesses of each and every experience, even if conscious "grasp" is unavailable. When the general shape of existence ascends back upwards towards its original source within the

Infinite, it is not simply a return back to the incomprehensible and ungraspable reality of *Hashem* regarding which we are told that “*no thought can grasp Him*”, but rather we are now armed with the awareness of *Hashem’s* Infinite and essential light that we “grasped” almost unconsciously during and throughout our experience in the limited expression of existence. And while the return upwards back towards the Infinite and unlimited light of *Hashem* brings with it a natural return to the laws which dictate the absolute ungrasability of the “essence” of the Infinite in any “thought” or comprehensible way, we are now able to grasp the Infinite by way of the “desire of the heart” which is a way of grasping that simultaneously acknowledges the utter impossibility of grasp, “*touching and not touching*”. For if prior to the creation of the world, the loftiest point of experience was one of “not knowing” due to the Infinitely removed “essence” of *Hashem*, the descent into separation and finitude gives us the ability to come and “know that we do not know”, which is in and of itself the “additional adornment” of creation and the possibility of experiencing the greatest level of goodness imaginable, the ability for the finite to “grasp” the Infinite.

1. “Introduction to the Pnimi Commentary on Sefer Eitz Chaim”

This remarkable *maamar* serves as a fundamental introduction regarding the possibility and need of studying *Sefer Eitz Chaim*- and many other *seforim* including the Vilna Gaon's commentary on *Safra D'Tzneyusa*, Rebbe Nachman's *Sippurei Maasaiyot* and the *Admor HaEmtzaee's Shaar HaYichud*- in alignment with the four letter essential name of *Hashem: Y-H-V-H*. As stated by the students in the subtitle, this *maamar*, “speaks wonders in explaining the order of the worlds (*Seder HaHishtalshlus*) in general and in particular, in accordance with the secret of the name *Y-H-V-H* which includes all forms of *avodah*. It is a requirement upon each and every person in the world- to grasp how all the particularities of the *Seder HaHishtalshlus* correspond to the pathways of the *avodah* of *yichud* and *emunah*, and how all of them are contained both in general and in particular within the secret of the holy name *Y-H-V-H*.” The *maamar* begins with the *Arizal's* statement in the first investigation of *Sefer Eitz Chaim* which describes the ultimate purpose of creation as being *Hashem's* revelation of his essential name *Y-H-V-H*, something that would be impossible, so to speak, without the apparent appearance of an existence separate and removed from the Infinite light of *Hashem*. Utilizing various sources from the writings of the earlier *mekubalim* who preceded the *Arizal*, the *maamar* makes clear that the name *Y-H-V-H* also includes all of the other names of *Hashem* such as the 12 letter name, the 42 letter name and the 72 letter name, all of which function within the most expansive sense of the four letter name *Y-H-V-H*. Of utmost significance for the understanding of this *maamar* is the fact that if the revelation of the name *Y-H-V-H* is the essential purpose of creation, then every possible aspect of creation must be found and contained within the expression of the name *Y-H-V-H*. While this *maamar* spends a lot of time explaining and clarifying the various associations of worlds and levels with the particular letters of *Y-H-V-H*, the essential purpose is to show how each and every level described in the writings of our *Tzaddikim*, not only can, but must be applied and engaged by way of *avodah*, wherein the ideas being described transform into experiential states of connection, unity and faith within the life and experience of each and every individual. Utilizing a remarkable statement from the *Leshem Shevo v'Achlama*, the *maamar* stresses how any teaching expressed within *Sefer Eitz Chaim* and the writings of the *mekubalim* can be transformed into a process of *yichudim* wherein the ideas themselves are transformed into pathways of *avodah* and intention, all of which are contained and subsumed within the essential and

holy four letter name of *Y-H-V-H* as expressed in *Sefer Bris Menucha*. And while there are many ways in which these pathways of *avodah* can be expressed and experienced, the *maamar* identifies four particular paths revealed by four particular *Tzaddikim* in alignment with the four letters *Y-H-V-H*: **Y- yichudim** **H- hisbonenus** **V- torah** **H- hisbodedus**. These four pathways of *avodah* were revealed by four *Tzaddikim*: **Yichudim**: the Komarna Rebbe, **Hisbonenus**: the Baal HaTanya, **Torah**: the Vilna Gaon and **Hisbodedus**: Rebbe Nachman. It is not only the teachings of the *Arizal* that need to be applied internally according to these four levels, but rather every aspect of *Torah* study that the person encounters must be transformed and elevated in and through this fourfold path of *avodah*.

After explaining the basic foundation of the *maamar*, the *Rebbe* continues to show how this basic formulation is clear in the writings of the *Arizal*, and how although it is not stated explicitly, the alignment of levels with the four letter name *Y-H-V-H* must be true regarding the levels beyond what the *Arizal* described as well. For the *Arizal* the levels of existence that are accessible to our understanding and grasp are the five worlds that come into being after the initial *Tzimtzum* wherein the Infinite and annihilating light of *Hashem* was concealed for the sake of revealing that which appears to be other than *Hashem*. The fivefold order of worlds are directly aligned with the five elements of the four letter name *Y-H-V-H*: The **Point of the Yud** corresponds to the world of *Adam Kadmon*, the **Yud** corresponds to the world of *Atzilus*, the first **Hei** corresponds to the world of *Briyah*, the **Vav** corresponds to the world of *Yetzirah*, and the last **Hei** corresponds to the world of *Asiyah*.

Four Letter Name	Worlds
<i>Point of Yud</i>	<i>Adam Kadmon</i>
<i>Yud</i>	<i>Atzilus</i>
<i>Hei</i>	<i>Briyah</i>
<i>Vav</i>	<i>Yetzirah</i>
<i>Hei</i>	<i>Asiyah</i>

According to the *Arizal* five part breakdown of the worlds in accordance with the five aspects of the four letter name *Y-H-V-H* is not only true at the general level (*klalus*) wherein each letter of the general name corresponds to a particular world, but rather it is true on a particular level (*pratus*) as well, wherein each and every letter

of *Y-H-V-H* contains its own subset of the entirety of the name, so that- for example- the *Yud* which corresponds to the world of *Atzilus* contains its own particular subset of the fivefold breakdown of *Y-H-V-H*, except that now the fivefold breakdown is within the particular expression of the letter *Yud*. This is true for each and every one of the five aspects of the four letter name, bringing us to five expressions containing their own particular subset of five expressions, thereby moving from the five levels of the general shape of things into the twenty-five levels of the particular shape of things.

<i>General (klal)</i>	<i>Particular (prat)</i>
<i>Point of Yud</i>	<i>Point of Yud: PoY, Y, H, V, Y</i>
<i>Yud</i>	<i>Yud: PoY, Y, H, V, Y</i>
<i>Hei</i>	<i>Hei: PoY, Y, H, V, Y</i>
<i>Vav</i>	<i>Vav: PoY, Y, H, V, Y</i>
<i>Yud</i>	<i>Hei: PoY, Y, H, V, Y</i>

As the *maamar* makes clear, the equivalency between the general *klal* and the particular *prat* is rooted in the all encompassing unity that surrounds and fills the *Seder HaHishtalshlus* to the point that any particular expression contains within itself the whole just as each whole contains within itself all the particulars. This radical expression of unity is not only true for the transition from the five levels of expression associated with the general *Klal* and the twenty-five levels of expression associated with particularized *prat*, but rather the principle of unity descends down into each and every imaginable *prat* so that in truth the possible manifestations and expressions of the four letter name *Y-H-V-H* are infinite, mirroring the Infinite light of *Hashem* that the name *Y-H-V-H* comes to reveal.

The *maamar* continues to show that while the *Arizal* limited the revealed expression of his teachings to the five worlds that emerge after the original *Tzimtzum* along with their alignment to the five parts of the four-letter name *Y-H-V-H*, it is self evident that the four-letter name must also contain within itself correlations to the levels that existed prior to the world of *Adam Kadmon*, for if the name is the essential purpose behind creation, then by necessity it must contain within itself every possible expression of existence, including the levels that precede the *Tzimtzum* and the subsequent worlds as expressed in the writings of the *Arizal*. This

point is highlighted by the teachings of the *Leshem Shevo V'Achalma* as well as the *Rashash* who extended remarkable efforts and time to disclosing the ultimate secret of connecting the worlds after the *Tzimtzum* with the "worlds" that existed in potential prior to the *Tzimtzum* through the essential and holy four letter name *Y-H-V-H*.

In order for the *Rebbe* to express the remarkable *chiddushim* that he reveals regarding the alignment of the entirety of the *Seder HaHishtalshlus* and the four-letter name *Y-H-V-H*, the *maamar* introduces two approaches to the name *Y-H-V-H* upon which the *Rebbe* bases the incredible approach we will soon see. One approach- based heavily on the writings of **Chassidus**- will be used to describe the general role each letter of the four-letter name plays; and the second approach-based primarily on the writings of the **Leshem Shevo V'Achlama**- will be used to describe the particular aspects of the *Seder HaHishtalshlus* which each letter of the four-letter name represents. It is ultimately the union of the paths of *Chassidus* and the *Leshem Shevo V'Achlama* that serves as the key to understanding the *chiddushim* of the *Rebbe*. Regarding the general role each letter plays as described in **Chassidus**, the general approach can be described as follows: the four-letter name *Y-H-V-H* is composed of two sets of letters, masculine letters (*Yud and Vav*) and feminine letters (*Hei and Hei*). These two subsets of letters represent the mode of movement through which the Infinite light of *Hashem* expresses itself in and through the vehicle of that letter. The masculine letters represent the movement from potential into actuality through the process of expression or egression, and the feminine letters represent the movement from actualization back into potential through the process of ascension or regression. Each subset of letters represents the doubled engagement with the particular mode of movement, so that **Point of the Yud** represents the unity between egression outwards and regression inwards; the **Yud** represents the first instance of egression outwards; the first **Hei** represents the first instance of regression back upwards; the **Vav** represents the second instance of egression outwards; and the last **Hei** represents the second instance of regression back upwards. It is through this doubled process of egression and regression, or expression and ascension that the four letter name of *Hashem* allows itself to manifest as something other than the infinite and annihilating light of *Hashem* that existed prior to the manifestation of existence. Regarding the particular coordinates each letter represents in the general form of *Seder HaHishtalshlus* as described by the **Leshem Shevo V'Achlama** can be described as follows: while the teachings recorded by R' Chaim Vital in *Sefer Eitz Chaim* begin with the world of *Adam Kadmon* which follows the initial *Tzimtzum* and *Kav*, implying that anything that existed prior to the *Tzimtzum* is off limits, nevertheless we know from elsewhere that even the

light of the Infinite (*ohr ein sof*) that existed prior to the *Tzimtzum* is still just a level of revelation and not heaven forbid identifiable with the true “essence” of *Hashem*. Therefore, even the levels that preceded the world of *Adam Kadmon* can find alignment with the four-letter name of *Hashem*. For the *Leshem*, the alignment of these worlds with the four-letter name are as follows: **The Point of the Yud** represents the world of *Ohr Ein Sof*; the **Yud** represents the world of the *Tzimtzum* and the *Kav*; the first **Hei** represents the world of *Adam Kadmon*; the **Vav** represents the world of *Atzilus*; and the last **Hei** represents the worlds of *Briyah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah*.

Letter of the Name	Movement (Chassidus)	World (Leshem)
Point of Yud	<i>Expression and Regression</i>	<i>World of Ohr Ein Sof</i>
Yud	<i>First Expression</i>	<i>World of Tzimtum and Kav</i>
Hei	<i>First Regression</i>	<i>Adam Kadmon</i>
Vav	<i>Second Expression</i>	<i>Atzilus</i>
Hei	<i>Second Regression</i>	<i>Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah</i>

After the *maamar* has fully set up the approach upon which the *Rebbe* will base his treatment of the four-letter name, it spends a significant amount of time describing the purpose of all of this, namely the movement away from the initial stage of perfection as it existed prior to creation, the descent into the particularized levels of finite existence, and the eventual return of limited existence back upwards towards its Infinite source, the three staged process represented by the threefold meaning of the four-letter name *Y-H-V-H*: **Haya**: *what was prior to creation*; **Hoveh**: *what is during the stage of creation*; and **Yihyeh**: *what will be after things revert back to the way they were*. As the *Rebbe* has made clear numerous times, the eventual return back to the way things were cannot be understood as literal, for if that were the case then the entire threefold process of existence would be purposeless. For if the ultimate goal is to return back to the way things were prior to creation, then what purpose is there for creation itself, it would appear as if nothing were gained. In truth however, the ultimate return of limitation back up into the unlimited light of *Hashem* is for the ultimate purpose of revealing an “additional adornment” (*tosefes kishut*), in that the level of Infinity and holiness that will be revealed after things revert back to the way they were is of a much loftier status and power than the Infinity and holiness that existed prior to the creation of the world. Whether the

process is described as a descent away from the level of *Arich Anpin* so that things can ascend to the level of *Atik Yomin*; or as a descent away from perpetual pleasure (*taanug timidi*) so that things can ascend to the level of inconstant pleasure within constant pleasure (*taanug bilti timidi b'toch taanug timidi*), the *maamar* shows without the shadow of a doubt how the entire process contained within the four-letter name *Y-H-V-H* is for the sake of bringing about the truest and most indiscernible desire of *Hashem* contained within the original thought of creation. While the *maamar* continues at great length and remarkable precision to describe and a novel approach to the four-letter name of *Hashem* which includes all of the *partzufim* as well as the doubled process within each particular letter, it is beyond the scope of this summary introduction and the reader is directed to the *maamar* itself.

Yam HaChochma 2013/5774

1. "The Unfolding of the Worlds according to the Pathways of Unity"

This remarkable *maamar* begins with an all important discussion of the “two principles upon which the entire system of *pnimiyus haTorah* rests: masculine waters (*Ma”D*) and feminine waters (*Ma”N*).” In explaining the essential purpose behind the original thought of creation, the *maamar* continues to describe the various ways in which these two essential principles play out throughout existence, from before the beginning until after the end. Contained within the essential four-letter name of *Hashem*, these two elements represent the ultimate purpose (*tachlis*) and the pathways through which creation can reach that purpose (*darchei avodah*). In the beginning things descend from above to below by way of the *masculine waters*-representative of the pathways of *avodah*- and in the end things ascend back upwards by way of the *feminine waters* - representative of the ultimate purpose. These two movements which comprise the singular thought behind creation represent the two forms of *avodah*- the movement from above to below, and the movement from below to above. After showing how these two ideas are directly rooted within the *Arizal* and the *Rashash*, the *maamar* continues to explain the purpose behind these two stages. Rooted in the dyadic unity of the “*spark of the Creator and the spark of creation*” described in the *Arizal’s Sefer Eitz Chaim* and the *Rashash’s Hakdamas Rechovos HaNahar*, the *maamar* describes how the *masculine waters* which descend from above to below are rooted in the secondary “*spark of creation*”, and how the *feminine waters* which ascend from below to above are ultimately rooted in the primary “*spark of the Creator*”. The reason for the seeming discrepancy between primary and secondary sparks is rooted in the fact that the ultimate purpose of creation is the revelation of the “additional adornment” (*tosefes kishut*) that is disclosed “*when things revert back to the way they were before the beginning*”. For in the beginning the *masculine waters* descended from the level of “*Ayin*”, but in the end the *feminine waters* will ascend even higher than their original point of departure, up to the level of the true “*Ani*” in the aspect of “*Ani Hashem Elokeichem*”. The *maamar* continues to describe how these two aspects of creation are hinted to in the *Rashash’s Hakdamas Rechovos HaNahar* as well as his *Hakdamas HaYamim v’HaZmanim* with regards to the concept of “*the avos are themselves the chariot*”. The descent from above to below represents the “*avos*” as they function within the “*order of neshamos*”, while the ascent from below to above represents the “*avos*” as they function within the “*order of sefiros*”, a two stage process directly aligned with what was described above. The *maamar* also spends a significant amount of space discussing the particularities of *masculine waters (Ma”D)* and

feminine waters (Ma"N), with a focus on the correspondence these two stages have with the various elements that comprise the individual soul, *Nefesh, Ruach, Neshamah, Chaya* and *Yechidah*. Similar to the process described above, the *masculine waters* which descend from above to below correspond to the two lower and irreducible aspects of the soul- *Nefesh and Ruach*; while the *feminine waters* which ascend from below to above correspond the three upper aspects of the soul- *Neshamah, Chaya and Yechidah*. The beginning of creation endows the individual with the lower two elements of the soul, while the ultimate purpose of creation is to draw down and earn the upper three elements of the soul.

After describing these two stages, the *maamar* continues to discuss the all important four-letter name of *Hashem* unto which all of these levels can be connected. With its four-letters plus the apex of the *yud*, the name corresponds to the five stage process through which existence manifests, exists and ultimately returns back to its intended purpose. Along with the five levels of the soul as well as the five interconnected worlds of *Adam Kadmon, Atzilus* and *Briyah, Yetzirah* and *Asiyah*, the *maamar* focuses of the five different permutations and “fillings” of the name: *Y-H-V-H* in its simplicity corresponding to *Adam Kadmon*; *Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei* filled with *yud (A"V/72)* corresponding to *Atzlius*; *Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei* filled with *yud and alef (Sa"G/63)* corresponding to *Briyah*; *Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei* filled with *alef (Ma"H/45)* corresponding to *yetzirah*; and *Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei* filled with *hei (Be"N/52)* corresponding to *asiyah*. After describing at length the various discussions regarding the specific alignment of these different permutations of the name, the *maamar* describes six different ways through which the names *A"V, Sa"G, Ma"H, Be"N* can be grasped. Of the more significant associations are the four levels of the *Torah* which correspond directly to these different iterations of the name: *Taamim, Nekudos, Taggin* and *Osiyos*, referred to generally as “*TaNTA*”. After clarifying the particularities of the different names, the *maamar* describes the general approaches to *avodas Hashem* as they emerge from different *Tzaddikim*: *The teachings of Chassidus; Rebbe Nachman of Breslov; and The Baal HaSulam*.

2. “Investigations into the Allusions within Sippurei Maasiyos”

While this incredible “*maamar*” is too far reaching to be summarized in any general way, the brilliance and depth of these investigations are too dazzling to skip over. Described as “*investigations into the allusions*” within Rebbe Nachman’s *Sippurei Maasiyos*, these pages include discourses that the *Rebbe shlit" a* delivered regarding the sixth (“Tale of the Humble King”), seventh (“The Spider and the Fly”) and tenth

("The Burgher and the Pauper") tales of Rebbe Nachman's 13 tales of ancient days. The discourse of "Tale of the Humble King" was delivered at the third meal of *Shabbos, Parshas VaYeitzeh (2012)*; the discourse of "The Spider and the Fly" was delivered at the third meal of *Shabbos, Parshas Toldos (2012)*; and the discourse on "The Burgher and the Pauper" was published solely for this volume of *Yam HaChochma*. In addition to these three discourses, the students included a three part *maamar* titled "*Additions to the Allusions within Sippurei Massiyos*". The first part is "*Divrei Elokim Chaim that were delivered on the 19th of Kislev (2012) clarifying the revelation of the teachings of Chassidus and the pathways of the holy Baal Shem Tov and his students, as well as the Arizal's kavaanos regarding Chanukah in which we will see an additional explanation regarding the allusions within the first part of the 10th tale of Sippurei Maasiyos.*" The second part of this section is "*Divrei Elokim Chaim delivered on Zos Chanukah (2012) wherein the avodah of the days of Chanukah are explained according to the 10th tale of Sippurei Maasiyos.*" The third and final part of this section is "*Divrei Elokim Chaim delivered at the third meal of Shabbos, parshas VaYigash (2012) wherein there are further clarifications regarding the 10th tale of Sippurei Maasiyos.*" The discourses contained within this *maamar* are exceedingly deep and they touch upon such essential aspects as the role of *Malchus* and her various stages throughout the day as well as history; the work of the *Tzaddik* in all of its frighteningly deep elements; the unique nature of *Chassidus* and the revelations of *Pnimityus HaTorah* and many other teachings associated with *Razin D'Razin*. The particular elements of these teachings will be discussed in future volumes, *be"H*.

Yam HaChochma 2014/5775

1. "For they are a Nation that Dwells Alone"

This remarkable *maamar* is an almost encyclopedic treatment of the concept of *hisbodedus*, or personal prayer as expressed in the writings of Rebbe Nachman of Breslov and his main disciple Rebbe Nosson zy" a. Described by the students as an essay that "*clarifies the value of hisbodedus and the secret depths of Rebbe Nachman's path of hisbodedus and the unity revealed within it*", this *maamar* describes the unique contributions that Rebbe Nachman brought to *Chassidus* and *Pnimityus HaTorah* in general, and the path of personal prayer in particular. After explaining the fundamentals of who Rebbe Nachman was and what he was contributing to the world of *Torah*, the *maamar* continues and focuses on the secret of *yichudim* that take place in and through Rebbe Nachman's novelty of *hisbodedus* by way of speech specifically. For while it is clear that the pathways of *hisbodedus* existed long before the arrival of Rebbe Nachman, the *maamar* makes abundantly clear that the notion of *hisbodedus* with one's power of speech and in one's own personal language is a novelty revealed by Rebbe Nachman.

Before compiling the various teachings of Rebbe Nachman regarding the nature and utmost importance of *hisbodedus*, the *maamar* copies and adds onto some of the ideas expressed in the *maamar* "*The Path of the Tree of Life*" (*Yam HaChochma, 2010/5771*) where the *Rebbe* described at length the transmission of *pnimityus haTorah* through the five historical *Tzaddikim*: *Moshe Rabbeinu*; *Rebbe Shimon bar Yochai*; *the Arizal*; *the Baal Shem Tov*; and *Rebbe Nachman*. The main point of focus here is the distinction that exists between the disclosure of secrets through the *Baal Shem Tov* and the disclosure of secrets through Rebbe Nachman. For while the *Baal Shem Tov* revealed the essence of *Toras HaChassidus* which represents the highest level of grasp wherein the "*spark of the Creator*" is revealed, it is only through the teachings and revelations of Rebbe Nachman- illuminating the "*spark of creation*"- that the fullness of the *Baal Shem Tov's* light can be revealed. Stated differently, the teachings of Rebbe Nachman- and the novelty of *hisbodedus* in speech in particular- reveal the intermediary level of "*souls*" (*neshamos*) that bridges the gap between the lower level of "*worlds*" (*olamos*) and the higher level of "*G-dliness*" (*elokus*). One of the unique elements of the "*souls*" level- representative of human experience within the physical world- is that it must engage with this worldly existence for the sake of refining it and elevating it back up to the level of supernal unity. And it is specifically this element of Rebbe Nachman's spiritual path that the *Rebbe* describes as the root of the novelty of *hisbodedus* in speech. For this world and all of the shattered vessels

within it represent the lower forms of experience caught up within the apparent limitations and concealments which comprise the worlds of separation (*Briyah, Yetzirah and Asiyah*), and yet it is specifically in this world that one is capable of engaging the uniquely human power of speech in all of its gross physicality. Rebbe Nachman's emphasis on physical speech within the *hisbodedus* experience is representative of the *Tzaddik's* spiritual path that moves through and beyond the lowest levels of separation, thereby revealing the hidden power contained within that which appears lowly and concealed. If the light of the *Baal Shem Tov* corresponds to the world of *Atzilus* wherein contemplative thought (*machshava*) reigns supreme; the path of Rebbe Nachman descends into the worlds of *Briyah, Yetzirah* and *Asiyah* where physical speech (*dibbur*) is possible, for the ultimate purpose of revealing the loftier level of *Adam Kadmon* which alone has the capacity of unifying unity and separation in order to reveal the "additional adornment" (*tosefes kishut*) that would not be possible without the lowest conceivable levels.

After contextualizing Rebbe Nachman's novelty of *hisbodedus* in speech within the framework of his unique path in *pnimiyus haTorah*, the *maamar* deviates from its typical way of conveying the *Rebbe's Torah* and compiles almost all of the essential teachings regarding the power and necessity of *hisbodedus* in speech in Rebbe Nachman and Rebbe Nosson's original language. Included within these teachings regarding the utmost value of *hisbodedus* in speech are the teachings wherein Rebbe Nachman describes the spiritual mechanisms at play within *hisbodedus* which reveals another element inherent within this novelty, namely the pathway of *yichud*. Among the powerful *yichudim* which take place through the novelty of *hisbodedus* in speech is 1. Awakening the heart to receive the true *eitzos* in *avodas Hashem* 2. The transformation of *Torah* into *Teffilah* which in turn creates *sha'ahshuim* above 3. The unification between the *partzufim* of *Ze'ir Anpin (Torah)* and *Malchus (Teffilah)* representative of the essential purpose of *avodah* 4. The opening towards unification with *Hashem* and possibility of "Divine inspiration" (*Ruach haKodesh*) 5. The acknowledgment of the unfathomable potency of human speech 6. The capacity to experience the loftiest forms of self-negation (*bittul*) 7. The secret of *Bitachon* within the act of *Teffilah* itself, a spiritual potency rooted in the loftiest level of *Radla* 8. The encounter with lack (*chisaron*) that rests at the heart of *Teffilah* through which the individual may ascend from level to level with desire and yearning 9. The transition of desire and yearning that stems from lack into the self-nullification that takes place through *bitachon* 10. The ability for the innermost point of the heart awakening the dormant strengths of *Chochma* and *Binah* within the individual's mind.

After describing at length how in addition to the practical and personal spiritual benefits associated with personal prayer *hisbodedus* in speech effectuates aspects of *yichud* in a new way, the *maamar* continues to describe the primary vehicle through which these new *yichudim* emerge, namely, the human power of speech. With complete control over the particularities of speech as they emerge from within the *Zohar*, the *Arizal* and the students of the *Vilna Gaon*, the *maamar* continues with various *shalosh seudos* discourses that shed additional light and insight onto the subject matter discussed in the *maamar*. The **first discourse** discusses the role of *bitachon* that can be experienced within the work of *hisbodedus* itself, thereby drawing down the light of salvation into the experience of pain itself, a spiritual strength rooted in the loftiest levels of *Radla* which is only accessible through the all too human power of speech. The **second discourse** discusses the role *hisbodedus* plays in the pathways of *yichud* and *bittul* that can be uncovered through speaking out every aspect of one's life, a process that enables the rectification and elevation of the residual sparks of *kedusha (nitzotzos)* which comprise the lower elements of daily experience. The **third discourse** discusses the primacy of speech within the *avodah of hisbodedus* in the sense that speech is rooted in the aspect of *malchus*. And while *malchus* is often described as the lowest level of manifestation, nevertheless *malchus* maintains the singular power wherein each and every expression of *malchus* is connected to the *malchus* above it, in the secret of "Your *Malchus* is the *Malchus* of all worlds" (*malchusecha malchus kol ha'olamim*). Because of this concealed, yet irreducible connection between all expressions of *malchus*, the engagement with human speech below enables the individual to access the loftiest expression of *malchus* which is the *malchus* concealed within *Radla*. The **fourth discourse** discusses the role *hisbodedus* plays in opening up all five senses towards the pathway of unity, representative of the spiritual entrance into *Eretz Yisrael*. The **fifth discourse** discusses the work of *hisbodedus* as it is properly implemented through the three lines that comprise existence, the *kav yamin*, the *kav sh'mol* and the *kav ha'emtzaee*. The **sixth discourse** discusses the interrelationship between *hisbodedus* and *tikkun chatzos* as well as its alignment with the paths of *Leah* and *Rochel*. The **seventh discourse** discusses the work of *hisbodedus* in relation to *Moshe's* encounter with the stone, and the essential distinction between speaking to the stone versus hitting the stone, as well as the power of *hisbodedus* to counteract the negative spiritual force of *Amalek*. The *maamar* concludes with the **eighth discourse** which discusses the power of speech within its loftiest expression at the level of *Arich Anpin* wherein the supernal level of *daas* is revealed.

Yam HaChochma 2018/5779

1. "No Thought Can Grasp Him at All"

This remarkable *maamar* descends into the depths of one of the most essential concepts within the writings of *Yam HaChochma*, namely, the impossibility of grasping the “essence” of *Hashem*. The *maamar* describes at length how ultimately the only thing we can feasibly grasp is the “*necessary existence*” (*chiyuv metziuso*) of *Hashem*’s “essence” by way of the desire of the heart. Beyond that, every grasp of *Hashem* that creations are capable of is always already after the descent away from the pure concept of “essence”. The *maamar* then descends into all of the various places within the writings of *pnimiyus haTorah*- with a particular focus on the writings of *Chabad Chassidus*- where there is an implication that “essence” is a theoretically graspable notion, showing with clear and precise strength how none of them are speaking of the “essence”, a theoretical notion that would create so many problems for the teachings of *pnimiyus haTorah* that it is almost difficult to understand how anyone could reason otherwise. Aside from negating the possibility of grasping the “essence” of *Hashem* in the present form of history, the *maamar* also clearly shows how any promise of future revelation of “essence” is also subject to the rules that prevent the graspability of “essence”, for even the “essential name” contained within the “essence of the Infinite” is still within the parameters of being a name, representative of the fact that it is still only an expression of the “essence” and not the fullness of the “essence” itself.

2. "HaKadosh Baruch Hu Desire a Dwelling Place Below"

This remarkable *maamar* continues the thread of thought described in the previous *maamar* in discussing the paradox of *emunah* that rests at the heart of our relationship with the “essence” of *Hashem*. Describing the apparent paradox of “*Hashem and His name existing prior to the creation of the world*”, the *maamar* explains the delicate concept of the “original name”, referred to as “potential” (*yecholes*) that existed in a non-existent way within the potential of the Infinite and unlimited light of *Hashem*. Like the “rays of light” in relation to the “source of light” itself, this power-of-limitation existed within the unlimited in such a way that it had no aspect of self-identity whatsoever. The process of creation rooted within the ordinary and unfathomable “*desire of HaKadosh Baruch Hu*” represents the emergence of this potential (*yicholes*) or “original name” (*shemo ha’kadmon*) from dormancy into actualization. The *maamar* ends with a brief explanation as to the

ultimate purpose behind this process, an deeply significant idea discussed in previous years *maamarim* at length.

3. ***“There will be No Other Prophet like Moshe”***

This remarkable *maamar* is the first of what seems to be a three part discussion regarding the uniquely elevated status of *Moshe Rabbeinu* and the interrelationship between the soul of *Moshe* and other *Tzaddikim*, up to and including the soul of *Mashiach*. The main focus of this *maamar* is the singular status that *Moshe* holds as the loftiest soul to have ever existed. After describing the ascendancy of *Moshe*, the *maamar* reintroduces the concept of the five historical *Tzaddikim* who comprise the transmission process of *pnimiyus haTorah*: *Moshe, Rashbi, Arizal, Baal Shem Tov and Rebbe Nachman*. Pointing out the apparent discrepancy between *Moshe* being the first and “lowest” (*nefesh*) level of the five historical *Tzaddikim* and the soul of *Moshe* being the loftiest possible soul, the *Rebbe* explains that while the five historical *Tzaddikim* represent five differentiated iterations of the revelation of *pnimiyus haTorah*, nevertheless on the level of interiority each and every one of these historical *Tzaddikim* contain “a spark of *Moshe*” within them. The *maamar* continues and describes four *Tzaddikim* who appear to have been of a loftier status than *Moshe*: *Shlomo HaMelech, Rebbe Akivah and Rashbi* and resolves the issue based on the writings of the *Komarner Rebbe zy”a, the Leshem Shevo V’Achlama, R’ Avraham Azulai and the Admor HaEmtzaee*.

4. ***“That Which Was is That Which Will Be”***

This remarkable *maamar* follows the previous one in discussing the teaching of the *Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh* which states that *Moshe* himself will be the eventual *Mashiach*. The focus of the *maamar* is to reconcile this teaching with the explicit *halacha* which dictates that as a king, *Mashiach* will emerge from the Davidic dynasty, something that runs counter to the notion that *Moshe* himself will be *Mashiach*. The *maamar* continues and explains how the words of the *Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh* must be understood as the soul of *Moshe* existing within the physical body of *Mashiach*, drawing explicit proofs from the *Zohar* and the *Ramak*. The *maamar* concludes with a clear description of the spiritual benefit involved with the interrelationship between the lofty soul of *Moshe* and the physical body of *Mashiach*.

5. “And the Spirit of Hashem Rested Upon Him”

This remarkable *maamar* concludes the three part discourse in describing the absolute ascendancy of *Moshe Rabbeinu* above and beyond anyone else, including *Mashiach*. Moving through every possible practical difference between levels of inspiration, wisdom and prophecy, this *maamar* proves through all forms of sources how the *neshamah* and *Torah* of *Moshe* was, is and will be the highest and most essential revelation of *Hashem's* light. Of utmost significance, however, is this *maamar's* clarification regarding the ascendant nature of *Mashiach* and the spiritual rectifications that will take place through his arrival.

De'ah Chochma L'Nafshecha

The second series of *seforim* that we will be describing are the remarkable teachings delivered by the *Rebbe* at the time of “*Rava d’Ravin*”, during the third meal on *Shabbos* after *Mincha*, when the “desire of desire” is revealed within the world. The discourses delivered by the *Rebbe* are given over in *Beis Medrash Toras Chochom*, after the *Rebbe* exits his private room following *Mincha*. Much like the writings of *Yam HaChochma* where the external form of the teachings is representative of their inner content, so too the external form through which the *Rebbe* delivers the *Shalosh Seudos* discourse is as significant as the teachings and ideas being delivered. This is not to imply, heaven forbid, that the way in which the *Rebbe* delivers his *shiurim* and discourses which comprise the *Yam HaChochma* writings are happenstance or insignificant, it is simply that the external and perceivable *avodah* of the *Tzaddik* at the time of “*Rava d’Ravin*” is of utmost spiritual significance and therefore deeply connected to the content of the ideas being revealed.

To highlight the deep connection between the time at which these teachings were given over and the content of the teachings themselves, the students wrote the following on the title page of the *Sefer De’ah Chochma L’Nafshecha*: “*Divrei Elokim Chaim, streams of faith from the pleasure of that ancient place, deep waters drawn by the man of understanding, said over from the heights at the time of the beloved, at this hour when the King is revealed , when the forehead is disclosed at the meal of Rava d’Ravin, with the joy of the holy Ze’ir Anpin, to unify as one the ten sefiros, the shining light of their unity, to awaken and strengthen the souls who yearn and long to receive the pleasantness of the holy shabbos, and to draw the sweetness of shabbos into the six days of the week.*”

While the *Rebbe* has been delivering *Torah* at the third meal since... the recorded writings circulated privately amongst those who were already aware of the powerful teachings. The students began recording and transcribing the *drashos* in *sefer* form in 5765/2004. The purpose for this was twofold, as the students write, “*After these teachings have been received through the positive eyes of those who know, we said that we would gather all the scattered pamphlets and draw them together to one place, for when the pamphlets are scattered, one here and one there, the crown of Torah is hidden in the corner, and it is befitting the honor of the Torah for her students to have the divrei Torah that were said throughout a full year, to print them all together in one volume, a beautiful Torah in a beautiful vessel. There are two benefits that come from this, one is that the teachings will be arranged and kept in such a way that anyone who yearns after Hashem will be able to find what they want when they want it, [and*

secondly] even those who have seen or heard these teachings at the time when they were given over, they will be able to awaken them as new at the time of reviewing them in writing, and the writing will serve as a reminder like repeating a passuk in its time, and the reader will come to see as if the one who spoke the words is standing in front of them. Through this they will merit to renew themselves like the eagle of youth, to strengthen themselves with renewed strength in the pathways of avodas Hashem as it is written and transmitted, renew our days like the days of the past, and gladden the hearts of those who seek Hashem.”

While the first two years of these teachings being recorded and transcribed resulted in published *seforim*- ***De'ah Chochma L'Nafshecha (5765/2004)*** and ***De'ah Chochma L'Nafshecha (5766/2005)***; the *drashos* of the subsequent years (2006 and on) have been written up and distributed as physical pamphlets in *Yerushalayim* and emailed throughout the world. There have been various *talmidim* and scribes who have been tasked with transcribing the *drashos*, but it has been R' A"E *shlit"a* who has taken on this holy task since 5771/2010. The responsibility and difficult nature of this holy task should not be understated. While the *Rebbe* discloses the secrets of his *drashos* in what can be described as an almost inaudible voice that emerges from beneath the cloth covering his mouth, R' A"E sits unassumingly in the corner recording every word on his laptop. The laptop is connected to a screen above it which shows the typed words in real time, revealing an almost preternatural ability to listen and record simultaneously. In addition to transcribing the *drashos* themselves, R' A"E also annotates them by adding *mekoros* referenced by the *Rebbe*, along with clarifications and elucidations⁶⁹. While the *drashos* are centered on a particular *passuk* from that week's *parsha*, the topic and the concepts revealed throughout the *drasha* are rooted in all aspects of the *Torah*, with a particular focus on the *Kabbalah* of the *Arizal* and his students; the *Rashash* and his students; the *Vilna Gaon* and his students; and most significantly the *Baal Shem Tov* and his students. When studying the *shalosh seudos* teachings of the *Rebbe*, what becomes clear is that the *drashos* build upon one another from one week to the next. That is not to say that each week is a response or *hemshech* to the previous week, but the general concepts and *yesodos* utilized for one week are typically carried over into the next week. The shared territory of ideas and *yesodos* usually lasts for one full year of *drashos* centered around the yearly *parsha* cycle. In addition to the

⁶⁹ The additional source material added to the *drashos* as footnotes is an art in and of itself, for as this author heard from R' A"E *shlit"a*, one of the distinctions between the *maamarim* of *Yam HaChochma* and the *drashos* of *De'ah Chochma L'Nafshecha* is that the *maamarim* are almost entirely comprised of the language of previous *Tzaddikim*, while the *drashos* are almost entirely comprised of the *Rebbe's* language itself. The sources then are not simply additional information, but rather the anchors which allow the student to connect the language of the *Rebbe shlit"a* with the previously written language of earlier *Tzaddikim*.

thematic similarity, a unifying feature of the *shalosh seudos* teachings is that the conclusion of the teachings are ultimately connected to and revealed through an interpretation of the stanza from the “*Dror Yikrah*” *zemer*, “*De’ah chochma l’nafshecha, v’hi keser l’roshecha*” (*Let your soul know wisdom, for she is a crown upon your head*). While this was certainly true for the earlier years of the *drashos*, it has not continued as of recent years. Nevertheless, the fact that the *drashos* themselves are referred to by the general name “*De’ah Chochma L’Nafshecha*” highlights the deep significance this stanza has regarding the *shalosh seudos* teachings.

While it would take almost a lifetime of intensive study, as well as abundant *siyata d’shmayah* to uncover the thematic and conceptual unity running underneath the 15+ years worth of *shalosh seudos* teachings, it is this author's humble opinion that the thread of unity most certainly exists. That being said, one can say that the *drashos* themselves are typically discussing the same subject matter as the *maamarim* in *Yam HaChochma* except that the *maamarim* take alot more time in setting up the necessary introductions and concepts, while the *drashos* usually introduce the ideas in a much quicker and more fluid way. Part of the reason for this- aside from the spontaneous precision of the *shalosh seudos drasha* as opposed to the precise calculation of the *Yam HaChochma maamarim*- may be that the *drashos* are speaking more to the soul of the student/listener/reader, and therefore the ideas and concepts can be expressed in a more evocative way for the sake of awakening the heart of the student. Perhaps it is possible to suggest that while the *maamarim* of *Yam HaChochma* describe the shape of existence and the origin, process and purpose through which the *Seder Hishtalshlus* came into being; the *drashos* of *De’ah Chochma L’Nafshecha* aim at applying those very same *sugyos* to the soul of the student in their lived experience of *avodas Hashem*⁷⁰. In addition- amongst many other things- the *shalosh seudos drashos* show how the concepts and ideas that rest at the heart of *Yam HaChochma* can be found and applied to the *pesukim* of the *Torah* itself, uncovering and revealing the secret levels of interpretation that have always already existed within the *parshiyos* of the *Torah* itself.

⁷⁰ This point was posed to the *Rebbe shlit”a* and according to this author’s understanding the response was that while the distinction may be true, it must be understood through the concept of “*Archin*”- or the Kabbalistic theory of relativity which reveals that any clear cut distinction made between spiritual levels and gradations must always be held together with the awareness that it is simply one particular way of looking at the topic, and by no means does it capture the topic under discussion in its absolute totality. According to this author’s understanding, a way of applying the concept of “*Archin*” to the distinction between the *maamarim* of *Yam HaChochma* and the *drashos* of *De’ah Chochma L’Nafshecha* would be to recognize that while both sets of *seforim* contain teachings regarding the shape of existence (*Olamos*) as well as the human experience of those concepts (*Neshomos*), *Yam HaChochma* seems to place the emphasis on the *Olamos*, while *De’ah Chochma L’Nafshecha* seems to place the emphasis on the *Neshomos*.

As of recent years there has also been a tremendous gift given over to the Jewish people who so desperately seek an entrance into the living waters of the *primiyus haTorah*, the series of *seforim* titled *Likkutei Yam HaChochma*. The series of *seforim* include “*Likkutei Yam HaChochma: Inyanim B’Avodas Hashem*” (2 Volumes, 5778/2017); “*Likkutei Yam HaChochma: Moadim*” (5779/2019); “*Likkutei Yam HaChochma: Shabbos/Avodas HaLayla*” (5780/2020); and “*Likkutei Yam HaChochma: Yerech HaEisanim*” (5781/2020). Described by the students as a guide that contains “*awakening, encouragement and pathways of avodah to enlighten for those who seek Hashem the path upon which to walk, to teach the children of Judah the weapons needed for the battle with the yetzer, to open the gate for all those who seek to ascend the ladder that ascends to the house of Hashem*”, these *seforim* are a collection of teachings arranged by topic gathered from the 15+ of *shalosh seudos drashos*. What is most remarkable about these *seforim* is that while each particular teaching is drawn from a different *shabbos* and year, nevertheless the teachings are arranged together in such a way that the student is now capable of seeing the unified vision of these *Torah’s* which spans across the the sumtotal of the *drashos*, highlighting the fact that while each week and year appears to be scattered and disconnected from all other years, there is still a thread of unity that transforms all of the *shalosh seudos* teachings into one long chain of *Torah*⁷¹. Another impulse behind the collection of these teachings into a single place is to highlight that while the depth and breadth of the *drashos* often reach heights wherein it is difficult for the student to conceive of how the teachings can be applied to the daily experience of *avodas Hashem*, nevertheless one of the essential purposes of *De’ah Chochma L’Nafshecha* is to guide and direct the student along the path of real *avodah*, as the students write, “*this generation has seen a wondrous light that shines like the noonday sun upon the paths of avodah. A desirable vessel containing storehouses, sweet waters for the thirsty soul. Words that upon the gate and illuminate the path for all those who seek after Hashem with an honest desire to ascend that ladder that leads to the house of Hashem. Collected from the the words of Torah delivered by our master and teacher, the Rebbe shlit”a that were spoken over at the time of Rava d’Ravin in front of the congregation of the Jewish people, written and published in the De’ah Chochma L’Nafshecha series. Now, the teachings themselves flow from the inner*

⁷¹ Regarding this point, R’ A”E *shlit”a* stressed that while on the most general level (“*klalei klalus*”) this is true, it must be understood that the *drashos* do not always align with each other in such a seamless fashion, for there are certain points made in earlier *drashos* that are treated differently in later *drashos*. Furthermore, before R’ A”E *shlit”a* took on the role of transcribing and annotating the *drashos* in 5771/2010, the main focus of the scribes was to capture the words of the *Rebbe shlit”a* without much focus on the uniformity and precision of the teachings. So while the *drashos* themselves do represent a singular body of *Torah*, this becomes much truer from the year 5771/2010 and on.

chambers of Torah, secrets of secrets, taken from a lofty source, for they are deep and vast and not every mind is capable of grasping them. Therefore we were inspired to collect from within them the suggestions and directions which emerge from within them for the sake of actual practice, and we have utmost trust in Hashem that they will be tremendously beneficial for those who seek to ascend in avodah. To teach the children of Judah the pathways of battle, to be victorious in the battle for Hashem, to succeed in overcoming the drives that confuse and confound us particularly in this last generation, and to merit knowing the path upon which to walk in the service of Hashem, may His name be blessed.” What is clear is that the purpose of these *Likkutim* is to open the gates of the *Rebbe’s Torah* so that anyone who desires may enter in and find everything prepared before them. Following the suggested distinction we made above regarding the difference between the *maamarim* of *Yam HaChochma* and the *drashos* of *De’ah Chochma L’Nafshecha*, one can perhaps suggest that while the “*Yam HaChochma*” represents the “*Mochin*”⁷² or the enlightening ideas that emerge from the mouth of the *Tzaddik*, “*De’ah Chochma L’Nafshecha*” represents the application of those “*Mochin*” down into the level of “*Middos*” or lived experience and applied *avodah*.

⁷² The names of the *Seforim* themselves hint to this point. “*Yam HaChochma*” can be seen as representing the level of “*Yam*” which is associated with the *mochin* of *Binah* in that *Binah* contains within herself the “fifty gates of understanding”, fifty being the numerical value of “*Yam*”; while *Chochma* represents the *mochin* of *Chochma*. “*De’ah Chochma L’Nafshecha*” on the other hand represents the level of *Daas* as hinted to in the word “*De’ah*” which represents the transition from the level of “*Mochin*” down into the level of “*Middos*” as symbolized by the neck that connects the head and the heart. The purpose of “*Daas*” is to connect the level of “*Chochma*” with the *nefesh* itself which represents the lowest and most physical element of the *neshamah*. There is however, an additional point that reveals the true depth of the *shalosh seudos drashos*. Although the “*Middos*” are typically seen as lower than the “*Mochin*”, the descent into the “*Middos*” allows for a new level of revelation that was not available at the level of “*Mochin*” themselves. For when the “*Mochin*” operate on their own at the level of the three upper-*sefiros* (*Ga”R*), they represent the Infinite and unlimited light of *Hashem* in the aspect of “Nothingness” (*Ayin*); while the lower seven-*sefiros* (*Va”K*) represent the finite and limited measure of existence in the aspect of “Something” (*Yeish*). But when the light of the Infinite descends into the lowest aspect of the “*Middos*” as represented by the level of “*nefesh*”, the lower seven-*sefiros* are transformed into vessels that reveal the light of *Hashem* within limitation itself, revealing an “additional adornment” (*tosefes kishut*) that goes even higher than the level of *Chochma*, upwards towards the level of “*Keser*” where “Nothing” and “Something” operate together, thereby revealing a new level of grasping *Hashem*. This additional element at the heart of *De’ah Chochma L’Nafshecha* is explicitly revealed in the “*Dror Yikrah*” *zemer*: “*De’ah chochmah l’nafshecha, sh’hi keser l’roshecha*”- *Let your soul know wisdom, for she is a crown upon your head*. Showing that when the level of *Chochma* is drawn down into the level of *Nefesh* through the level of *Daas*, the lowest level is revealed to be rooted in the highest level, awakening the *Keser* which transcends even *Chochma*.

Nishmasin Chadasin

The third series of teachings we will be describing are the "***Nishmasin Chadasin***" writings. This remarkable system of teachings are the recorded discussions and *Torah* ideas expressed by the *Rebbe* over *shabbos* by the first and second meals. Described by the students as "*unique teachings to connect the hearts to the Singular One of the world and to unify the supernal lovers, said over at the table of purity, to crown the bread with valuable secrets during the sacred feast of the holy orchard of apples*", these teachings are the recorded transcription of the ideas and concepts given over by the *Rebbe* in front of the students who merit to sit at the *Tzaddik's* table. Beginning in 5770/2009, "***Nishmasin Chadasin***" began being written down after *shabbos* based on the memory and retention of the ideas as understood by particular students. After the teachings are written, they are brought to the *Rebbe* for review and clarification before being printed. Over the years, the "***Nishmasin Chadasin***" writings have been sent out across the world through *Machon Yam HaChochma's* email list following the *De'ah Chochma L'Nafshecha drasha* for the *parsha*. In 5775/2014 some of the teachings were collected and published as two full length *seforim*, "***Nishmasin Chadasin: Bereshis***" (5775/2014) and "***Nishmasin Chadasin: Shemos***" (5776/2015). What is most unique about these teachings is the fact that they cover nearly every aspect of *Torah*, revealed, concealed as well as *halachic*. The *Torah* shared at the meals moves beyond any particular boundary as practical *halachos* are seen through the lens of the deepest *kabbalistic* teachings, and Talmudic *lomdus* is used to answer questions in *chassidus*. The students of the *Baal Shem Tov* join together with the students of the *Vilna Gaon*, and insights and stories from the lives of *Tzaddikim* are interpreted through the deepest aspects of the *Razin d'Razin*. Part of what makes "***Nishmasin Chadasin***" so incredible is the fluid way in which the *Rebbe* moves through every category of *Torah*, allowing concepts and *yesodos* that appear to be vastly separate from one another to interact in a unified conversation, revealing the ultimate unity that rests at the very core of the *Torah*. While the *Rebbe* makes abundantly clear that the "*halachic rulings brought down should not be relied upon in a practical way*" the remarkable ease with which the *Rebbe* swims through every aspect of the revealed *Torah* is astonishing, hinting to a fundamental element at the heart of the *Rebbe's Torah*- the redemptive ability to engage the revealed aspect of *Torah* through the concealed aspect of *Torah*. As the students themselves describe, the remarkable world of "***Nishmasin Chadasin***" is like "*a new song in praise of redemption, for a new face has arrived. Why is it called "bread of the face"- because it can face this way or that way. Investigations into the revealed aspect of Torah dipped into the secrets and the interiority of Torah, to unify one with one to draw down the secret of one. Words that are open to all. Beautiful ideas and*

remarkable stories, pleasing words that ascend upwards. The holy Avnei Nezer zy" a has already spoken of the great value of studying the revealed Torah according to the concealed Torah, and before him the author of *Sefer Emek HaMelech* has already revealed this secret. We also find by a number of holy geniuses from previous generations who have followed this path, among them R' Yosef Engel as anyone who studies his vast writings can attest, and there are many more like him, may their merit protect us." In addition to the remarkable union between all facets of *Torah*, the spontaneous nature of these teachings allows for a somewhat more intimate view into the interaction between the *Rebbe* and the students when often a student's question or insight initiates a further clarification from the *Rebbe*, something that is not present in the *maamarim* of *Yam HaChochma* or the *drashos* of *De'ah Chochma L'Nafshecha*. *Nishmasin Chadasin* is also where the student encounters the more personal expressions of the *Rebbe* including tales of his experiences with particular teachers, reminiscences of childhood, insights he received from his parents, interactions with *Gedolei Yisrael* as well as reflections regarding current events and issues. And while the terrain covered in *Nishmasin Chadasin* moves from one world to another in the blink of an eye, the clarifications and insights made provide a remarkable window through which the student may view certain *sugyos* that rest at the heart of the *maamarim* of *Yam HaChochma* or the *drashos* of *De'ah Chochma L'Nafshecha*. While the framework through which these teachings are revealed makes them appear as if they are stand alone points unrelated to the system of ideas, with a closer look the student is able to see how each particular point can be applied or connected to other elements of the *Rebbe's Torah*.

The Weekly Shiurim

Printed along with the weekly *Nishmasin Chadasin* are the transcribed and recorded *shiurim* that the *Rebbe* gives throughout the week. Depending on the year or week, the printed *shiurim* are usually the *Kabbalah shiur* focused on the *Arizal's Shaar HaKavaanos*; the weekly *Chassidus shiur* on Rebbe Nachman's *Chayei Moharon*; and as of late the remarkable *shiurim* on R' Chaim Dela Rosa's *Toras Chochom*. In addition, the *Rebbe's* running commentary on *Shulchan Orech*, ***Biurei Shulchan Orech*** as well as the *Daf Yomi shiurim*, ***Biurei Shas*** are also printed. A newer feature of the weekly pamphlet that is emailed out is the *Yoma D'Hilula* section where the *Rebbe* speaks about the particular *Tzaddikim* whose *yahrzeit* falls out during the week, reviewing stories and teachings from the *Tzaddikim* in a unified way wherein the stories are interpreted through the teachings and the teachings are interpreted through the stories. While each of these sections represents a profound, and almost historic undertaking, most of them have not been compiled in *sefer* form- as of yet- and as such it is difficult to describe them in a systematic fashion. Regarding the ***Shiurim al Shaar HaKavaanos***, these teachings are a thorough and complete investigation into the depths of the *Arizal's Kavaanos* for *tefillah*, *shabbos* and *yomim tovim*. Utilizing the various commentators on the *Arizal* with a particular focus of the *Rashash* and his student the *Toras Chochom*, these *shiurim* analyze the particularities that the *Arizal* describes while uncovering threads of understanding aligned with the *Rebbe's* general approach to these topics in their most general framework. What this looks like practically is that the particularities of the *Arizal* are seen through the general framework of the *Rashash* and his students, which allows for the ideas to then be charted onto the coordinates of *avodah* as described in the writings of *Chassidus*. While this is not the case with every *shiur*, very often the points elucidated within the writings of the *Arizal* and *Rashash* are applied to the practical elements of day to day *avodas Hashem*. Circulating amongst the students is a compilation of all of these *shiurim*, running more than 600 written pages with elucidating footnotes and clarifications, something that will hopefully see publication in the future. Furthermore, a number of these *shiurim* were arranged according to the particular time period they discuss and printed in *Yam HaChochma* 5779/2018.

Preceded by *shiurim* on Rebbe Nachman's ***Sichos HaRan***, the ***Chayei Moharan shiurim*** are given over on thursday night in the *Toras Chochom Beis Medrash*. Aside from revealing a comprehensive mastery over the history of *Breslov Chassidus* and the intricacies of censored writings and stories, these *shiurim* chart the specific teachings regarding Rebbe Nachman onto the particular teachings of *Kabbalah*. One

of the most beneficial aspects of these *shiurim* is that they are often given over and transcribed the night before *shabbos*, allowing them to be printed in that week's pamphlet. The proximity between the teachings being given over in the *Beis Medrash* and the ability to read them around the world gives the distant student a taste of what the *Rebbe* was teaching on the previous day, shortening the duration between what was spoken and what is read and offering a sense of closeness and connection typically reserved to face-to-face transmission.

As of late, the *Rebbe* has also been giving *shiurim* on R' Chaim Dela Rosa's *Sefer Toras Chochom*, a *sefer* that is as difficult as it is profound. While the *Rebbe's* deep affection and grasp of the *Toras Chochom* is well known- with certain *mekubalim* of our generation referring to him as the "singular one who holds the key to the *Toras Chochom* in our time", as well as the naming of the *Beis Medrash Toras Chochom*- there has never been a full system of *shiurim* devoted to elucidating, clarifying and applying the teachings of the *sefer* before. The ***Shiurim al Sefer Toras Chochom*** are arranged in three parts. First, a particular fragment of the text is printed in full, with acronyms opened up and clarified. Second, there is a clarification and elucidation of the *sugya* and the novelties that emerge from within the *sefer*. Lastly, there is the *Biur HaPnimi* which takes the points revealed in the *Sefer Toras Chochom* and applies them to *avodas Hashem* according to the pathways of *Chassidus*.

Of the more remarkable undertakings of the *Rebbe* is the running commentary of both *Shas* as well as the *Shulchan Orech*. As we will see *be"H* in future volumes, one of the essential elements of the *Rebbe's* approach to *Torah* is the successful attempt at unifying the revealed and concealed aspects of the *Torah*. Following the hopes of the *Emek HaMelech*, the pathways of the *Rama M'Fano*, and the work of the Vilna Gaon and *Rebbe Nosson* of Nemerov, the *Rebbe* seeks to show how the revealed parts of the *Torah* must be seen through the lens of the concealed parts of the *Torah*, ultimately showing that the fullest manifestation of the concealed parts of the *Torah* is when they can be shown within the revealed parts of *Torah*. This is not to say, heaven forbid, that the revealed *Torah* without the concealed *Torah* is deficient in anyway, or vice versa, rather the fullness and unity of the revealed *Torah* (*echad*) and the fullness and unity of the concealed *Torah* (*echad*), must be unified one with the other (*l'mehevei echad b'echad*), so that from within both of them the true secret of unity (*raza d'echad*) may emerge, thereby heralding the Messianic era wherein the "ancient *Torah*" (*Torah d'atikah*) will be revealed. The first project we will attempt to briefly describe is the work of ***Biurei Shulchan Orech***. In these *shiurim* the *Rebbe* learns through the *Orech Chaim* section of the *Shulchan Orech* dealing with the laws of daily living and *mitzvah* observance. After clarifying the particular *halachos*

through the revealed writings of the *poskim* and *mefarshim*, and after discussing the different *minhagim* associated with those *halachos*, the laws are then seen through the lens of *pnimiyus haTorah* where the seemingly incidental elements of the topic are revealed to be signposts pointing towards the secret meaning that rests at the apex of existence. *Halachos* are shown to not only be prescriptive with regards to daily life, but also descriptive of the spiritual process through which the *neshamah* exists and lives within this world. Aside from the expansion of the *halachic* framework from praxis towards theory, the *shiurim* also uncover the internal significance of the *Tzaddikim* and *Talmidei Chochomim* through whom these *halachos* were given over and clarified. Arguments and different approaches are shown to not simply be the result of some external disagreement, but rather rooted in the loftiest realms of creation wherein the spiritual vitality and soul source of each *mechaber* is taken into consideration. What was at first considered a separate universe of *halacha* is elevated and revealed to be the second side of the same coin as *pnimiyus haTorah*. While the *shiurim* have gone through various areas of *halacha*, the *Machon* has only printed one stand alone ***Sefer Likkutei Yam HaChochma: Hilchos Tefillin*** (5772/2011). In addition, the *Rebbe* also did something similar with *Hilchos Tzitzis* in his commentary on *Meseches Tzitzis* in *Yam HaChochma* (5774/2013).

The *Rebbe's* project in ***Biurei Shas*** is similar to the *Shulchan Orech shiurim* in that it has been a successful attempt at revealing the depths of *pnimiyus* within what is typically considered *chitzoniyus*. That is not to say, heaven forbid, that the revealed elements of *Torah* are pushed away for the sake of replacing them with the concealed elements of *Torah*, but rather the letters, words and concepts of the *chitzoniyus haTorah* are shown to be part and parcel of *pnimiyus HaTorah*. Typically arranged according to the *mesechta* being studied throughout the *Daf Yomi* cycle, these *shiurim* analyze the *sugyos* discussed through the perspective of *Chassidus* and *Kabbalah*. While rooted in the topics discussed on the *daf*, the *shiurim* utilize the concepts discussed as a springboard towards deeper and more expansive discussions. The question and answer that comprise the *gemara* become signposts along the way directing the student to the *sugyos* in *pnimiyus* where all forms of *Torah* sources are used to clarify fundamental points of understanding. While there is certainly some *lomdus* and classical tools of interpretation utilized in this *shiurim*, the main form of teaching is a deep and wide analysis of the *sugyos* in *machashava* and *pnimiyus* that are evoked from within the *daf* itself. Here, like all the other written forms of the *Rebbe's Torah*, the teachings do not stand alone, but rather they shed light on other areas of *Torah* as well. For example a discussion regarding the different times for the recitation of *Kriyas Shema* introduces new formulations of

language that shed light on the concepts of *Tzimtzum* discussed in the *Kabbalah shiurim*; while the particular laws defining the landscape of personal *nedarim* shed new light on the *partzufim* of *Rochel* and *Leah*. In addition to the application and elucidation of the *sugyos* in *Shas* by way of *Chassidus* and *Kabbalah*, the *shiurim* also contain *halachic sugyos* which are examined through contemporary applications as well as theoretical investigations. Stories about *Tzaddikim* are aligned side by side with their legal opinions, and *Maaseh Rav* are interpreted through their written teachings. Throughout the years, the various *meshechos* the *Rebbe* has given *shiur* on have been published in *Yam HaChochma*, which include *shiurim* on *Nedarim*, *Sanhedrin*, *Taanis*, *Megillah* and *Brachos*. In addition to the printed *shiurim* in *Yam HaChochma*, the *Machon* has also published two full length *seforim* which running commentary on the *meshechta*, ***She'aris Yaakov: Brachos*** and ***She'aris Yaakov: Megilah***. It is important to note that part of the impulse behind publishing the first volume *She'aris Yaakov: Megilah (5771/2010)* was the *petirah* of the *Rebbe's* father *Yaakov* as well as the *Bar Mitzvah* of the *Rebbe's* son, as the *Rebbe* wrote in his own words, *"The essence of this sefer was written during the year in which my father zt"l passed away, and it has still not been fully edited. Nevertheless, how good is something in its time, and as the great day of our joy, the day of my son's Bar Mitzvah, it is a good thing to bring these writings to light. For it is written (Zohar Chadash, Bereshis, Maamar Toziah HaEretz) that the day of one's Bar Mitzvah is like the day of one's wedding. Furthermore (Zohar, Pinchas 219b) that on the day of one's wedding, Hashem enters into the Gan Eden and retrieves from there one's father and mother and leads them to join together with the joy of their children (see the commentary of the Ramaz there where he highlights the significance of the word "retrieved", for each Tzaddik has two spirits, one for this world which is the one that is drawn down, and one for the next world. When the Tzaddik is in Gan Eden, the two souls merge as one, and when Hashem wants to retrieve the Tzaddik's father or mother so that they may participate in the joy of their children, both aspects of the spirit arrive, meaning to say that even the essential root is retrieved from there for that moment). And even though we will not merit for my father z"l to arrive with his physical body to join in our joy, his neshamah will most certainly arrive. It is known that chiddushei Torah create garments for the soul of the deceased (see Zohar 2:210 and 2:229, this aspect is accomplished for the deceased through the chiddushei Torah of their children), and our teachers have taught us (Yevamos, 97a) that any insight that is said over in the name of the one who said it in this world, their lips will murmur within the kever, meaning, they receive the aspect of the spirit of life within their bodies. And there are so many chiddushim in this sefer that were said over by my father and teacher z"l, and through this sefer it should be as if my father z"l is actually joining us in our joy with his actual body. May it be the will of Hashem that we should already merit the manifestation of*

the verse (Yeshaya, 26) "Those who slumber in the dust should arise and sing" and may we merit to join together as one in body and soul along with all the Tzaddikim of previous generations, and the honor of Hashem should be revealed so that we see eye to eye with the return to Tzion speedily in our days." These writings are simply astonishing in their breadth and depth, and the historical nature of the project cannot be overstated. In these writings the *Rebbe* is not simply expressing a new project of *Torah* scholarship, but rather the writings on *Shas* represent the actual accomplishment of what the *Rebbe* writes so often about in his other writings, namely, the ability of transforming the vessels of *chitzoniyus haTorah* into receptacles for the settled light of *pnimiyus haTorah*. This realtime encounter with the burgeoning actualization of the very ideas discussed elsewhere in theoretical terms gives the student a sense of wonder as the dream of a unified *Torah* takes shape in front of their own eyes.

Other Writings

In addition to the writings we have discussed, *Machon Yam HaChochma* has also published numerous other volumes that do not fit into any particular group. However, in order to provide a full overview of the *Rebbe's* vast library of writings, we will list the *seforim* without any particular order.

Shu"t Yam HaChochma (2 Volumes) are a collection of responsa written by the *Rebbe* in response to *halachic* questions. While some of the *teshuvos* printed in these volumes are original, most of them have already been printed in the "*Dvar Halacha*" section of *Sifrei Yam HaChochma*. What is most significant about this project is that it represents an expression of the *Rebbe's* ability to join the revealed and concealed aspects of *Torah* together. Many of the *teshuvos* include within themselves analysis from both revealed *Halachic* sources as well as concealed *Kabbalistic* sources, showing how both within in unison to reveal the most essential elements of the *Torah*, namely the practical engagement in this world itself. As expressed in the introduction of the students, the world of *Halacha* is the process through which this worldly existence, in all of its physicality and measurement, is refined and elevated to the level of spiritual awareness. It is the *Halacha* that allows one to transform the "earth" from a place of concealment, into a perpetual song of praise and gratitude towards *Hashem*. As the students themselves write, "*A song of thanks, shout out to Hashem, all the earth (h'ariyu I'Hashem k'ol h'aretz R 'T Halacha), for this is a great day for our Creator, with the publication of the holy sefer in front of us. Its name clarifies its essence Shailos v'Teshuvos Yam HaChochma, a well dug by royalty to uncover living waters, valuable words, the Torah of a Chochom which is the source of life within the four amos of Halacha, where he has spread out his hands from within his tremendous spirit, where our teacher and master the Rebbe shlit"a has answered those questions regarding the word of Hashem- this is the Halacha, To engage and descend into the battle of the Torah, with insight and logic, to draw down the sugya according to the heart of the Halacha. And through this, nachas ruach ascends higher and higher to adorn the 'kallah' (same letters as 'halacha'), to unite her in full unity with her beloved which is 'HaKadosh Baruch Hu' with the pleasure and joy of engagement with the Torah. This is the explanation of what Rebbe Chiya bar Ami said in the name of Ullah (Brachos, 8a), that from the day the Beis HaMikdash was destroyed, the only thing Hashem has in this world are the four amos of Halacha.*

And regarding this it is certainly appropriate for us to praise and thank the One Who spoke and created the world, for the Torah and the Halacha are mutually supportive of one another, and both of them will exist forever, as it is explained in the words of our master the Arizal zy"a (Shaar HaPesukim, Tehillim, 100; Pri Eitz Chaim, Shaar HaZemiro, Ch. 4), that the R"T of h'ariyu I'Hashem k'ol h'aretz spells out the word Halacha, hinting to what Chazal have said,

“Hashem has nothing in this world other than the four amos of Halacha”, and aligning it with the ‘Mizmor l’Todah’ to hint to what Chazal have taught regarding how all sacrifices other than the Korban Todah will be nullified in the future. It turns out then, that both ‘gratitude’ (Todah) as well as Halacha are maintained throughout the land and that they will both exist for eternity. Therefore there is a tremendous necessity upon us to thank and praise the King of all kings, HaKadosh Baruch Hu for allowing us to bring this sefer to light in the world. The holy mekubal, our master R’ Meir Ibn Gabbai has already written (Avodas HaKodesh, 4:1), that “the true and accepted knowledge within our nation etc. which is the condition for our knowledge of Hashem and his unity, has not departed from our nation etc. for in each and every generation the wondrous governance of Hashem has not rested nor will it rest from awakening within the heart of men and those who receive it, the desire to write seforim, and this is itself the reason that the wisdom of our teachers has not been lost completely”, see his words there. And Chazal (Chagiga, 15b) have already stated regarding the passuk, “For the lips of the kohen guard knowledge, request the Torah of his mouth for he is an angel of Hashem”- if the Rav is similar to an angel of Hashem, then you should request Torah from his mouth.”

The students also took the time to make clear the process in which these writings came to be, describing in almost poetic detail the experience of serving as scribe for the king, *“Now, the teshuvos published in this sefer have already been elevated upon the altar of publication in Sifrei Yam HaChochma that have come out in the past years, and with Hashem's help, they have already ascended upon the tables of kings- these are the Rabbanim, and they have been discussed in the Beis Medrash in the mouths of teachers and their students. Now, however, we have printed them once more, gathered together into a single location within a single volume, a beautiful Torah within a beautiful vessel. To enable those who swim towards the word of Hashem- the Halacha, and our eyes are directed up towards Hashem with the hope of publishing all the other teshuvos that have been written. But we must also make known, that these teshuvos have not been sanctified with the pen of the gaon, our master the Rebbe shlit”a, but rather they were written by the students upon whom the holy work of writing rests, they are the artists who sit together with the king in his work, and he stood upon them from above, calling out to them through his mouth while they wrote with ink upon the pages. Nevertheless, it must be known that even after the work of writing was completed, our teacher did not extend the staff of his insight upon the written pages. It is already known that one cannot stand upon the knowledge of their teacher, all the more so when fire emerges from his mouth, sparks of light and flames of fire like the lightning bolts, for then it is almost certain that there will be indiscernible mistakes. Therefore, please let this be in your eyes like unedited writings, not like a mistake that emerges from he who is in charge, but rather like a mistake that emerges from the writers who stand in service and as their responsibility alone.”*

In addition to the warnings of the students, the *Rebbe* also highlighted the fact that these *teshuvos* are not meant to be relied upon for practical application, but rather they are there in order to waken and instigate further exploration and investigation into the topics discussed, or in the words of the students, *“Furthermore, as we have been directed from the holy mouth of our master, the Rebbe shlit”a to announce, all of these teshuvos are not meant to be halacha l’maaseh, but rather to awaken the student in their learning, to accomplish the statement of R’ Chisdah (Brachos, 8a) regarding the passuk “Hashem loves the gates of Tziyon from all the encampments of Yaakov”- Hashem loves the gates that are proficient in Halacha more than the shuls and batei midrash. “*

The Writings of R' Shmuel Ehrenfeld shlit"a

There is a certain feeling of trepidation when coming to discuss the writings of the true *talmidim* of the *Tzaddik* that is not present when writing about the writings of the *Tzaddik* themselves. On a certain level, when writing about the *seforim* of the *Tzaddik* it remains abundantly clear that the deep and almost untraversable gap separating the *Rebbe* and the student persists even after the words of *Torah* are studied and understood. This awareness ensures that the student will not fall into the trap of equating the teachings as they appear in written *seforim* with the face of the *Tzaddik* as it exists outside and beyond the written texts. When it comes to the *seforim* of the students, however, this distinction becomes less apparent, as one may come to assume that the written words contain all that needs to be expressed, and the yearning and desire that propels the reader beyond the written words begins to fade. This becomes an even bigger issue when the *seforim* under discussion are written with such precise clarity that even the novice student can come away with a clear understanding of the *Torah* and concepts. Therefore, it is important to stress that while the writings of the *Baal K'Tzeitz HaShemesh* leave the attentive reader with a sense that everything has been revealed in an almost unprecedented way, nevertheless the gap separating the mind of the reader and the mind of the true *talmidim* remains in its place, for just as the reader cannot fully grasp the face of the *Tzaddik*, so too the reader cannot fully grasp the face of the true *talmidim* through whom the light of the *Tzaddik* shines forth. Generally speaking, the true *talmidim* are considered an aspect of the “moon” in relation to the *Tzaddik* who is considered an aspect of the “sun”, highlighting the relationship wherein the “moon” reflects the light of the “sun” in a measured and manageable way. The “sun” in its blinding brilliance carries the threat of blinding one who gazes directly at it, and it is the “moon” that allows for a less potent and more refined expression of the “sun’s” light so that it can be received in the heart and mind of the student. If that was the sum total of the true *talmid's* task, then the concern raised above would not be an issue, for what issue is there in assuming a full grasp and understanding of the “moon’s” reflective light. In other words, what need is there in maintaining the sense of distance born out of the natural reverence the “lower” level has in relationship to the “higher” level if the entire essence of the “higher” level is make the light of the “sun” accessible in a measurable way to the “lower” level? The answer, it seems, emerges from the fact that while most *talmidim* are simply reflecting the light of their *Rebbe* in a minimized and manageable form, just as the “moon” reflects the light of the “sun”; there are certain *talmidim* who go beyond the natural task of being like the face of the moon in relation to the face of the sun, engaging in a more delicate and essential mission of drawing down the light of the “sun” itself in a more potent and revealed way⁷³. In this sense, the true *talmid* is less of reflection of some distant and inaccessible

⁷³ This author wanted to suggest that the general title of R' Shmuel's *seforim* “*K'Tzeitz HaShemesh*” hints to this very idea. As opposed to *talmidim* who's *seforim* are like the ‘face of the moon’ in relation to the ‘face of the

light and more of a pipeline that allows the source of water to express itself in its original, albeit measurable and precise way. This task is less of a “packaging” and “distribution” of the *Tzaddik's Torah*, and more of a “unfolding” and “expression” of the *Tzaddik's Torah* that would not be possible without the true *talmidim* who are uniquely capable of discerning the inner essence of their *Rebbe's* teaching. Because the true *talmid* is drawing out and revealing the light of the *Tzaddik's Torah* in a new way, the *Torah* being revealed in the writings of the *talmid* are subject to same rules and regulations as the *seforim* of the *Tzaddik* themselves, namely that no matter how clear and precise the teachings are, the reader must always bare in mind the distance that remains between the translational aspect of the writings in relation to the essential nature of the face itself.

This is most certainly true when it comes to the writings of R' Shmuel Ehrenfeld shlit" a, who in describing the gratitude he has for the opportunity to learn *Torah* from the mouth of the *Tzaddik*⁷⁴ writes as follows: *“And I must bless Hashem for directing along the path of truth, bringing me to the house of my master, the seller of all things, my master, my Rebbe and the crown upon my head, the prince of Torah, the pillar of prayer, light of the world, master of unity, pillar of light, the godly mekubal, his honor and his holiness, the strength of our master and teacher, Maran HaGaon HaKadosh [R' Yitzchak Meir Morgenstern] shlit" a. From the outset of my quest he has drawn me into the gates of inner wisdom, who (m"i- r"t Yitzchak Meir) has revealed this secret, this revelation of the concealed. In his shade I have sat and delighted and his fruits are sweet to the mouth, drinking with great thirst from the waters (me"i- r"t Yitzchak Meir) of the supernal stream that flows from the sea of the supernal and concealed wisdom. His wisdom has sustained me , **and nearly everything that is inscribed in this book, and all other books that are with me in writing have been received from his mouth, the mouth that speaks greatness.** He has shown me great kindness and graciousness, almost always reviewing the writings I have merited to put onto paper with his pure eyes. With his kindness and goodness, he strikes them with his examining staff, and from his holy mouth he calls to me as I record the words on pages with ink. There are no words on my tongue to express gratitude and praise for all the kindness he has shown me, oh that I should merit to sit in the shade of his wings all the days of my life, forever warming myself next to his great light. That we should be protected by his wings, and that his cloak should be cast upon us. With love and awe I pray- along with all of the students and the entire Jewish nation- for the life of the king, that days and years be added upon the days of the king, that his days should be lengthened with physical health and light from above , to spread more Torah, to unify the supernal couple and to reveal the godliness of G-d, may His name be blessed, in the*

sun', these *seforim* are more about revealing the 'sun' itself in a more intense and expressive way. When this point was shared with R' Shmuel shlit" a, he laughed and said “anyone who knows me will laugh because I am nothing, it's as if I don't even have a name”. The short but remarkable conversation simply strengthened this author's opinion.

⁷⁴ R' Shmuel Ehrenfeld shlit" a, *Yirucha Im Shemesh, Hakdamah*, p. 33

lower realms. To draw the hearts of the Jewish people closer to their father in heaven, as is the desire of his holy and purified soul. May we merit that he should lead us soon to greet Mashiach with faces of light enlightened with supernal light, may it come speedily in our days.” We see then that even though the *seforim* are the writings of the *talmid* himself, nevertheless, **“nearly everything that is inscribed in this book, and all other books that are with me in writing have been received from his mouth, the mouth that speaks greatness.”** This sentiment becomes even clearer and more precise in R’ Shmuel’s introduction to his most recently published *sefer*: *“nearly all of the ideas written within have been received from his holy mouth with an illuminated and clarified face, and any difficult matter was investigated and brought in front of him as if before the Urim v’Tumim”*, once again highlighting the deep rootedness the *talmid’s seforim* have within the mind of the *Tzaddik*.

Thankfully, however, we need not infer from within the *talmid’s* poetic expressions the deep connection between his writing and the *Tzaddik’s* thinking, as R’ Shmuel himself has expressed the matter in the clearest of terms⁷⁵: *“At this point I must make an announcement, that although most of the time we have put the greatest effort forward in writing the name of the Rebbe shlit”a next to the chiddushim I have merited to hear from his holy mouth- both in order to accomplish the statement of Chazal (Megillah, 15a), “that anyone who brings a teaching in the name of the one who taught the teaching brings redemption to the world”, as well as to inform the reader that these words come from a sanctified table, emerging from within the holy mouth of he who holds all secrets, as Chazal (Shabbos, 10b) teach us “one who offers a gift to their fellow must inform them”- nevertheless, it is possible that there are some instances that the matter escaped my memory, for who can discern the mistakes. Therefore, I decided to announce publicly, that since I have merited to received almost all the wisdom of this Torah from his holy mouth, I am now making a clear disclosure that any words of life that are appropriate to express written within this sefer before you, it is a ‘chazakah’ that they have emerged and come from him through joy and enlightenment, or at the very least the essential points emerged from his mouth and were given over according to his knowledge and his power of Torah. As Rebbe Meir said (Bechoros, 55b), “The river is called ‘Yuval’, as it is written , “like a tree planted firmly by the water, with its roots spreading out to its outgrowths”, and why is this river called ‘Nahar Perat’ ? Because its waters multiply like fruits. In line with the statement of Shmuel⁷⁶ who said that water of the river emerges from within its subterranean source.” And anything found [in this sefer] that should not be said has come from me alone, for in my inequity I have not merited to receive even a drop of*

⁷⁵ R’ Shmuel Ehrenfeld shlit”a, *K’Tzeitz HaShemesh: Rechovos HaNahar (Vol. 1)*, p. 163

⁷⁶ It is no coincidence that the *tanna* who describes the unity between the source of water and the outspread of water is named ‘Shmuel’; see as well, R’ Meir Rosenblatt of Nadvorna *haskamah* to *K’Tzeitz HaShemesh: Biurei Kavvanos Sefiras HaOmer*.

the great sea, and if I am mistaken then the mistake rests with me, and may Hashem in His mercy forgive me."

Considered amongst the holy inner circle of *talmidim*⁷⁷, R' Shmuel shlit"a has been a scribe for the *Rebbe's Torah* for as long as the *Torah* has been written and recorded⁷⁸. Writing and elucidating many of the *maamarim* printed in *Sifrei Yam HaChochma*, R' Shmuel maintains the remarkable gift of conveying massive amounts of written information in such a way that there is almost no effort demanded by the reader⁷⁹. The smooth and pristinely clear writings draw the reader into the flow of water, drawn from the hidden depths of the sea. While deep investigation and mental energy are demanded for the reader to fully grasp the *Torah* being conveyed⁸⁰, at first glance one can easily move through the smooth terrain of the *maamarim* without stumbling. Aside from the ability of properly recording the words of light that flow from the *Rebbe's* mouth, one of the most significant aspects of R' Shmuel's writing is his ability to reveal the system at the heart of the sea of wisdom. Typically speaking, when the waters of *Torah* flow without measure, there is a risk that the inundation of water will erase any possibility of distinction and boundary. And when distinction, boundary and categorization are erased, the waters of *Torah* lose the powerful element of precision and specificity. In other words, it is all too easy for one to see the almost impossibly vast body of the *Rebbe's Torah* as one singular body of water that makes no distinction between up and down, thereby reducing the sea of wisdom to a flood of water devoid of any real systematicity. What R' Shmuel reveals is that within the immeasurable sea of wisdom, there exists a very clear and coherent infrastructure of *Torah* founded upon unshakeable pillars of insight. Far from being a flood of shapeless and unbounded *Torah*, *heaven forbid*, the *Torah* of the *Rebbe* is shown to be a clear and coherent system that operates according to the strict laws and measurements necessary for properly understanding the limitless depths of *pnimiyus haTorah*. This is not to imply, *heaven forbid*, that the *Torah* of the *Rebbe* was ever devoid of these clear and precise distinctions, but rather the power of the *true talmid* is his ability to receive the raw information from the *Rebbe* and reveal the clear and coherent system that always existed within potential.

⁷⁷ It is this author's humble opinion that R' Shmuel shlit"a is one of, if not the closet student of the *Rebbe* in terms of reception and development of *Torah* ideas. Not only is he the scribe of the *Rebbe* when it comes to *haskamot* and letters that need to be written, but he has also been the *Rebbe's 'chavrusa'* after *chatzos* for many years. Amongst the ten or so *talmidim* whose initials are referenced in the introduction to every volume of *Yam HaChochma*, R' Shmuel's initials are written first. This author also heard from the mouth of another *talmid*, R' C"R shlit"a, "that the *Rebbe* has said outright that his power of writing was given over to R' Shmuel".

⁷⁸ This is clear from the introductions written to the early editions of *Yam HaChochma* penned by R' Shmuel himself.

⁷⁹ See the *Rebbe's Haskamah* to R' Shmuel Ehrenfeld shlita's *Yi'ucha Im Shemesh* at length.

⁸⁰ See the remarkable *Maamar Ya'aseh L'Michakeh Lo*, in R' Shmuel Ehrenfeld's *K'Tzeitz HaShemesh: Rechovos HaNahar* (Vol. 2).

In addition to his remarkable ability to write at great length without losing his pointlike precision, R' Shmuel shlit" a also maintains a profound control over almost the entirety of *Torah*, from *Shas* and *Poskim* through the writings of the *Arizal* and his students, the *Rashash* and his students, the Vilna Gaon and his students, the Ramchal and his students as well as the *Baal Shem Tov* and his students. The vast source material- as we will see shortly in discussing his writings- enables R' Shmuel to reveal the deep rootedness of the *Rebbe's Torah* within nearly every element of *Torah*. By adding and applying sources that support the *chiddushim* or insights of the *Rebbe*, the reader comes away with a feeling that the work of the *Tzaddik* is not so much the revelation of a 'new' form of understanding *pnimiyus haTorah*, but rather a disclosure of what all the previous *Tzaddikim* and *seforim* have been trying to say from the very beginning. After learning through the *maamarim* he has transcribed, and especially the *seforim* that he has written and will continue to write, one comes away with a sense that there has never been any other way to learn the *sugyos*, for both the precise reasoning as well as the extensive textual evidence force the reader to acknowledge the truth value of this system of interpreting *pnimiyus haTorah*.

While R' Shmuel's writings illuminate all paths of *Torah* so that they may join together revealing a "*partzuf*" of unified *Torah* that is greater than the sum total of its parts, the most significant element of his writings are most certainly centered on our master, *Maran HaRashash*, R' *Shalom Mizrachi Sharabi zy" a*. This is clear from the general title of R' Shmuel's *seforim* "*K'Tzeitz HaShemesh*" as well as his introductory *sefer* "*Yirucha Im Shemesh*" as *Shemesh* is the acronym for *Shalom Mizrachi Sharabi*, as well as from the general content of the *seforim*. While a full overview of the essential role the *Rashash*, his writings and his students play within the system of the *Yam HaChochma* will be discussed *be"H* in the next volume "*The Path into the Sea*", for our purposes we will simply review the general framework of R' Shmuel's *seforim* on the *Rashash*. As of now there have been three sets of *seforim* printed which amount to seven volumes. The first *sefer*, titled "*Yirucha Im Shemesh*" (5771/2011), is described by the author as an introduction to the *seforim* printed afterwards. As a general introduction to the world, history and writings of the *Rashash* there is, quite literally, nothing that is left uncovered in this remarkable *sefer*. With a subtitle "*General Principles in the Path of Studying Toras HaRashash*", this 850+ page *sefer* discusses such essential topics as **1.** The praise of the *Rashash's* introductions **2.** The *Rashash's* path of studying and understanding the *Torah* of the *Arizal* **3.** The power of the *Rashash* in terms of the practical path of engaging the *kavaanos* of the *Arizal* **4.** The historical acceptance of the *Rashash*, which includes a reception history of the writings of the *Rashash* both in *halachic* literature, the students of the *Baal Shem Tov* as well as the students of the Vilna Gaon **5.** The proper approach to *Mahara"sh Malko's Sefer Shemen Zayis Zach* which brings down numerous questions on *Rashash's* path **6.** The relationship between the *Rashash* and the history and the writings of R' *Chaim Vital zy" a* **7.** The textual

history of the *Rashash's* writings, including deep manuscript work and the spiritual story behind the historical changes **8**. The proper path of understanding the subsequent commentators and students of the *Rashash* with a particular focus on R' Chaim Dela Rosa, the *Toras Chochom* and **9**. The relationship between the *Rashash* and his students to the writings of R' Yisrael Sarug zy" a and the "worlds of the *Malbush*". In addition to the nine gates on the *Rashash* and his *Torah*, the *sefer* includes a remarkable 80 page essay on the life, path and spiritual power of R' Aharon HaLevi of Strasye zy" a, titled "To Proclaim the Praise of Aharon⁸¹". Aside from the remarkable grasp, utilization and overview of nearly every available source regarding whatever topic is under discussion on a particular page, this *sefer* also includes teachings and explanations offered by the *Rebbe shlit" a* that are not printed anywhere else. The general goal of this *sefer* is to serve as an introduction to the other writings of R' Shmuel shlit" a where he delves deeply into the particulars of the *Rashash's Torah* through which the reader will be armed with the proper tools needed to engage those writings with clarity and precision.

The next series of *seforim* printed are "***K'Tzeitz HaShemesh: Biurim B'Sefiras HaOmer***" and "***K'Tzeitz HaShemesh: Iyyunim B'Sefiras HaOmer v'Shavuos***" (2 Vol., 5774/2014). These remarkable *seforim* are basically a "shita m'kubetzetz" of everything there is to say and understand regarding the *kavaanos* of *sefiras ha'omer* and *shavuos* as they are expressed in the writings of the *Arizal* and the writings of the *Rashash*. Whether an investigation into the proper understanding of a highly specific particular element of the *kavanah*, or an overview of the development of the *kavanah*, R' Shmuel leads the reader through the various commentators and their opinions, answering questions and clarifying difficulties in such a way that the entire history of ideas comes to life in front of the readers eyes. In addition to the control and utilization of all possible opinions and sources from within the *kabbalistic* tradition with a particular focus on the students of the *Rashash*, these *seforim* also utilize manuscript analysis to determine the most refined and clarified approach to the topics as possible. While the subject matter discussed in these *seforim* demands a basic understanding of the *sugyas* as they emerge from within the writings of the *Arizal* and the *Rashash*, the *seforim* review and elucidate the topics in such a clear way that even the novice student will be able to traverse the historically difficult terrain of these ideas. In this author's opinion, however, the most remarkable element of these *seforim* are the footnotes which lead the reader down a path wherein the unity of the *Torah* is revealed. Particular elements of the *Rashash's* system open up into discussions that reach from one end the world to the other, moving through essential *sugyas* in *Chassidus* to reveal how the particulars of the *Kabbalah* and the general principles of *Chassidus* unify together, *l'mehevei*

⁸¹ This *maamar* was translated into english by this author

echad b'echad, creating a singular entity of *Torah* that extends from the very top down to the very bottom⁸².

The last series of *seforim* printed is "***K'Tzeitz HaShemesh: Biur al Rechovos HaNahar***" (3 Vol., 5778/2018). A fully comprehensive commentary on the first page of the *Rashash's* nine page introduction *Rechovos HaNahar (daf 2a-2c)*, these *seforim* cover what R' Shmuel refers to as "*siman alef*". Following the students of the *Rashash* who arranged the *hakdamah* according to twenty-six *simanim*- in alignment with the four-letter essential name of *Hashem* which equals the *gematriah* twenty-six- this massive project is envisioned to comprise more than 20 volumes. Described as "*explanations and investigations*" on *Rechovos HaNahar*, these three volumes descend into the depths and ascend to the heights of the *sugya* referred to as "*the incident of the kings took place on the particular level*" (*mikrah ha'melachim irah b'pratus*). Containing twenty chapters ("*anafim*"), the first two volumes of this series goes through each and every word of the *Rashash*, measuring and weighing the significance as well as the import of their meaning. The essential *sugyas* as they exist within the writings of the *mekubalim* prior to the *Rashash* are introduced so that the terse writing style of the *hadamah* becomes intelligible and understandable. After the origin of each *sugya* is expressed clearly, the *seforim* then expose us to the vast swath of commentators who came after the *Rashash*, revealing arguments and offering answers. In addition to the running explanation and commentary, R' Shmuel goes to great lengths to align the teachings of the *Rashash* with the teachings of the Vilna Gaon and his students as well as the *Baal Shem Tov* and his students. These *seforim* also contain introductions and clarifications from the *Rebbe shlit"á* which are not printed anywhere else. Much like the previous series of *seforim*, the footnotes- in all of their various forms- reveal a subterranean world of insight to the reader where the depths of *emunah* and *yichud* come to life. Aside from the body of the *sefer*, the first volume includes a comprehensive introduction that reviews the general ideas discussed in *Yirucha Im Shemesh* as well as a succinct overview of some of the key points of light that emerge from within the *Rashash's hakdamah*. Attached to the second volume of the series is a remarkable discourse titled "*Maamar Yaaseh L'Michkeh Lo*" describing in depth the nature and necessity of studying *pnimiyus haTorah* through intensive investment and attentive toil. Far from simply a guide as to how to study the teachings, this *maamar* reveals how the method of study reflects the very teachings and secrets revealed within the *seforim* themselves, enabling the reader to experience a unity between the process of study and the actualization of the ideas themselves. The third volume of this series contains another remarkable discourse titled "*Maamar HaKlal v'ha Prat*". Deeply associated with the subject matter discussed in *siman alef* of *Rechovos HaNahar* this *maamar* descends into the depths of the all important concepts of the "whole"

⁸² This is explained in the clearest of terms in the *Rebbe's haskamah* to R' Shmuel's *Sefer Yirucha Im Shemesh*, and reprinted in *K'Tzeitz HaShemesh* and all subsequent *seforim*.

(*klal*) and the “part” (*prat*), or the “general” and the “particular”. Gathering from sources ranging the entire gamut of *pnimiyus haTorah*, this *maamar* reveals how the essential pathway into *avodah* is to first focus of the general whole (*klal*) wherein the shattering and difficulty does not exist, and only afterwards focusing on the particular part (*prat*) wherein the brokenness and concealment exist. By beginning above where all things are fixed, one connects themselves to the light of life that saturates the “*klal*” so that they can then descend into the darkened territory of the “*prat*” without any fear of disconnection. Once a person has descended from the “*klal*” into the “*prat*”, they can then reascend from the “*prat*” back up into the “*klal*”, thereby revealing the additional adornment (*tosefes kishut*) wherein the “*klal*” is revealed to contain the “*prat*” within itself.

The last *sefer* containing the teachings of R' Shmuel *shlit"a*, was not actually written by him but rather it is a compilation of essential teachings gathered together from the sum total of his writings, most of which have not yet been published. Described by the anonymous compiler as “*a summary of the order of the unfolding of the worlds and their rectification according to the Kabbalah of the Rashash*”, ***Sefer Tevuos Shemesh*** reviews the most fundamental elements of Arizal's Kabbalah as it is refracted through the teachings of the *Rashash* and his students, the *Baal Shem Tov* and his students as well as the Vilna Gaon *zy"a*. Compiled from the “*writings of the [Baal] K'Tzeitz HaShemesh*”, this remarkable *sefer* “*clarifies the quintessential summary of the order, emanation and rectification of the worlds as well as the order of the rectifications within the Torah and the mitzvos and their action above*”. The incredible value of this short *sefer* is described by the compiler on the title page, simply put, within this *sefer* “*the reader will find an opened opening through which one may come to recognize and fear Hashem, to extend their hand and eat from the 'Eitz HaChaim' and to place it as a reminder between their eyes for how to serve Hashem.*” The contents of the *sefer* which “*are arranged in a general fashion according to the compiler*” are as follows:

- 1.** The concept of *Tzimtzum*
- 2.** The general description of *Shevirah* and *Tikkun*
- 3.** The *Birurim* associated with every aspect of creation
- 4.** Each and everyday is a replication of *Maaseh Bereshis*
- 5.** The linear (*orech*) and depth (*ovi*) perspectives
- 6.** The need for contemplating the *partzufim* according to the pathways of *avodah*
- 7.** The concept of *Tzelem Elokim*
- 8.** The order of the distribution of the *mochin* of *Ma"h* and *Be"n* throughout the twelve *partzufim* of *Atzilus*
- 9.** The order of interinclusion and interconnection (*hisklalus v'hiskashrus*)
- 10.** The *Ne"r* (*Nefesh and Ruach*) of Hashem is the soul of the person
- 11.** The concept of *Ma"N* (*Mayim Nukvin*)
- 12.** The process of drawing down *Mochin*
- 13.** The concept of *Kol Tzumah* (*Keilim, Levushim, Tzelamim, Mochin, Oros*)
- 14.** The various forms of *Yaakov v'Rochel*