

LESSONS IN TORAH OR

PRECIOUS TEACHINGS THAT AWAKEN THE HEART
TO DIVINE SERVICE FROM THE HOLY MASTER
♪ **RABBI SHNEUR ZALMAN OF LIADI** ♪
TRANSLATED AND EXPLAINED

תורה אור

פרשׁת ואריא

דברור הפתיחה

ויאמר גו' את מטרך גו' יהי לתנין

“Transforming Kelipah By Revealing Its
Source”

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Torah Or English translation project:

The original text of the maamarim with נקודות and punctuation is presented side by side with a phrase-by-phrase translation and explanation. The translation of the text is in **bold** whereas the commentary is in regular font. The explanations of general concepts that are not directly relevant to understanding the flow of the maamar are in footnotes.

The Goal

The main purpose of this project is to enable the reader to learn the Likutay Torah in the original. By learning the words, structure, and concepts of the maamarim, eventually they should be able to learn it by themselves in the original.

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Torah Or**תורה אור**

דברור המתחילה

ויאמר גו' את מטר גו' יהי למתנין¹

פרשת וארא ז' נו, ב

“Transforming Kelipah**By Revealing Its Source”**

In the Parsha of Vaeira, the Torah tells us about the miracles Moshe and Aharon performed in Mitzrayim (Egypt). The first set of miracles performed weren't intended to punish Pharoah; their purpose was to prove to Pharoah that Hashem had actually sent them, and Hashem's infinite might. The first of these “signs” occurred when Hashem told Moshe to relay to Aharon to throw down his staff and it will transform into a snake. When Aharon did so, not only it transformed into a snake, but it also (1) turned back into a staff and then (2) swallowed up all the other snakes Pharoah's magicians had made from their own staffs, while still remaining a wooden staff. The Alter Rebbe will analyze the significance behind the details of this particular miracle:

(א) Part 1

”ויאמר ה' אל משה ואל אהרן לאמר כו',
 קח את מטר ותשלח לפני פרעה יהי
 למתנין כו', עד: ויבלע מטה אהרן את
 מטוטם” (פרשתנו ז, ח'יב):

“And Hashem said to Moshe and Aharon saying: When Pharoah will ask for a sign, then tell Aharon: take your staff and throw it down before Pharoah and will become a snake...then Pharoah called to his magicians and they also turned their staffs into snakes...but then the staff of Aharon swallowed up their staff-snakes...” (Shemos 7:8-12)

¹ (נאמר בסעודה שבת פרשת וארא, מברכים הchodosh שבת, ב"ז טבת תקס"ה).

לְהַבִּין עַנִּין הַמְּטָה שָׁנַהֲפֵר לְנַחַשׁ, (וְאַחֲרֵי
כֵּר חָרָב וְנַהֲפֵר לְמַטָּה).

וְגַם, מָה שָׂוָה הִיא הַמּוֹפֵת הָרָאשׁוֹן:
שְׁנַתָּנוּ לְפְרָעָה, וְקָדֵם לְכָל הָעָשָׂר מִפְוָתִים):

הַנֵּה בְּתִיב (בְּאַיִב, לו): "וַיַּנְצַלּוּ אֹתְ מִצְרָיִם",
וְאָמַרְוּ רַב"ל (פֶּסַחִים קִיט): "שְׁעַשָּׂאוּה
בְּמַצּוֹלָה שָׁאֵין בָּהּ דָּגִים".

פִּירּוֹשׁ: שְׁלַקְתּוּ בָּל הַנְּצֹעִין שָׁנְפָלוּ
בְּשִׁבְירָה אֲלֵיכֶם, וַיַּתְּרוּקְנוּ מִצְרָיִם מִמֶּם
עַד שְׁנַשְׁאָרוּ בְּמַצּוֹלָה נִי, וְלֹא הַשְׁאִרוּ
שֵׁם אֲפִילוּ נָצֹעַ אֶחָד.

וְהַנֵּה, לְהַבִּין עַנִּין הַנְּצֹעִות שָׁנְפָלוּ
בְּשִׁבְירָת-הַכְּלִים עַנִּין הַעֲלָאתֶם -

הַעֲנִין: כִּי הַנֵּה יְדַעַת, עַנִּין הַשִּׁבְירָה הַוְאָ
מִיתָת ז' מְלָכִין קָרְמָאִין דָתָהּוּ, שְׁנַשְׁבָּרוּ

We need to understand: (1) What is the significance of the miracle that the staff was transformed into a snake, and then was transformed back into a staff?

Also: (2) Why was this was the first "sign" that they showed to Pharaoh, and came as a prerequisite for all of the Ten Plagues?

Now, it is written (Shemos 12:36): "And they (The Jewish People) emptied Mitzrayim (from their gold and silver and possessions when they left) ,," regarding which our Sages have said (Pesachim 119a): "They made it (Mitzrayim) like a pond lacking its fish".

This means: They collected all of the "Sparks of Holiness" that "fell down" from the "shattering of the Keilim" into their land (of Mitzrayim), and after the Jewish People gathered these "sparks of Holiness," the land of Mitzrayim was emptied from them until it remained like "a pond without fish", and the Jewish People didn't leave behind even one "spark".

Now, we need to understand the idea of these "Sparks of Holiness" that fell down with the "shattering of the Keilim" and how they are elevated:

The idea is: It is known that the "shattering of the Keilim" is the

וַיַּנְפְּלוּ לִמְטָה לִבְיָע בְּבִחִינַת הַקְּלִיפּוֹת וּסְטַרְא-אַחֲרָא.

“death” of the “Seven Primordial Kings of Tohu”, meaning the Keilim of the seven emotional attributes from Chesed to Malchus of the World of Tohu, **that broke and fell down in the worlds of Beriah, Yetzira, and Asiya into the realm of unholiness referred to as Kelipa and Sitra Achra.**

To understand the above, we need to preface:

Before Hashem created the physical world, He created a system of spiritual worlds where the Truth of Hashem’s Oneness is more apparent. These spiritual worlds contain the souls and angels that are greatly more aware of Hashem than people in the physical world are. These spiritual worlds are referred to as Beriyah (Creation), Yetzirah (Formation), and Asiya (Action). They correspond to different levels of the how the creative energy of Hashem descends until it reaches the physical world.

Before Hashem created the spiritual worlds, He created an interface system limiting His Infinite Light to definable manners so as to create and interact with finite beings. This interface is comprised of two components: The “Light” of Hashem expresses Hashem’s indivisibility and limitlessness, and the “Keilim” of the 10 Sefiros, or 10 manners of how Hashem chose to ‘express’ Himself.

The word “Keilim” literally means “vessel” or “instrument”. In this context, it refers to Hashem’s ability of limiting His infinite revelation in specific expressions and attributes, e.g. wisdom, kindness. Therefore, these expressions are able to act as a source for creating specific and limited beings, and the manner in which Hashem interacts with them.

Now, this ‘interface’ of the 10 Sefiros imbued with Light, came in two ‘stages’ known as “Tohu” and “Tikun”.

The word “Tohu” means “wild” or “unlimited,” and refers to a system of Sefiros of Light and Keilim unable to function together properly. The Light was so infinite and intense that it was not able to be properly defined and channeled through the Keilim in a way that could be directly given over to the created beings. In addition, each of the Keilim only had the capacity of expressing Hashem in one particular manner to the exclusion of the other Keilim. Thus, the Keilim weren’t able to merge into one cohesive system properly expressing Hashem. For these two reasons, the Keilim of this system of Sefiros “shattered”, meaning broke down into myriads of fragmented “sparks.” Each “spark” is an expression of a particular Kli (sing. of Keilim) of Tohu.

(They are also referred to as “Sparks of Holiness”. In their source in Tohu, these sparks were originally connected to an unlimited level of Holiness, namely the Light of Hashem expressed in Tohu. After these “sparks” fell, they still retain a residual degree of that original holiness, except its trapped in unholiness, as the maamar will further explain.)

For example, when a person desires to eat a particular food, that urge is a “spark” of the Kli of Chesed-Kindness-Love from the world of Tohu.. In this case, it is manifest in a particular person who has a ‘love’ or desire for this particular food. When the person does not naturally see any connection between his desire for this food and Hashem’s Infinite Light, this “spark” of the Kli of Chesed of Tohu has been far removed from its original source. This process is referred to as the “Sparks of Holiness” falling into unholiness of Kelipa and Sitra Achra.

Kelipa means a “peel” or “shell”, referring to how the physicality or ego conceals the inner Divine intent in something. For example, in this case, the Divine intent in a person eating is to energize himself to serve Hashem, but the person feels he is eating in order to have pleasure or to energize himself for purely physical life. Sitra Achra means “the other side”, meaning not the Side of Holiness. The Side of Holiness is only whatever is dedicated to fulfilling Hashem’s plan and true desire for its existence.

In the “shattering of the Keilim of Tohu”, the main shattering occurred in the seven Sefiros of the ‘emotional attributes of: 1-Chesed/Kindness 2-Gevura/Severity 3-Tiferes/Compassion 4- Netzach/Victory 5- Hod/Submission 6- Yesod/Connection 7- Malchus/Kingship. These seven Sefiros of Tohu are referred to as “the 7 Primordial Kings of Tohu”. Each of these Sefiros was only expressing Hashem in its particular manner, but with unlimited energy, like a king who is the only one in charge of his country and has unlimited pride for his particular kingship.³

After Hashem made the system of Tohu, whose Keilim “shattered” and whose sparks fell into unholiness, Hashem created a second interface of Sefiros called Tikun.

The word Tikun means to “fix” or “build up”, and this set of Sefiros has the power to fix the “shattering” of the Keilim of Tohu, and to “build up” those sparks into something productive and holy. In the world of Tikun, the Light is limited enough to properly adapt to the parameters of the Keilim. Also, the Keilim are able to merge with each other and into a cohesive system, unlike the Sefiros of Tohu.

³ The three Sefiros of the ‘intellectual attributes of Chochma/Wisdom, Bina/Understanding, and Daas/Knowledge also broke down, but in a different manner, and here is not the place to elaborate.

The system of Tikun is generally expressed in the Sefiros of “Atzilus”, but in particular in the Divine soul of every Jew. This is especially true of the souls of Tzadikim, like Moshe and Aharon for example. They initiated the process of “redeeming the sparks of holiness” that fell into Mitzrayim through the Ten Plagues and the service of the Jewish People in general, as the maamar will continue to explain.

Now the Alter Rebbe will give an analogy to better understand this process:

וְהִיינוּ כְּמוֹ עַל דָּرְךָ מְשֻלָּב בִּנְשָׁמָת הָאָדָם:
שְׁקוֹדָם בּוֹאָה לְגַוֹּף הַיִתָּה בְּטִילָה
בְּתִכְלִית לְגַבִּי אָוֶר אַיִן-סֹוף בְּרוּךְ-הָוָא
(כְּמוֹ שְׁכָתוֹב (מלכִּים ב' ה, טז): "חַי ה' אֲשֶׁר
עַמְּדָתִי לִפְנֵי").

This is similar, by way of analogy, to the soul of a person: Before the soul came into the body it was completely absorbed in experiencing Hashem's Infinite Light, as it is written (Melachim II 5:16): “As Hashem lives, that I have stood before Him”, meaning that the soul of every Jew has previously stood “before Hashem”, completely absorbed in His Truth.

וְהִיינוּ מְשׁוּם שָׁאֹזֶן לְאַהֲרֹן דָּבָר הַמְּחַשֵּׁיר
וּמְסִתֵּיר עַלְיָה הַגִּלְוִי אֱלֹקּוֹת, לְכָרְבָּהּ הַיִתָּה
בְּטִילָה לְמִקְוָה בְּתִכְלִית.

This is because then there was nothing covering over and concealing the revelation of Hashem, therefore it was completely absorbed in experiencing its source in Hashem's revealed Presence.

וְכִין שִׁירְדָּה לְמִטָּה וּנְתַלְבָשָׁה בְּגַוֹּף
הַחֲוּמָרִי, אֲזִי הַגּוֹף מְסִתֵּיר עַלְיָה לְהִיוֹת
נְרָמָה הַעוֹלָם וּמְלֹאוֹו לִישׁ וְדָבָר נְפָרֵד
בְּפָנֵי עַצְמוֹ,

However, after it descends below to become invested in a physical body, at that point the body conceals this revelation from the soul, so that the soul should perceive the world and all therein as though they are separate and independent of Hashem,

וְאֵין רֹאָה בְּחִנִּת הַבְּטוּל שֶׁל כָּל
הַעוֹלָמוֹת לְגַבִּי אָוֶר אַיִן-סֹוף בְּרוּךְ-הָוָא
הַמְּחִיה וּמְהֻווָּה אֹתָם תְּמִיד.

and it doesn't perceive how all of the worlds are totally dependent upon Hashem's Infinite Light to constantly give them existence and life.

וכך על דבר משל הוא עניין שבירתה
הכלים:

שנפלו הנציצין דתהו ונתלבשו בkelipot
דב"ע,

שהkelipot מחשיכות על הנציצות
ומסתירים אותם מכל צה, שלא יריגשו
גilioi או אין-סוף ברוריהו, עד שיזוכלו
להיות יש ודבר בפני עצמו.

ובמאמר פרעה (יחזקאל כט, ג): "לי יארו
ונאני עשויתני".

רק "דקרו ליה אלהא דאליהא".⁴

The spiritual Kelipos believe that they also have independent power, it is just that Hashem is greater than them. However, the physical Kelipos, like Pharaoh, deny Hashem completely, which is why he claimed to have created himself.

ואף שקדם השבירה היו הנציצים
בטלים ומוחדרים באין-סוף ברוריהו,
מן שפניהם לא היה מתרגלה או אין-סוף בהם
בגilioi ויחוד גמור,

Similarly, by way of analogy, is the case regarding the "shattering of the Keilim (of Tohu)":

The "Sparks of Tohu" fell down until they became invested in the Kelipos of Beriah, Yetzirah, and Asiyah,

these Kelipos cover over these "sparks" and bring concealment to them from all sides, so that they will not be able to experience the revelation of Hashem's Infinite Light, until these "sparks" are able to feel themselves as being totally separate and independent of Hashem.

Like Pharaoh said (Yechezkal 29:3): "I own the river, and I made myself."

It is only that the spiritual Kelipos call Hashem: "the G-d of all other forces."

Even though before the "shattering of the Keilim" these same "sparks" were totally absorbed and unified with Hashem's Infinite Light, this is because then the Infinite Light was completely revealed to them and therefore united with them,

אבל לאחר השבירה, שירדו הנצוץין ונחלבו בתוך הקלייפות, שהם מלבישים אותם ומסתרים גילוי אלקות, כמו של הגוף שמסתיר ומחשיך לנוּי הנשמה בנוּי,

לכֶר אִינָם יִכּוֹלִים לְהִיוֹת בְּבִחִיתָ בְּטוּל
בְּמוּשָׁהָיו תְּחִלָּה.

ולכֶר נִקְרָאים בְּשֵׁם "קָלִיפּוֹת"⁵, שָׁהֵם בְּמַשְׁלֵחַ הַקָּלִיפָּה, שְׁהֵיא חֹפֶפת וּמַקְפָּת עַל הַפְּרִי הַבָּנוּס בְּתוֹךְ וּמִסְתַּרְתָּ אֹתָה,
בְּמַשְׁלֵחַ קָלִיפָּת הָאָגוֹן,

וְאֵין תְּרוּפָה לְהֹזִיא הַפְּרִי, בִּי אִם עַל יָדִי
שְׁבִירָת הַקָּלִיפָּה;

וּכְרָ, כִּי לְהֹזִיא נָצְעֵי הַקְדוֹשָׁה מִהַקְלִיפּוֹת הַמְסִתְרִים עַלְيָהֶם, הִיא עָרֵיר לְהִיוֹת שְׁבִירָת-הַקָּלִיפּוֹת.

וְזֹה הִיא עֲנֵנִין אֶתְהָ� וּמַזְמָתִים וּמַכּוֹת שְׁבָמְצָרִים, כְּדַלְקָמָן, אִם יַרְצֵחַ הַשֵּׁם :

however, after the “shattering of the Keilim,” these same “sparks” fell and became invested in the Kelipos, which envelope them and hide from them the revelation of Hashem, just like the body covers over the soul and conceals from it the revelation of Hashem, as described above,

therefore, these “sparks” are not able to become absorbed in Holiness like they were originally.

It is for this reason that unholiness is called “Sparks of Holiness” – קָלִיפּוֹת – shells/peels”, since they are like a peel that encompasses and surrounds the fruit that is hidden inside of it and conceals it, and like the shell of a nut,

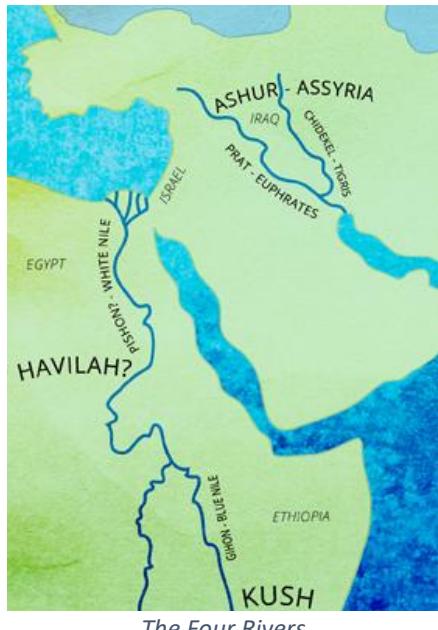
and there is no remedy to extract the fruit without breaking the shell or peel.

So too, in order to remove the “Sparks of Holiness” from the Kelipos that conceal them, there needs to be the process of breaking these Kelipos.

This was the purpose of the of the “signs”, “wonders”, and Plagues that were performed in Mitzrayim, as will be further explained with Hashem’s Will.

⁵ ראה גם ל'קמן בשלח סא, ד. לקוטי תורת מוריע כג, ד. ביאור "אחרי" הנדרס בסוף ספר "דרך מצותיק" קפט, ב זילר - נסמן ב"MRIAI מיקומות, הגדות והערות קוצרות לספר של בינוים" פרק א).

והנה כתיב (בראשית ב, י"א): "וַיַּעֲמֹד כָּבֵד, וּמְשֻׁם יִפְרֹד וְתֵהַ לְדָבָר רָאשִׁים. שֵׁם הַאֶחָד פִּישׁוֹן כֹּו".



The Four Rivers

Here the Alter Rebbe will give a mystical interpretation of these verses. To better understand this, we will go through how these verses are understood on a literal level, then on a mystical level:

When Hashem first made the world, He created a place⁷ called "Eden", and to the east of this place He created a place called "the Garden". There was a river that flowed from Eden to the Garden, which watered all the plants and trees in the Garden. After this river passed through the Garden, it submerged underground and resurfaced as four different rivers.⁸

(לארבעה)

⁷ The exact location of this place is not clearly known, according to a maamar from the Mittler Rebbe. The Garden of Eden is located somewhere along the equator, to the south of Eretz Yisrael, See *Maamarei Admor ha-Emtza'i* (Discourses of the Mittler Rebbe), *Vayikra*, vol. 2, p. 703.

⁸ Information here are based on article by Rabbi Shaul Wolf, https://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/3082157/jewish/Where-Are-the-Four-

One river, Pishon, was the Nile (White Nile) that flows through Mitzrayim, the second river was Gichon (Blue Nile) that surrounds Ethopia, the third river was Chidekel (Tigris) near Assyria, and the fourth river was Pras (Euphrates).⁹

On a mystical level, this “river from Eden” is a “river” of Divine Light that “flows” from the highest level of Atzilus called Chochma/Wisdom all the way until the lowest level of Atzilus known “the Garden” which is Malchus/Kingship of Atzilus. (Chochma/Wisdom is also called “Eden/Pleasure” since Hashem’s Pleasure is expressed in this Chochma.) While this “river” of life-giving Divine Light flows through Atzilus it is still “one river” since this Light is united with the Sefiros of Atzilus, and the Sefiros with each other. This is analogous to a body that has one soul flowing through it, since the various body parts form one cohesive entity.

However, after this “river of Light” flows through Malchus (the Garden) it becomes “submerged” into a different level of existence where Hashem’s Oneness is not openly revealed. In that level, the created beings do not feel united with the Divine Light, nor with each other. This “river” of Light “resurfaces” there as four different “rivers”, meaning that it becomes expressed differently in different aspects of creation, for example in the four “elements” of fire, air, water, and earth, which represent different tendencies and aspects manifest throughout all levels of creation.

After this “river of Light” flows through the various aspects of the spiritual worlds and into the physical world, it further descends to give life to an even lower dimension of existence known as “Kelipa” or unholiness.

In Kelipa itself, there are four kingdoms that tried to enslave the Jewish People, or at least stop them from serving Hashem. These were: Mitzrayim (Egypt), Bavel (Babylonia), Greece, and Rome.

These four kingdoms of unholiness receive their life from the “four rivers of Light” flowing through the spiritual worlds, which correspond to the four physical rivers that came from “the Garden”. The kingdom of Mitzrayim received their life from the spiritual “river” called Pishon/Nile, which also was manifest in the physical river Nile that flowed through their land.

After the Sin of the Tree of Knowledge by Adam the First Man, the “Sparks of Tohu” fell from him into the physical and spiritual river that flowed out of the Garden where he was. They later became expressed in all the unholiness in the world, but primarily in the four kingdoms that enslaved the Jewish People.

[Rivers-that-Come-from-Eden.htm](http://www.chabad.org/Rivers-that-Come-from-Eden.htm), excerpted with permission from Chabad.org.

⁹ Picture of “The Four Rivers” is copyright of Sefira Lightstone, and reproduced here with special permission. To see more of her works, go to www.sefiracreative.com

More of these “Sparks of Tohu” that fell into these “rivers” fell into the spiritual river of “Pishon/Nile” that gives life to Mitzrayim than in the other spiritual rivers. These sparks were redeemed through the Jewish People’s self-sacrifice and the miracles and plagues in Mitzrayim.

ופירוש: “נָהָר הַיֹּצֵא מִעֵדֶן” הִיא הַמְשֻׁבָּה
וְהָאֶרֶה הַנְּמַשְׁכָת מִחְכָּמָה-עַלְּאָה
דְּאַצְּלָוֹת, שֶׁבֶת מְלֻוָּשׁ אָוֶר אַיִן-סּוֹף
בְּרוּךְ הוּא.

וְבָה וְעַל יָדָה נִמְשָׁר אָוֶר אַיִן-סּוֹף בְּרוּךְ
הָוּא בְּכָל הַאֲצִילוֹת, וּנִמְשָׁר עַד בְּחִינַת
מֶלֶכְוֹת-דְּאַצְּלָוֹת הַנְּקָרָא “גַּן”, וְזֶה
לְהַשְׁקוֹת אֶת הַגַּן” (שם).

The mystical meaning of this: “The river that came flowing out of Eden” is a reference to the flow and light of Chochma (Wisdom) Above in the World of Atzilus, which is referred to as “Eden”, in which Hashem’s Infinite Light is expressed.

Hashem’s Infinite Light is drawn forth into the entire World of Atzilus in and through this level (of Chochma/Eden), until it becomes expressed in the level of Malchus (Kingship) of Atzilus which is referred to as “the Garden”, and this is the meaning of “to give ‘water’ to the ‘Garden’,” meaning to drawn down Hashem’s life-giving Light into Malchus, which is called “the Garden”.

**שם באצילות “אינו גְּרָמוּהֵי חָר
בְּהַן”¹⁰.**

In that World of Atzilus, “Hashem’s Light and His Keilim are totally unified”.

Meaning, the Light adapts to the Keilm and the Keilim surrender their definition and limitation to the Light, so that they work to merge Infinite and Finite. This allows Hashem’s Infinite Light to come down to the created beings. Not only is the Light united with the Keilim, but the Keilim are able to merge together cohesively, so that the Light remains one single indivisible Light throughout all of Atzilus.

ולְבִן הַנָּהָר - אֶחָד, שֶׁהָוָא עַלְּמַם הַאֲחֻדּוֹת.

And therefore the “river” of Light in Atzilus is still “one”, since it is in the

¹⁰ (הוּא אֶחָד עִם פְּלִיו. תָּקוּנִי זָהָר בְּהַקְרָמָה ג, ב).

World of Hashem's Oneness being openly expressed.

ובין שגיא לראש הבראה, אוני "משם יفرد" – בבחינת פירוד והתחלקות לד' נהרות – שהוא תחילת ההתחלקות.

Once this "river of Light" reaches the beginning of the World of Beriah "from there it splits up," into the level of separation and division, so that it turns into four different "rivers of Light", since the World of Beriah is the beginning of division.

In that spiritual world the created beings first experience a feeling of division and separation between themselves and their Creator, and consequently, between themselves and each other.

והנה, במשל הנהרות שאין נהר אחד דומה לחברו: לא ב מהותו – שזו מים מתוקין וצלולין והשני אינו כן; ולא בגודלו – שזו נמושך מאות פרוסאות והשני נמושך מאה, וככאי גוונא.

Now, just like in the analogy of physical rivers, one river is not the same as another river: Neither in quality, since one river will have sweet and clear water compared to a different river; nor in quantity, since one river may run for two hundred miles¹¹ and another may run for only a hundred miles or the like.

– בך אין דומים הנהרות עלילונות זה זה:

So too, the "rivers of Light" Above in the spiritual worlds are not the same:

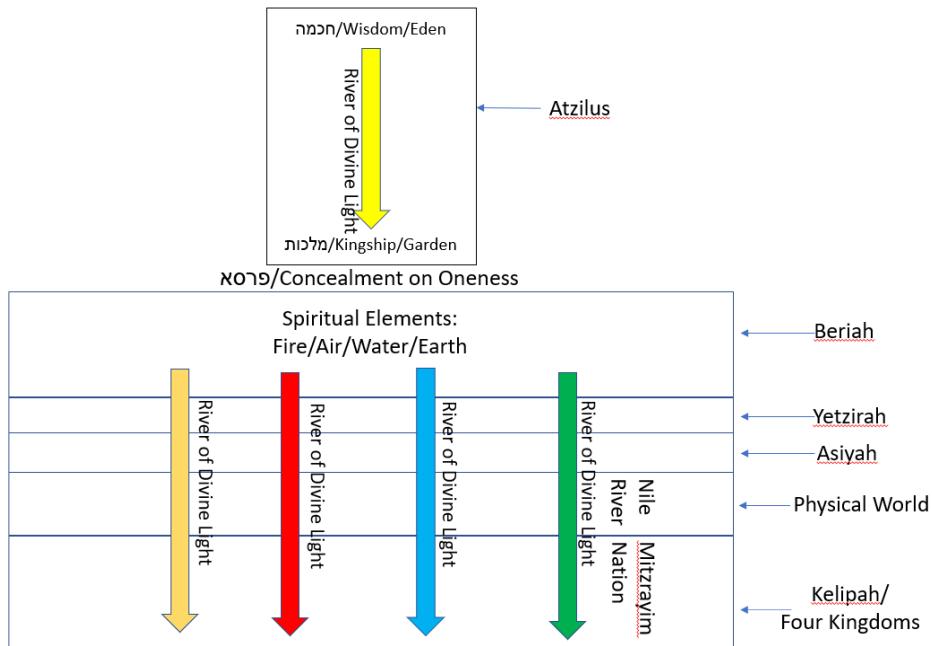
דהיינו, "פישון" – "נילוס" – שר של מצרים¹², נמושכו ונפלו בו נצוצים רבים מעולם התהו, יותר ממה שנפלו לבבל וכו':

Meaning, that many "Sparks of the World of Tohu" were drawn down and fell into this spiritual "river", the "river" called Pishon, which is a reference to the Nile river and represents the angel -the spiritual flow of life-force- appointed over the land of Mitzrayim, more "sparks"

¹¹ The original word in the maamar is "פרסהות" which is the plural of "פרסה" - a measure of distance around 4 kilometers, or around 2.5 miles.

¹² ("פישון הוא נילוס נהר מצרים" רשי על הפסוק. וראה זהר חלק א לך לך פא, ב. חי שורה קכח, א ברעיא מהימנא).

fell there than the amount or type of “Sparks” that fell into the spiritual “river” of Bavel (Babylonia) or the other spiritual “rivers”.



Because more “sparks” fell into the spiritual life-force of Mitzrayim than into the other unholy kingdoms, the accomplishment in redeeming them was of the utmost significant. This is expressed in the fact that the exile and redemption from Mitzrayim enabled the redemption from all further exiles, including the current exile, may we merit the Redemption immediately!

(ב) Part 2

ועתה יובן עניין המופתים שהראה השם
יתברך למצרים, ובמו שכתוב (פרקנו ז,
ח): "וַיַּדְעֻ מִצְרָיִם כִּי אֲנִי הָ".

פירוש, "וַיַּדְעַ" הוא מילשון שבירה, כמו
שכתוב: "וַיַּדַּע"¹⁴ בם את אנשי סכות".

Now we will understand the idea of the wonders that Hashem showed to the Mitzriyim (Egyptians), as it is written (Shemos 7:5): "And the Mitzriyim will 'יַדְעַ' -know' that I am Hashem."

Meaning: the word "יַדְעַ" which usually connotes "knowing" can also connote "breaking," as it is written (Shoftim 8:16): "And he (Gideon) 'יַדַּע' -broke' the people of Sukkos with these..."¹⁵

We see that the word for "knowing" is connected to "breaking". In our context this means that for the Mitzriyim to "know" that Hashem is their Creator and Source of Life, Hashem had to "break" their external dimension of ego that was preventing that "knowledge" from reaching them.

והענין, בمبואר למעלה, שבדי להוציא
הנצחון מן הקליפה המכסה עליה, אי
אפשר להיות כי אם על ידי שבירת
הקליפה, ובמשל האגוז כי.

The idea is, as explained above, that in order to extract the "Spark of Holiness" from the Kelipa (Unholiness) which covers over it, this can only be done by breaking the Kelipa, like the analogy of the nut that cannot be extracted and eaten without breaking its shell.

והענין: שעל ידי שבירת הקליפה יוכל
 להיות גילוי אור אין-סוף בראור-הוא

The idea is: Breaking the Kelipa, reveals the Infinite Light of Hashem

¹³ (שופטים ח, טז. ושם: "בָּהֶם").

¹⁴ ("וַיַּדַּע" - תרגם יונתן: "ותבר" - ושבר).

¹⁵ The context there: The nation of Midyan was attacking the Jewish People, and someone named Gideon was asked by a certain group to step up to defend the Jewish People. As he was pursuing Midyan, he stopped in the city of Sukkos to feed his hungry soldiers, but the leaders of the city brazenly disrespected this 'new' general and refused to provide them food. After defeating Midyan, he returned to Midyan to punish those disrespectful 'leaders' and 'let them know' their wrongdoing by 'breaking' their ego through corporal punishment.

להנצוץ, עד שיויכל באלקוטו יתברך.

to the “Spark”, enabling it to become re-absorbed in Holiness.

וזהו עניין “סוס ורוכבו רמה” (בשלח ט, א) – פירוש: הרוכב הוא הקלייפה, הרוכב ומכסה על הנצוץ. זהו עניין “מרקבה פרעה כי” (שם, ד).

This is the idea of: “the horse and its rider were cast into the sea,” (Shemos 15:1), the “rider” represents the Kelipa that is “riding” on the “Spark of Holiness” and blocking it from perceiving its source. This is also the meaning of: “the chariots of Pharaoh and his horsemen were cast into the sea.” (ibid. v. 4)

Just like the rider sits on the horse and forces it to go where he wants, so too, the Kelipa “hijacks” the “Sparks of Holiness” and forces them to become their life-force.

The process of “throwing the chariots and horsemen” into the sea means to break off these “hijacking” Kelipos, allowing the “Sparks” to reconnect with their source.

ועל ידי שבירתם נתגלו הנצוצות ונבללו
באיינטוף ברור-הוא.

Through breaking these Kelipos, this uncovers the “Sparks” and allows them to become re-absorbed in Hashem’s Infinite Light.

ובזה יתורץ מה שבתוב בקריית ים-סוף
(בשלח יד, ד. יח): “ויראו מצרים כי אני ה”.

With this we can also answer a famous question on what is written regarding the purpose of the Splitting of the Sea of Reeds (Shemos 14:4): “so that the Mitzriyim will ‘יְדַעַי’-know’ that I am Hashem.”

ולכאורה תמורה: שהרי להלן כתיב (שם, כח): “לא נשאר בהם עד אחד”?

Seemingly this is not understood: Further on, the verse writes (ibid. v. 28): “not even one of them (the Mitzriyim) remained (alive),” so how can they “know Hashem” if they are all dead?

אלא דפירוש “ויראו” – לשון שבירה כי.

Rather, the meaning of “יְדַעַי” in this verse is “breaking”, i.e. the Kelipa of

the Mitzriyim will be broken since Hashem will reveal Himself.

ועל ידי זה היה גילוי אור אין-סוף להנוצערין, והם ידעו ידיעת ממש כי אני (ה"י)¹⁶

Through this breaking of the Kelipos at the Splitting of the Sea, this allowed Hashem's Infinite Light to shine upon the "Sparks", and it is these "Sparks" who then came to actually know Hashem.

The answer to the question is that even though the Mitzriyim died and didn't afterwards come to know Hashem, the "Sparks of Holiness" trapped in them did afterwards come to "know Hashem" by reconnecting to their source in His Light.

ועל דרך זה היה ענין העשור מכות - בכך לשבר הקלייפות, להוציא מכם הנוצערין.

Similarly, this was the purpose of the Ten Plagues: breaking the Kelipos and extracting from them the "Sparks".

אבל ישראל עצמן לא היו צריכים למופתים כלל, כי הם "מאמינים בני מאמנים"¹⁷, ובmodo שבחוב (שמות ד, לא): "ויאמן העם ונישמעו כי פקד ה'נו".

However, the Jewish People themselves didn't need "wonders" at all to bring to out a belief in Hashem, since they are called (Shabbos 97a) "believers in Hashem, the descendants of the Forefathers who are believers in Hashem," and as it is written (Shemos 4:31): "And the nation believed in what Moshe told them, and they accepted that Hashem had remembered to redeem them from Mitzrayim."

רק בשביל להוציא הנוצערות המובלעתים תוך הקלייפות ממש, הוצרך להיות עשר מכות הנ"ל, שזהו בשביל "וירדו מצרים נו".

The Ten Plagues were only needed in order to extract the "Sparks" that were "swallowed up" in the actual Kelipos, as described above, accomplishing that "Mitzrayim will 'not-know' Hashem," by breaking their external dimension and allowing

¹⁶ עין מה שנטבאר במקום אחר על קושיא זו.
¹⁷ (שבת צ, א).

their inner dimension to reconnect with Hashem.

ובזה יובן ענין המופת הראשון שהראה
השם-יתברך ל פרעה, שהוא ענין שנפהה
המטה לנחש¹⁸ – שזהו הקרה ל כל
העشر מכות:

כى הנה ענין העשר מכות מבואר, שהוא
לשבר הקלייפות, שהם בחינת יש ודבר
בפני עצמו, כמו שבכתוב (יחזקאל כט, ג): "לי
יאורי כי";

רק "דקרו ליה אלהא דאליהא"³⁰ בנו"ל.

וענין המופתים הוא, להראות להם איך
שם היותם בבחינת קליפות וסתרא
אחרא ממש,

אף על פי בן הם מקבלים חיים טמייד
מקדושה בכל רגע, ושבאמת אינם יש
ודבר נפרד בפני עצמו כדמותם החזוב,
אלא שהם ביטלים בתוכית לגבי אלוקות
יתברך.

רק שהחיות נמשך להם על ידי מסכים
והשתלשות מדרגות רבים ועצומים,

With this we will understand the first "wonder" that Hashem showed to Pharaoh, Aharon's staff transforming into a snake, this being the preface to all to the Ten Plagues:

As explained above, the purpose of the Ten Plagues was to break the Kelipos, which feel themselves as being completely independent of Hashem, as it is written (Yechezkal 29:3): "Pharaoh said: I own the Nile river, and I made myself."

It is only that the spiritual Kelipos call Hashem: "the G-d of all other forces," as explained above.

The purpose of the "wonders" was to show them that even though they are acutal Kelipah and Sitra Achra (unholiness),

nonetheless, they constantly receive their life from Holiness at every moment, and in truth they do not exist independently from Hashem, as they falsely believe, rather their entire existence depends upon Hashem's Power.

It is only that this Life-Force from Hashem comes to them through many stages of concealment, and through a myriad of levels of

¹⁸ (פרשתנו ז, י: "זיבא משה ו Aharon אל- פרעה ויעשו כן כאשר צוה ה', וישליך אהרן את- מטהו לפני פרעה ולפנוי עבדיו ויהי לתנין").

powerful concealments on Hashem's revelation,

וְגַבְרוּ כֹּל כֹּר הַצְמָצּוּמִים וְהַהְסְתָרִים עַד
שְׁיוֹכְלָו לֹמֶר: "לִי יָאוּרִי כָּי".

and these levels of **concealment** and **limitation** on Hashem's revelation **are so strong that they result in** creating beings **that are capable of saying** that "I own the Nile river and I made myself," i.e. they feel totally separate from Hashem.

ולבן בְּהַגָּלוֹת הָאָרֶה רַבָּה שְׁלָמָעָלה מִן
הַצְמָצּוּמִים - הֵם בְּטִילִים וּמְבוּטִים. וְזֹה
הִיא עַנֵּן הַמּוֹפְתִים כָּי.

Therefore, when there is a great revelation of Divine Light that transcends all the "concealments," the Kelipa becomes utterly nullified. This was the purpose of the "wonders."

The whole definition of Kelipah is a "shell" concealing the truth of Hashem's Presence everywhere and in everything. Therefore, by revealing the Truth of Hashem and removing that "concealment", then automatically the Kelipa will vanish. This is like a shadow whose entire existence is simply the absence of light. When light shines in the place of the shadow, it automatically disappears.

(The fact that evil things don't always instantly vanish upon being confronted with Divine Revelation, is because Hashem actually gives them the ability to exist and fight against holiness. This Hashem does in order that we should have free will to choose to serve Him despite obstacles. However, if Hashem decides to remove that ability, then their evil/unholy dimension would instantly be nullified upon being confronted with the Truth of Hashem, similar to how a dream vanishes upon a person awakening from sleep.)

וְעַל זֶה הִיא מִזְרָחָה הַמּוֹפְתָה הַרְאָשׁוֹן בְּעַנֵּן
הַמְּטָה שְׁנָה פֶּרֶךְ לְנַחַשׁ:

This was the lesson of the first "wonder" shown, the transformation of the staff into a snake:

פִּירּוֹשׁ "מְטָה" הוּא לְשׁוֹן הַמְשָׁבָה
וְהַטִּיחָה;

The meaning of the word "מְטָה" is related to the word that means "drawing down" or "turning,"

ובן "שָׁבֵט" – גם בן לשון המשכבה, כמו "כּוֹכֶבֶת דְּשִׁבִּיט".¹⁹

similarly, the word “שָׁבֵט-rod” also is related to the word that means “drawing down,” as in the phrase “כּוֹכֶבֶת דְּשִׁבִּיט-a shooting star.”

דהיינו, כל המשכבה סדר ההשתלשלות דקדושה מריש כל דרגין עד סוף כל דרגין נקרא “מַטָּה”.

Meaning, the drawing down of the Divine Light throughout the entire Chainlike Spiritual Order of Worlds (Seder Hishtalshelus), from the highest level to the lowest level, is represented in the word “מַטָּה-drawing down Light.”

ו”תניין” היא מקור הקלייפות דמצרים, כמו שכתוב (יחזקאל כט, ג): “הנתנים הגדול הרובץ בתוך אֹרוֹיו”.

And the “snake” represents the spiritual source of the Kelipah of Mitzrayim, as it is written (Yechezkal 29:3): “(Pharoh is like) the great serpent that dwells in the Nile.”

וְהָרָא לו מַשָּׁה וְאַהֲרֹן אֵיך שְׁהַמַּטָּה נָהָפֵך לנחש, דהיינו, שמבchinat or וְהַמַּשָּׁבֵכה דקדושה הנקרא “מַטָּה”, נמשך החיות והקיום להתניין מקור הקלייפות.

Moshe and Aharon showed him how the “מַטָּה-staff” becomes the “snake,” meaning that from the Divine Light of Holiness that is referred to as the “מַטָּה-drawing down Light,” this becomes the life and existence of the “snake” which is the spiritual source of the Kelipah.

ובמו שכתוב (משלי ה, ה): “רְגֵלֶיך יָוֹרְדוֹת כָּא”; “וּמְלֹכֹתֶיך בְּכָל מִשְׁלָה” (תהלים קג, יט).

As it is written (Mishlei 5:5): “Her ‘feet’ go down to a place of death,” and (Tehillim 103:19): “His Kingship has dominion over everything.”

These two verses are referring to the level of Malchus/Kingship.

The first verse (from Mishlei) refers to Malchus in the feminine, since Malchus is the “mother” of creation, nurturing all the created beings. The ‘feet’ of Malchus, are a reference to the lowest level of the Light and Life-force coming from

Malchus, like the feet are the lowest part of the body. They descend to a “place of death, meaning the Kelipah, which is spiritually dead. Thus, from Malchus there comes spiritual life that ultimately becomes the life of Kelipah as well.

The second verse (from Tehillim) mentions that Hashem’s Kingship has “מֶשֶׁלֶת” (dominion) over everything. The idea of a dominator is that he rules by force. Hashem is the Creator and King who deserves that all of His creations serve Him willingly. There should be no need to force His rulership over them. Nonetheless, the Kelipah refuses to willingly serve Hashem. It is only regarding the Kelipah that Hashem shows Himself as a “dominator, since in the realm of Holiness, everything accepts His Kingship willingly. Thus, Kelipah receives life from the attribute of “Dominion,” which is an extension of the main attribute of “Kingship.”

אֵלָא שָׁׁחוּ עַל יָדֵי הַשְׁתְּלִשּׁוֹת
וְעַמְצּוּמִים רַבִּים בְּנֵי לְעַד שִׁוְּכָל לְהִיּוֹת
נְהַפְּךָ מִמְּטָה לְנַחַשׁ.²⁰

However, this comes about through many levels of descent and myriad stages of concealment on the Light, until the “staff/Light” transforms into the “snake/Kelipa”.

שָׁׁעַל יָדֵי עַמְצּוּמִים רַבִּים אֵלּוּ מִסְתָּחָר
הַשְׁפָּעַ מִבְּחִינַת הַמְּטָה פָּל בָּרָה, עַד שִׁיּוֹכָל
לְהִיּוֹת הַתְּהוֹוֹת בְּחִינַת “הַתְּנִינִים נְגַדּוֹל
חַרְבוֹצָן בְּתוֹךְ יָאָרוּוּ”, וְאֹוֹמֶר: “לֵי יָאָרוּ
נֵי”, בְּנֵי לְ.

Through these many stages of concealment, the flow of Divine Light and Life-force that comes from the “staff/Light” becomes so hidden, until there can come from it “the great serpent that dwells in the Nile,” which is Pharaoh who said “I own the Nile and I made myself,” as described above.

וְאַחֲרֵ בָּרָה לֹא אִירַק שְׁהַנְּחַשׁ נְהַפְּךָ
לְמְטָה, וְגַם (פְּרִשְׁתָנוּ גַּם): “וַיִּבְלַע מְטָה
אַהֲרֹן אֶת מְטָתָם”.

Afterwards, they showed him how the “snake/Kelipa” becomes transformed back into the “staff/Light”, and that “the ‘staff’ of Aharon swallowed up their ‘staffs’.”

הַיּוֹנוֹ, שְׁחֹזֵר בְּחִינַת הַתְּנִינִים לְהַתְּבַטֵּל לְגַבֵּי
הַקְּרוֹשָׁה הַאֲלָקִית בְּבָרָא שׂוֹנָה,

Meaning, that the snake of Kelipa becomes nullified and absorbed back into the Holiness of the Divine Light, just like it was originally in its ultimate source.

²⁰ (ועיין ב”תקוני זהר” תקון כ”ב, בעין פירוש מטה). (אולי ציריך להיות תקון כ”ב דף מג, א).

(זהו עניין העלאת הנצונות הנ"ל).

(This is also the idea of the “Elevation of the Sparks” of Tohu, as explained above.)

- בזה הראו לפרעוה ולמצרים אשר אינם יש ודבר בפני עצמו, כי אם בכל רגע נמשר להם חיות מלאכות, אלא שהוא יתברך אל מסתתר (ישעה מה, טו).

With this “wonder” they showed to Pharaoh and Mitzrayim that they are not truly separate and independent from Hashem, rather, at every moment they receive their life from the Divine Life-force (the “staff/Light”), its just that “Hashem is hiding Himself,” (Yeshaya 45:15)

(וברצותנו נחפץ הנס למשה והוא بلا היו הקליפות).

and if Hashem wants, He can transform back the “snake/kelipa” into the “staff/Light”, and the Kelipos will vanish.

ועל דבר זה קיו כל המופתים - להיות:
 “ירדו מצרים כי אני ה” בנו ל :

Similary, this was the purpose of all of the “wonders” performed, in order that Mitzrayim “so that the Mitzriyim will ירעד-break/know’ that I am Hashem,” as explained above.

Summary of the Maamar

- 1- What does a stick turning into a snake represent?
- 2- The Jewish People extracted all the Sparks of Holiness that fell from Tohu into the country of Mitzrayim (Egypt). Just like the body covers over the soul, so too the Kelipah/unholiness covers the Sparks of Holiness trapped in it. Before these Sparks fell into unholiness, they were completely united with their Source in holiness. But once they became trapped in unholiness in the physical world, they become “disconnected” from their Source, until they feel as though they are separate from Hashem. The only way to free these Sparks so they can reunite with their Source in Holiness is to break the kelipah/unholiness that covers over the Sparks. This was the purpose of the Ten Plagues: to break the kelipah/unholiness of Mitzrayim so that the Sparks can reunite with Hashem.

- 3- These Sparks came through a river a Divine Light that flows through Atzilus. As this River of Light flows through Atzilus, it is “one” river, i.e., it is completely transparent to Hashem’s Oneness. However, when it reaches the World of Beriah, it “splits” into four “rivers,” i.e., it becomes split and disconnected from its source in Hashem’s Oneness, beginning to feel separate from Hashem. One of the “split rivers” of Divine power is called Pishon, that flows into Mitzrayim and gives it life. The Sparks trapped in Mitzrayim came from this “river” of Divine power.
- 4- This was the purpose of the miraculous plagues in Mitzrayim, to break through the cover of unholiness, so that these Sparks can become reunited with Hashem’s true Oneness.
- 5- This is why the introduction to the Ten Plagues was a stick turning into a snake: The idea of a stick is an extension/branch from the body of the tree. This represents how Hashem’s Infinite Light branches out and extends downward into all the worlds, giving them life. The idea of this “stick/branch” turning into a “snake” is to show that the forces of unholiness, the “snake,” actually come into existence from the “branch” of Hashem’s Light that flows into it, albeit through a process of concealment. I.e., the “snake” is actually nothing other than this “branch” of Hashem’s Light, that somehow turned into the shape of a “snake” of unholiness.
- 6- What is the meaning of this “snake” turning back into the “branch” and then swallowing up the other “snakes”? Hashem was showing Pharaoh that just as the “snake” draws its life from Holiness, it can return to Holiness, and the unholiness can be nullified, turning back into its source in Holiness, with no unholiness remaining. This was the purpose of the Ten Plagues: to reveal the hidden Sparks of Holiness in Mitzrayim and turn the “snake” of Mitzrayim’s unholiness into the “branch” of Hashem’s Light, represented by the staff of Aharon

A Lesson in the Service of Hashem from the Maamar

We look at our own yetzer hara and other unholy things in our lives as opposing Hashem and His will. Yet, the very fact that these things exist is only because Hashem is creating them and giving them life. In other words, these unholy things, such as our own yetzer hara, have no power other than that given to them by Hashem. Since their entire power is only just Hashem’s

power flowing into them, they have no true ability to stop us from serving Hashem in any way. It is just a test from Hashem, to bring out our inner strength to withstand temptation and distraction. When we look at the yetzer hara as just a tool in the hand of Hashem to test us, without any power of its own, it makes it much easier to overcome it.

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