

"Open my eyes so that I may see the **wonders** of Your Torah"



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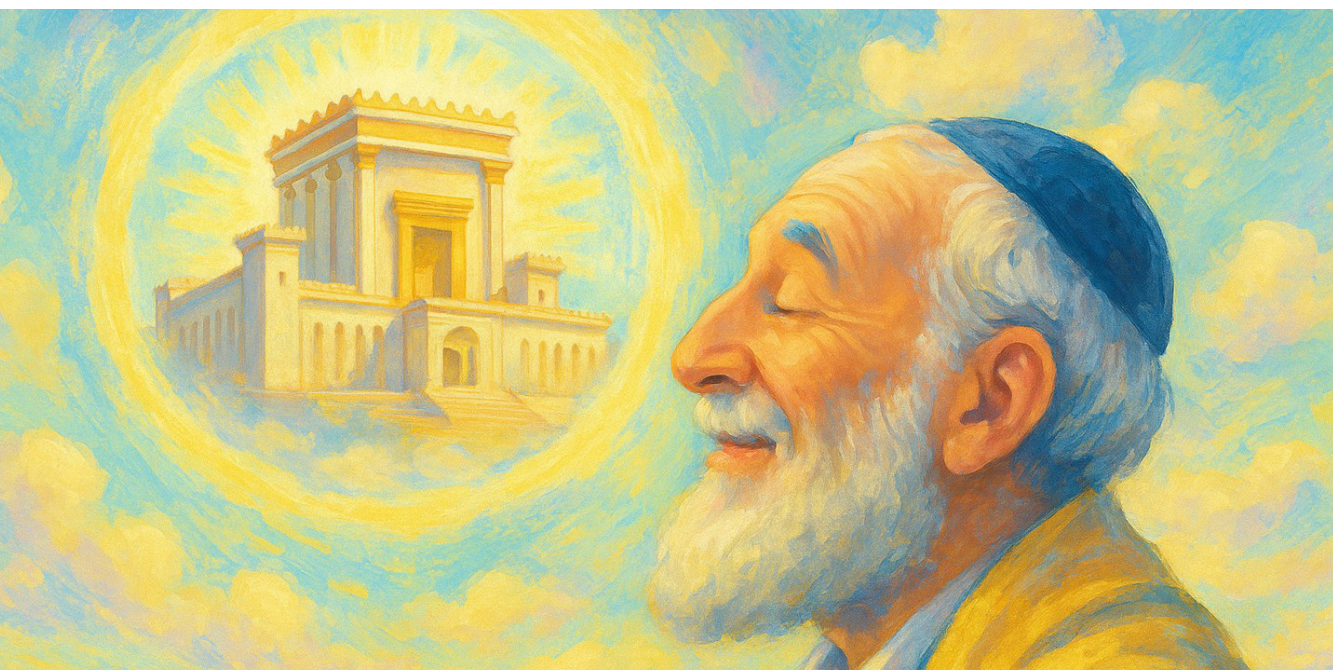
Wonders

בס"ד

Weekly Magazine of the Shiurim and Farbrengens
of HaRav Yitzchak Ginsburgh

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שַׁבַּת דְּבָרִים-חֲזוֹן 🌿 ז-ח אָב תשפ"ה



“ There can be nothing more lamentable than picturing the future Third Temple as a copy of the Temples of the past, without any inner sense of how it will be infinitely greater qualitatively than all that was in the past. The sense of how the future is meant to be infinitely greater than the past is the inner core of Jewish faith. ”

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*"...It would be proper
to publish your classes
in book form.
With blessings for success..."*

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בית הדין
שאלה.

ברכה

לחיים טובים

An anthology from the shiurim and farbrengens
of Harav **Yitzchak Ginsburgh**

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MAIN ARTICLE

DO WE REALLY YEARN FOR THE PAST?

KEDEM OR KADIMAH?

On Tisha B'av we read the Book of Lamentations,¹ the scroll composed by the prophet Jeremiah about the siege of Jerusalem and the destruction of the First Temple. The entire book (or scroll, as it is referred to in Hebrew) is painful to read. It is full of very difficult descriptions of the unimaginable suffering the Jewish people went through during the Babylonian siege and ultimate destruction of the city. Still, one might ask, what is the saddest, most painful verse in the book?

There is a principle in Torah that, “all follows the conclusion”² (הכל הולך אחר החתום). The Jewish custom is to always conclude with something positive.³ The final verse of the Lamentations reads, “For truly, You have rejected us, bitterly raged against us.”⁴ Since this would not be a very good ending, the previous verse is read a second time after the last verse. The previous verse is, “Take us back O' God, to Yourself, and we shall return; Renew our days as of old.”⁵ The phrase, “Renew our days as of old” (חַדֵּשׁ יָמֵינוּ כַּקֶּדֶם) seems to be very positive. But if we contemplate these words a bit, we may well come to the conclusion that they are actually the saddest part of the entire book.

How can I make such a preposterous claim? The idea behind these words, “Renew our days as of old,” is that I

remember and have studied the floorplan and architecture of the First and Second Temples. I have even spent my time well and carefully studied the description of the future Third Temple as it appears at the end of the Book of Ezekiel (chapters 40-43). One of the conclusions from my learning is that at least architecturally, the Third Temple is similar to the Second, with some differences. But in principle they are similar.

Now, when I say the phrase, “Renew our days as of old,” instead of facing the future and striving for it, I am yearning that God bring back the past. The Hebrew word for the past, for “the days of old” is *kedem*. Perhaps I would like to relive the past in a slightly better version, but still my mindset and my heart are set on the past. It is the exact opposite of what the prophet describes as, “their faces are set eagerly forward”⁶ (מְגִמַת פְּנֵיהֶם קְדִימָה), describing someone whose intent is on the future, which in Hebrew is a very similar word, *kadimah*—forward!

THE PLIGHT OF “WHAT WAS IS WHAT WILL BE”

What is the plight of those who cling to Torah? That their ideal is what was in the past. Among the futile and empty vapors described by Ecclesiastes⁷ is a verse that reads, “What was is what will

be..., and there is nothing new under the sun.”⁸ This is a futile ideal, an ideal that is entirely meaningless.

It is true that the initials of the phrase, “What was is [what will be]” (מה שהיה הוא [שהיה]) are “Moses”⁹ (משה), but even in if you yearn for Moses who will remain the same as the first Moses—that too is futile. For, the Torah of this world, of the reality we are currently living, is the Torah of Moses. And yet, the sages say that this Torah [i.e., its interpretation] “is like vapor before the Torah of the Mashiach.”¹⁰ Therefore, there can be nothing more lamentable than picturing the future Third Temple as a copy of the Temples of the past, without any inner sense of how it will be infinitely greater qualitatively than all that was in the past.

The sense of how the future is meant to be infinitely greater than the past is the inner core of Jewish faith. Faith, by definition, is the expectation and belief in a reality that is incommensurably greater than all that we have experienced. If all I am able to do is picture the future as another version of the past, then I have no need for faith in that which is above nature. The past can be reconstructed naturally. No need for miracles, no need to ascend above the natural course of reality, no need to transcend our present understanding. All it takes is more of the same. The world can just continue coasting forward and follow its course.¹¹ We must not think this way!

We need to consider the Rambam’s description of the times of Mashiach. He interprets the phrase, “renew our days as of old” according to their literal meaning—a return to the past. This can be seen from

his description of the early part of the times of Mashiach, when the world will continue following its course. This would seem to include the third phase of the Mashiach’s exploits, “building the Temple in its place.”¹²

Why does the Rambam use the terminology of “in its place.” The simple answer is that for the Temple to be sanctified, the location of the external altar must be precise¹³—exactly in its place. But it also means that the Temple (at this stage of the Redemption) is still what we would call in physics a “local phenomenon.” It is limited to being, “the location where [God] will choose to make His Name dwell there.”¹⁴ This is still not the dwelling place of He whom the sages describe as “He is the space of the world, but the world does not contain Him”¹⁵ (הוא מקומו של עולם ואין העולם (מקומו)). That can only be the true location of “I will dwell in them,”¹⁶ “within the heart of each and every one of them.”¹⁷

CORRUPTION LEADS TO DESTRUCTION

During the Three Weeks, and particularly the Nine Days, it is customary to learn Torah that is connected to the topic of the Temple, but we are thereby limited to learning about what was. So, why was it that God destroyed the Temple time and again? A simple reason is that those who were in charge of the Temple (or the Tabernacle), like the sons of Eli¹⁸ or the priests of the end of the Second Temple period¹⁹ were corrupt. The Temple was rife with corruption and corruption is what God hates deeply. This was the corruption of the heads of the religious establishment of the people. That

was a cause of the Temple's destruction. Indeed, the corruption—the cause—was worse than the effect—the destruction of the Temple itself. It is from this cause that people came to baseless hatred, everything started with the corrupt management of the Temple.

Now, if we are to imagine that we will build another Temple, we should ask: who will run it? From the point of view that “the world continues on its course” and that nothing really changes, we might notice that it is the same type of people that ran things in the past and the same type of people that run things today. Who can guarantee that they will not be corrupt like their predecessors 2000 years ago. I certainly cannot offer any such guarantee, and I do not believe anyone can. The Holy Temple, for all its good, can last for 410 years (the First Temple), for 420 years (the Second Temple), but in the end, nature follows its course including the natural tendency for corruption in those in charge of the establishment and the Temple cannot last and its good does not persist.

That is why our wailing and crying on Tisha B'av lasts for generations.²⁰ We wail and cry that indeed, “what was will be,” and that inevitably, “You will renew our days of old” and corruption will return.

THE TEMPLE OF THE PRIMORDIAL

For all that we have said regarding the inadequacy of yearning for the past, for “*kedem*,” there is a more essential interpretation of *kedem* (the past) that can connect it with *kadimah*—the future. The word *kedem* can also refer to God Himself who is known as “the Primordial One of the World”²¹ (קַדְמוֹנוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם). This is the true

source of *kedem* as alluded to in the verse, “God has possessed me from the beginning of His course, the primordial of His exploits of old”²² (הוּא קִנְנִי רִאשִׁית דִּרְכוֹ קֶדֶם מִפְּעֻלָּיו מֵאֶז). If it is for this primordiality—the Primordial One Himself—that I am yearning, then the phrase, “renew our days as of old,” becomes a very positive statement, for I am yearning for the return of God's very being, for His Presence in reality as it was before the world was created when only He and His Name filled all of reality.

But according to the literal meaning that we are yearning for the past, even if it imagines the past Temple with the old sacred vessels and priestly garments, etc. If this is all that I yearn for—for our present reality to resemble the past—there can be no cry for the future Temple that is less appropriate for bringing about its construction. Indeed, it is because of the pitiful history of the past Temples that we have yet to perform the commandment to construct a Temple, as explained by the Rogatchover.²³

THE VISION OF THE TEMPLE

Rebbe Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev famously taught that on the Shabbat before Tisha B'av, known as *Shabbat Chazon* (lit., the Shabbat of the Vision), God shows each of us the Temple.²⁴ What is the Temple shown to each soul? Every person sees something else depending on his level.

There are those who see a picture or a three-dimensional model of the Temple's physical construction. This might be an intellectual ‘photograph’ of something a person may have seen in a book. Such a vision of the Temple's exterior is actually

a reference to the Temple as it was in the past and was destroyed.

Then there are those individuals who merit seeing a vision of the Temple's more essential aspects. That might manifest as a vision of some valuable object. In Rebbe Levi Yitzchak's teaching, he describes it like seeing a very expensive suit (because that is something that a child can relate to more than a building, but the principle is that each person is shown a vision of something they would recognize as valuable). The more spiritually advanced the soul, the more abstract the valuable object might be: it might appear as a beloved friend, family member, or even a lofty spiritual state.

A truly futuristic manifestation of the Temple will appear as a vision of standing before God Himself, as it were. When we stand before God, we are already in the Temple. Standing before God includes the experience of personal Divine Providence in every detail of my life and of my surroundings. It includes the experience of God's infinite love for every soul, and the experience of hearing God speaking to us,

in what is described by the sages as, "A new Torah will emerge from Me." This follows the superposition of the two phrases, "May the Temple be built speedily in our days," and "Give us our portion in Your Torah," where "Your Torah" refers to the Torah as it is with God, intimately private. It is about this Torah that we pray, "Open my eyes so that I may see the wonders of Your Torah."

Every individual is shown a vision of the Temple in his or her mind's eye relative to their perception of Godliness. Knowing that the vision we receive of the future Temple is personal is somewhat comforting. If we are frustrated that our vision of the future Temple seems limited, we can rest assured that if we open our minds to higher aspirations, we will be shown a more exalted and meaningful image of what the future will hold. This is the fulfillment of the sages' statement, "Who is wise? He who can see the future" (איזהו חכם? הרואה את הנוֹלָד). As King David said, "to envision the pleasantness of God."²⁵

1. In fact, in Hebrew the Book is called Eichah, named after its first word. The English translation, Lamentations, is the book's name in rabbinical circles (קִינּוֹת); see *Sofrim* 18:8.

2. *Berachot* 12a.

3. Jerusalem Talmud *Megillah* 3:7. *Maharsha* on *Berachot* 31a. (See also Jerusalem Talmud *Berachot* 5:1 on the verses from Lamentations).

4. Lamentations 5:22.

5. *Ibid.* v. 21.

6. Habbakuk 1:9.

7. Ecclesiastes 1:2; 1:14; 2:11; 2:17; 3:19; 12:8.

8. Ecclesiastes 1:9.

9. *Megaleh Amukot* 252 Faces, face 65.

10. *Kohelleth Rabbah* 11:7.

11. See *Avodah Zarah* 54b and *Hilchot Melachim* 12:1.

12. *Ibid.* 11:4.

13. *Hilchot Beit HaBechirah* 2:1.

14. Deuteronomy 26:2.

15. *Bereishit Rabbah* 68:9.

16. Exodus 25:8.

17. See *Alsheich* on Exodus 31:13. *Reishit Chochmah*, *Sha'ar HaAhavah* 6:19.

18. 1 Samuel 2:12-17 and v. 22.

19. See *Pesachim* 57a.

20. *Sanhedrin* 104b.

21. *Bereishit Rabbah* 38:7.

22. Proverbs 8:22.

23. See *Tzafnat Paane'ach Hilchot Beit HaBechirah* 1:1.

24. Quoted by Rebbe Hillel of Paritch. Also *Tzemach Tzedek* on *Eichah*, p. 45 in footnotes.

25. Psalms 27:4.

STORY

REBBE HILLEL OF PARITCH: DON'T SUFFER, DO MITZVOT!

Rabbi Hillel HaLevi of Paritch was born in the town of Khmilnyk (Ukraine) in 5555 (1795), to his father Rabbi Meir, a Chernobyl Chasid. Even in his childhood, he was well-versed in Talmud and poskim (legal authorities), studied Kabbalah books, and prayed with the Arizal's mystical intentions. He married before his bar mitzvah. When the Book of Tanya came into his possession, he became a Chabad Chasid, but despite his efforts, he did not merit to meet the author of the Tanya, the Alter Rebbe of Chabad. In 5578 (1818), he was sent by the Mittler Rebbe "to gather materiality and sow spirituality" in the agricultural settlements established by the Rebbe in the Kherson region. Thus Rabbi Hillel became the spiritual guide for tens of thousands of Jews. He dedicated his life to spreading Torah and Chasidut and sacrificed himself to provide kosher food for Jewish soldiers in the Tsar's army. In 5600 (1840), he was appointed as the rabbi of the town of Paritch (Parichi, Belarus) in White Russia, and later served as the rabbi of nearby Babruysk (Belarus). Rabbi Hillel used to record everything he heard from his rebbes and add explanations. He also composed deep chasidic melodies. His Torah teachings were collected in the series of books titled Pelach HaRimon, in a volume titled Imrei Noam, and elsewhere. He passed away in the town of Kherson on Shabbat, the 11th of Av, Shabbat Nachamu 5624 (1864) and there lies his resting place.

It was common for the Mittler Rebbe and the Tzemach Tzedek to send young men to the holy *chasid* Rebbe Hillel of Paritch to teach them the Chasidic path and way of life and to instruct them in Chasidic philosophy. Rebbe Hillel was very structured and orderly in his teaching and invariably would begin by relating the same two stories to the young men:

At great length, he would talk about the righteous convert, Count Potocki, how he conducted himself with fasts and self-afflictions. Worms crawled on his body, and if a worm fell to the ground, he would pick it up and say: "Eat my impure body!" Even when he was imprisoned by the regime for converting to Judaism, he afflicted himself with all kinds of self-mortifications. When they sentenced him to be burned at the stake, there was a possibility to lighten his sentence and to save him from death, but he desired to be killed for the sanctification of God's Name.

Rebbe Hillel concluded and explained that this was before the revelation of chasidic teachings: Chasidut explains the virtue of practical mitzvot, and not to afflict oneself, as the sages said, "Better is one hour of repentance and good deeds in this world than all the life of the World to Come."

Rebbe Hillel would also tell them about the Maharam of Rothenburg, one of the great early sages of the Middle Ages. A certain nobleman captured the Maharam, locked him in a tower, and demanded a large ransom from the Jewish community to release him. The Maharam ruled from within the prison that they should not pay the ransom, for if they did, every nobleman would capture rabbis and demand large sums to free them. As instructed, the Jews did not cooperate, and the Maharam of Rothenburg languished in prison from the 4th of Tammuz 5046 (1286) until the 19th of Iyar 5053 (1293), when he passed away.

But that was not the end of it. After his passing, the nobleman continued to demand a large ransom just to allow his body to be buried. The Jews were impoverished then and did not have the means to release even the body of their rabbi, and he was not buried until the year 5067 (1307). A wealthy man named Alexander ben Shlomo put his life in his hands and interceded with the nobleman, spending a great amount to release the Maharam's body and bring it to a Jewish burial.

After the burial, the Maharam came to the wealthy man in a dream and said to him. "Choose for yourself one of two things: either your descendants after you until the end of history will merit wealth and honor, or you will die immediately and merit the life of the World to Come with me in my chambers." The Maharam's benefactor, Alexander ben Shlomo chose to die and be with the Maharam in his chambers in the afterlife.

Rebbe Hillel then proceeded to explain that this was the right choice to make before Chasidut was revealed in the world. Because, as revealed by the Ba'al Shem Tov, the virtue of performing practical *mitzvot* in our reality, in the World of the Living, far surpasses the afterlife. As the sages said, "Better is one hour of repentance and good deeds in this world than all the life of the afterlife."

Through these stories, we encounter Rebbe Hillel in one of his most important roles in life: the Chasidic *mashpia* (spiritual mentor), whose task is to guide his followers at the beginning of their path

as chasidim and beyond. He is a kind of super-educator, deeply shaping the souls of the students and revealing hidden layers within them. In Chabad, Rebbe Hillel is remembered as the greatest of

the Chasidic spiritual mentors, and his Rebbe, the Tzemach Tzedek, relied on him greatly: every new young man seeking to join the chasidic community was sent to Rebbe Hillel for a training period that could last months or even years. Only after completing his time with Rebbe Hillel was the young man eligible to enter the Rebbe's presence and receive from him.

There are two types of intellect discussed in Kabbalah. The first is known as “the mind of father” (מוחין דאבא), corresponding to the *sefirah* of wisdom and the second “the mind of mother” (מוחין דאמא), corresponding to the *sefirah* of understanding. The mind of wisdom/father imparts a spark of intellect—a seminal idea, and the mind of understanding/mother contemplates and builds it into a complete well-formed thought and even complex system with myriad details. For a chasid—a devoted disciple of a tzaddik—the rebbe fulfills the role of the fatherly intellect that provides new inspiration and direction, and the *mashpia* takes the role of the mother who develops and refines the rebbe's words. In particular, the *mashpia* must develop in the young chasid the power of comprehension (תבונה), a subset of the mind of understanding, which absorbs and internalizes the Rebbe's wisdom even before he—the chasid—has continued to delve into it and develop it himself. Rebbe Hillel's two stories, with which he began the preliminary induction of every new chasid provide an even earlier step. Their purpose is to distinguish between the worldview of Chasidut, which the student is entering, and the accepted and normative worldview that preceded it.

Both stories revolve around the significance of performing God's mitzvot, or commandments. Customarily, there are two general types of “genius” in Judaism: genius of thought (a *maskil*) and genius of action (an *oived*), which is considered an extension of the heart and its emotive faculties. Interestingly, in his youth, Rebbe Hillel was known as the “Genius of Chumtz,” famous for his erudition and scholarly talent, i.e., for his genius in thought. As he matured and became a devoted disciple of the Chabad rebbes, he was considered a wondrous *oived* or “servant of God” with a great heart, and so he had become a “genius of action” and is considered to have reached the level of a tzaddik, a righteous individual, as described in the Tanya. The Tzemach Tzedek—the third Lubavitcher Rebbe—even said of him that there had not been a tzaddik in action like him in this world for three hundred years!

If we contemplate the Tzemach Tzedek's words (considering them historically, i.e., who lived 300 years before Rebbe Hillel), we will realize that it places Rebbe Hillel above even the Arizal, the Baal Shem Tov, and many other holy figures when it comes to his “genius of action.” This is indeed a surprising declaration but aligns well with the first two stories he would impress upon his young students. For Rebbe Hillel understood that the core of Chasidut—the purpose of all Divine service (*avoidah*) and all intellectual comprehension (*haskalah*)—is to facilitate the our dedication to and performance of *mitzvot* in this lifetime.

PARTZUF

THE THREE MAIN DEFENSE MECHANISMS AND ENDING EXILE

PROJECTION AND OTHER DEFENSE MECHANISMS

In *parashat Devarim*, we find a verse that reflects the psychological defense mechanism known as projection, “Because of God’s hate for us, He took us out of Egypt, to hand us over to the Amorites to destroy us.”¹ In fact, this verse can be identified as the origin in Torah for projection. Freud was the first to speak about defense mechanisms in modern psychology, but obviously they have been around since the earliest stages of our existence. In short, defense mechanisms are set up by the ego to protect itself. When they “operate” properly, they are usually subconscious. Defense mechanisms distort reality in some way to allow our sense of self to continue to function.

What is projection? The basic example is that I hate someone but for one reason or another cannot bear that reality. So instead of accepting my hatred, I project it on the person I dislike and build a mental reality where it is he that hates me. Understanding projection as centered on emotions—at the most basic level, about love vs. hate—is the easiest way to understand it.

Returning to our verse, Rashi explains that it reflects a type of collective defense mechanism. Out of God’s love for us, He

took us out of Egypt and promised to bring us back to the Land of Canaan. But following the spies’ report that it would be impossible to settle the land because of its current inhabitants, the people were disillusioned. Perhaps they felt manipulated, perhaps the reasons were deeper, but they came to hate God because of what they considered an impossible situation He had placed them in. But they could neither admit nor face their hatred and so they projected it onto God: It is God that hates us, they claimed, that is why He took us out of Egypt to destroy us.

Though there are by some accounts there are upwards of 30 different defense mechanisms found in the psyche, all used to protect the ego, we can identify three that are the most basic: denial, projection, and repression. As we will see, they correspond to many basic Kabbalistic structures among them the three lower Worlds—Creation, Formation, and Action.

THREE PRACTICAL ACTIONS TO BRING MASHIACH

Since we are in the middle of the Three Weeks, we begin with the question of what we should focus on to bring the Redemption and Mashiach. We say in our prayers that because of our transgressions

we have been exiled from our land, meaning that we are responsible for the sad state that the Jewish people are still in without a Temple, without a redeemer, the world is not in its ideal state. There is suffering in reality. The first question is: Who is to blame? The obvious answer is that “I am to blame.” Every individual must take responsibility for the state we are in. This is the contemplative meditation we should perform during the Three Weeks.

There is a famous saying from the sages, that any generation in which the Temple has not been built is like it has been destroyed in their generation. That is the usual way it is quoted. But, in the original quote in the Talmud, it does not say that, but rather “that it is as if we ourselves destroyed it.” Some sources even place the burden on every individual: Whomever the Temple has not been built in his days, it is as if he himself destroyed it. That is a very strong saying.

Going back to the first saying that we have been exiled because of our sins. The sages say that the all-inclusive sin for which we are in exile is baseless hatred. Therefore, the rectification is the very opposite. What we need to do to bring Mashiach is to reach a state of unconditional love. Just as the sin was unconditional hatred, so the rectification is unconditional love.

Are there other practical things we can do to bring redemption? In the Zohar, it says that the way to bring about redemption with kindness and compassion is by disseminating the teachings of the Zohar itself. *Raya Mehemna* (the soul of Moses) says to *Rashbi*, “with your teachings, the

entire world will come out of the exile with mercy and compassion.” This took on even deeper meaning after the Ba’al Shem Tov asked the soul of Mashiach, “When are you coming?” And Mashiach replied, “When your wellsprings spread to the furthest possible extremes.” That is a condition. For *Rashbi* it was a question of the manner in which the redemption will come. By the Ba’al Shem Tov it was even clearer: the only way that Mashiach will come is when your teachings—the inner soul of the Torah—will spread far and wide, to everyone. That is the second thing we can do to bring Mashiach.

A third thing we can do to bring Mashiach is described in the Torah’s revealed teachings. The Rambam says that at the end of exile, the Jewish people will do *teshuvah*, and immediately they will be redeemed. Meaning that the Redemption depends only on *teshuvah*. The simple meaning of *teshuvah* is at a personal level, taking an account of what I am doing wrong relative to the Torah’s teachings and commandments. If we all think about our actions and regret what we have done wrong, and decide to never repeat it again and live up to this decision, then the Mashiach will come. This is the simple revealed condition for the Redemption to come. Every person should do this before Rosh Hashanah and make a decision that tomorrow I will be a new person.

CORRESPONDENCE TO THREE LOWER WORLDS

These three practical actions correspond to the three lower Worlds in Kabbalah. The three lower Worlds can be described as the realms

of thoughts, emotions, and deeds. Each of the three actions we can and should take corresponds to one of these Worlds. Since all three lower Worlds have evil in them, with growing proportions, each

action is meant to heal the evil in that world. Though we will not develop it here, it is important to note that the World of Emanation that is above the three lower Worlds is already rectified.

World	realm of	proportion of evil	rectified by
Creation	thoughts	mostly good	spreading the Torah's inner dimension
Formation	emotions	equally good & evil	baseless love
Action	deeds	mostly evil	teshuvah

Spreading the Torah's Inner Dimension corresponds to the World of Creation and represents a shift in mindset. Changing our mindset is like what the Rebbe said that we need to open our eyes to see reality differently. That is the rationale behind the inner teachings of the Torah—to see reality with our inner eyesight, to see Mashiach. It says that for *Rashbi*, the author of the Zohar, the Temple was never destroyed, he continued to see it standing. If it was only up to *Rashbi*, he wouldn't have to fast on Tisha B'av, but since he is part of the Jewish people, he mourns because of our state of consciousness. To change our mindset, *Rashbi* taught the Zohar, so that we could adopt his state of consciousness. This is in the world of Creation, where there is only a little bit of self-consciousness (or ego). The World of Creation is mostly good and only a little bit negative and it is defined as the world of perception of reality. Good in Creation means perceiving reality correctly. Evil in Creation manifests

as perceiving reality incorrectly. Thus, rectifying the mind by spreading the wellsprings of the Torah's inner dimension to see the world correctly, and not live in an illusion parallels the World of Creation. Creation is thus about perception vs. illusion.

The World of Formation is the seat of emotions. Most often we say that the two basic emotions are love and fear, however at times fear is replaced by hate. The World of Formation is half good and half bad. Which would mean that if love is good and hate is bad, then it is 50 percent love and 50 percent hate. Hate however is not always bad, because it says that those who love God shall hate evil, and God Himself hates Esau, even though he is Jacob's brother.² The same Esau that God hates, Isaac loved (more than Jacob). The fact that we have two brothers here already presents a half and half situation. Nonetheless, we will say that hate is a bad quality in general and love is needed to rectify the

world of Formation, as we said, to love unconditionally.

The World of Action is obviously rectified by doing *teshuvah*, getting our act together and fixing our conduct: from the moment we wake up to the moment we go to sleep. Consciousness permeates all three lower Worlds. If the question is “Who’s to blame?” and in these Three Weeks the answer is, “I am to blame.” That is the answer in the lowest world. Certainly, I am responsible for my mindset (Creation) and for my lack of love (Formation), but the thing I am most to blame for is for destroying the Temple because of my actions (Action). Most people shun responsibility or blame. Another word for blame is guilt. The World of Action is the world of guilt vs. innocence. When two people appear before a judge because of a dispute, the final decision must be that one is guilty, and the other is innocent. That is what the World of Action is about. You are either guilty or innocent. If you can take responsibility, then you have revealed the good in the World of Action. However, the World of Action is mostly evil, which means that almost no one can take responsibility.

This leads us to a parallel between the Worlds and defense mechanisms. In the World of Action, the defense mechanism against responsibility is repression. If I am found guilty in a court of law that is a huge blow to my ego. If the trauma of being guilty is too much to cope with, then I repress my guilt, I forget it. In the World of Formation, where good is love and evil is hatred, the defense mechanism is projection, which we began with. Using projection, we project our hate on the person we hate. Finally, since the World of

Creation is about our perception of reality, the defense mechanism is known as denial. If the reality we are facing is too difficult to handle, we may end up entering a state of denial. This is not common, because the majority of Creation is good—meaning that people tend to accept reality, but some cannot handle it and end up setting up a denial defense mechanism.

During the Three Weeks, we have a chance to learn how to properly cope within the context of the three Worlds.

Above the three Worlds, there is a World that is entirely good. It is known as the World of Emanation and those who are tzaddikim live in its state of mind. How do great tzaddikim perceive reality? They see what you and I see, but they see everything like a garment for God. In the World of Emanation, God is always removing a garment and dressing in another garment, as it were. At a certain point, perhaps God will strip off the clothing and we will see Him, “eye to eye, when God redeems Zion,” “Your teacher will no longer be enclothed” you will be able to see Him directly. Every one of us should strive to experience reality in this way. Everything that happens and that is in our experience is just an external expression of God. To reach this state of mind, we learn Chassidut and try to teach and spread it. Just as living life in the three lower Worlds requires the ego to protect itself with defense mechanisms, so the tzaddik who lives in the World of Emanation has no need to protect his ego at all. Thus, there are no defense mechanisms per se in the World of Emanation. Let us summarize this in a partzuf:

World	realm of	good and evil about	defense mechanism	rectified by
Emanation	nullification	all good: clinging to God	none	already in a rectified state
Creation	thoughts	perception	denial	spreading the Torah's inner dimension
Formation	emotions	self-image	projection	baseless love
Action	deeds	responsibility	repression	teshuvah

ALTERNATE TERMINOLOGY

Is there another way to describe the issue in the World of Creation, which we identified as perception vs. illusion? We could say even more simply: knowledge vs. ignorance. That explains why the Creation is also viewed as the realm of Torah. When people are ignorant, they live in an illusion. Knowledge builds perception. Socially we could call this literacy vs. illiteracy. The world is like a book. Some people know how to read the book—they are literate. Others are ignorant and cannot understand reality. If they cannot read the text, they end up most likely living in some form of an illusion. All the inner teachings of the Torah are meant to make us literate and able to perceive what is really happening.

THE POWER OF CONFESSION

The three evil aspects of the three Worlds are thus illusion, hatred, and guilt. How do we know this period is about guilt, about feeling guilt?

Because there are 22 days, and the scroll of Lamentations that we read on Tisha B'av is based on the 22 letters of the Alephbeit, in acrostic form. The reality we blemished, the World, is like a text. We made ourselves illiterate and blurred the text. Every form of rectification of reality begins with confession. In fact, in the Torah itself, the practical element of doing *teshuvah* is confession. Why? What makes confession superior to just deciding to never sin again? Confessing with words brings to the fore of the consciousness forgotten or repressed memories. Without spoken confession, I will never remember these repressed memories I was not able to cope with.

What is the first word of the confession is “We are guilty” (אשמונו). The confession follows the order of the Alephbeit because it means to rectify all our words, all our memories. It is the general confession that we are the ones who are guilty. That word corresponds to the first day of the Three Weeks. Each

day corresponds to one of the 22 words in the confession.

TORAH AND DEFENSE MECHANISMS

We began our exploration of Defense Mechanisms with a verse from Parashat Devarim, which is always read just before Tisha B'av. Just as this verse contains a clear example of projection,

every one of the defense mechanisms identified by modern psychology has an example either in the Torah or in the rabbinic writings and all of them can be categorized based on our identification of the three primary defense mechanisms—denial, projection, and repression—corresponding to the three Worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action.

(based on a class given on the 25th of Tammuz, 5779)

1. Deuteronomy 1:27.
2. Malachi 1:2.



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On this coming Shabbat, Shabbat Chazon (=Vision, the first word of the Haftarah), each one of us envisions, in one form or another, the Temple of the future. One may see it as a physical structure, another as that which is most precious to him, whether a physical object (for a relatively immature soul), a beloved individual, or a spiritual state of being (for a more mature soul). The ultimate vision of the Temple of the future is the experience of the Presence of God in our lives (the Temple is the place where we stand "before God"), the experience of His Divine Providence over even the most minute detail of our lives (and all of existence), and His infinite Love for all.



The "Three Weeks" is a time of mourning over the destruction of the Temple. But it is also a time of transformation, transforming darkness into light, bitterness into sweetness, sadness into happiness, destruction into construction, and exile into redemption.



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