

What it means to be Born-Again

By

Rabbi Edward L. Nydle / B'nai Avraham

*And there was a man of the Perushim; Nakdimon¹ was his name, a ruler (katzin) of the Yehudim. 2This one came to Yahshua by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from Elohim, for no one is able to do these signs You do if Elohim is not with him." 3 Yahshua answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew from above, he is unable to see the reign of Elohim." 4Nakdimon said to Him, "How is a man able to be born when he is old? Is he able to enter into his mother's womb a second time and be born?" 5 Yahshua answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he is unable to enter into the Malchut of Elohim. 6 "That which has been born of the flesh is flesh, and that which has been born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 "Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You have to be born from above.' 8 "The Spirit (wind) breathes where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who has been born of the Spirit." 9Nakdimon answered and said to Him, "How is it possible for this to take place?" 10 Yahshua answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Yisrael, and do not know this? **Yochanan 3:1-10***

From the pulpits of the churches, the radio evangelists, the television preachers, and the core of modern Christianity comes the statement, "you must be born again". It is a Christian buzz word, and considered a stamped passport into heaven, without which, Hell is the only other destination. It is what separates the saved from the unsaved, the good from the bad, and the lost from the found. Anyone's failure (especially politicians) to say that they have been "born again" immediately relegates that person as a target of evangelism by zealous believers.

If you claim to be "born again" you get a free ticket to heaven; a place defined by Christian dogma as protected by "pearly gates and guarded by St. Peter" .It containing many "mansions on a hilltop" for those who "choose" Jesus as their "personal" savior and say the correct words of a prayer. The smug attitude of "born again" Christians is not much different from those residing in elite gated communities, enjoying their exclusivity and feeling sorry for the poor masses outside those gates.

¹ Some have identified him with Nakdimon ben-Gurion, mentioned in the Talmud as a wealthy merchant at the time of the Second Temple and its destruction.

Not to claim to be “born again” is the highest form of psychological "terrorism". Terrorism can be defined as "the systematic use of terror especially as a means of coercion". Christians, who subscribe to the idea of being "born again" have no hesitation in claiming that if people do not accept this dogma, they are damned forever to a fate much worse than death; an eternal imprisonment and punishment in a place called Hell. In Hell, one is subjected to unimaginable suffering through the pain from the fire and torture eternally. Most people from the pulpit-controlled flocks believe that this “born again” concept is a mandated pre-condition required for salvation, which is found only in the “New Testament” and a “new doctrine” taught by Yahshua. The common view is if you "accept" Jesus as your savior, then you are born again. There are no exceptions to the rule in Christianity that only those who are born again will escape the tortures of Hell. Only those who go to church and publicly accept Jesus as their "personal" savior are forgiven their shortcomings.

Being “born again” is not an original teaching from Yahshua and the launching point for some new Christian faith. Being born anew was and is fundamental to Torah-based Judaism, as the message of the Torah has always been to have faith in YHWH for salvation. Salvation in Torah-based Judaism has always been by faith, both before Moshe and after him, as well as before Yahshua and after Him. The reason most people don't see this when they read the "Old Testament," is because their understanding of, "what the Scriptures say," is affected by hundreds of years of theology formed by previous generations studying and interpreting the Hebrew Bible in a Hellenized way. This "mindset" is not an easy thing to unlearn as it is reinforced daily by family, friends, sermons, books, Christian TV programs, Christian holidays, and the entire culture we live in.

It is clear that anyone arguing that you must believe in Jesus to be born again does not get that concept from Scripture but from their ignorance of Scripture. Christians do not realize that it is a Hebraic concept found within Judaism, the writings of the sages, and the Hebrew Scriptures. There is no other reason for this doctrine to be present in Church teachings other than ignorance of the Biblical teachings on this concept and to use it as a whip to keep the masses in line with church doctrine.

Rebbe Yahshua spoke with Nakdimon who was a learned teacher (rabbi) and a member of the Sanhedrin, so he (Nakdimon) had to be very familiar with Jewish tradition and the Torah of Moshe. From the conversation, it is understood that Yahshua obviously thought that Nakdimon should be very well versed in the concept of being born anew or born from above. We can conclude from Yahshua’s comments that the concept was taught and found in the *TaNaK* (Hebrew Scriptures) and the teachings from Oral Tradition. The experience of being born from above then was possible before Yahshua was born or died on the stake and was resurrected.

Yisrael had been born into a new life when they were “saved/delivered” from Egypt and given the Torah at Mt.Sinai. We know that over a period of time, they had departed from Torah and the various navaim (prophets) kept calling Yisrael back to the teachings of the Torah. They (as did the Messiah) called Yisrael to do *teshuvah* (return) towards YHWH and His Torah. *Teshuvah* starts inwardly and then is manifested by actions that conform to the Torah. This inward change of heart and outward change in one’s actions is known as being “born again/anew”.

- 6“Then I passed by you and saw you trampled down in your own blood, and I said to you in your blood, ‘Live!’ And I said to you in your blood, ‘Live!’Yechezkel 16:6

According to the sages, the repetition of the word “blood” and “live” in this verse teaches a physical redemption in the blood of the Passover Lamb and a spiritual redemption in the blood of physical circumcision.²It alludes to two births, physical and spiritual.

- **Midrash Rabbah - Genesis XXXIX: 1111.** AND I WILL MAKE OF THEE A GREAT NATION (XII, 2). Said he to Him: ‘Yet hast Thou not caused the seventy nations to spring from Noah?’³ He replied: ‘That nation of which it is written, For what great nation is there, that hath Elohim so nigh unto them (Deut. IV, 7), them will I raise up from thee.’ R. Berekiah said: It is not written, ‘And I will give thee,’ or ‘And I will set thee,’⁴ but, AND I WILL MAKE THEE: i.e. after I have created thee as a new creation⁵ thou wilt be fruitful and multiply. R. Levi b. Abyatha and R. Abba said: Thrice is ‘greatness’ mentioned here, and ‘blessings’ four times...

Yisrael experienced a new birth freely when they came out of Egypt. It was a free gift from YHWH and in turn they were to obey YHWH’s instruction given to them as a nation at Mt.Sinai. But Yisrael had forgotten their new birth through the water (the Red Sea) and the two bloods, the blood of circumcision and the blood of the Passover Lamb (also see Yochanan 1:13) and over a period of time and disobeyed the Torah and neglected its observance. That is why in Yechezkel 18 YHWH pleads with Yisrael make for themselves a new heart or a renewed spirit.

- 30“Therefore I judge you, O house of Yisrael, every one according to his ways,” declares the Master YHWH. “Repent, and turn back from all your transgressions, and let not crookedness be a stumbling-block to you. 31“Cast away from you all the transgressions, by which you have transgressed, and make for yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die O house of Yisrael? 32“For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies,” declares the Master YHWH. “So turn back and live!”

² Artscroll TaNaK commentary on Yechezkel page 1236

When Yisrael does not observe Torah, they become like the nations who reject YHWH and His Torah. If they return to YHWH and obey Him, they remove their heart of stone (hardness towards YHWH and Torah) and receive a new heart and soul.

Since Nakdimon was a learned teacher in Yisrael, he would be familiar with the words of the prophets. He would also have been knowledgeable with the *Sod* level of Scriptural learning. Since the book of Yochanan is written in the *Sod* level, the concept of being born again, we also have to examine Yahshua's statements on that level. The concept of a man receiving a *nefesh* (soul) at physical birth (the water) is a foundational teaching in Judaism. After his first birth by the water, man is to cultivate his soul by obedience or faithfulness to the Torah and his faith in YHWH. He then is elevated by the power of the *Ruach* or spirit (wind) and becomes "born again/anew" by his reconciliation to YHWH.

- **Deuteronomy 10:16** -- *"Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer."*
- **Deuteronomy 30:6**- *And YHWH your Elohim will circumcise your heart, and the heart of your seed, to love YHWH your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your soul, that you may live.*
- **Ezek. 44:7-9** *in that ye have brought in aliens, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in My sanctuary, to profane it, even My house, when ye offer My bread, the fat and the blood, and they have broken My covenant, to add unto all your abominations. And ye have not kept the charge of My holy things; but ye have set keepers of My charge in My sanctuary to please yourselves. Thus saith YHWH Elohim: No alien, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into My sanctuary, even any alien that is among the children of Yisrael.*
- **Ezek. 36:24-27** *For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*

The term "*stiff-necked*" is equivalent to not having faith. YHWH called the generation in the wilderness stiff-necked because they failed to trust in Him. (See [Exodus 32:9; 33:3, 5; 34:9, Deut. 9:6, 13; 2 Chron. 30:8; Acts 7:51](#))

[Hebrews 3:7-4:2](#), said they received the Good News but failed as they did not "*mix it with faith,*" and "*went astray in their hearts.*"

- [Deuteronomy 30:6](#) -- "*And YHWH your Elohim will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love YHWH your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.*"

Here the word "live" is used in a spiritual sense and is equivalent to salvation. The letters of Rav Shaul show that "*circumcision of the heart*" is the equivalent of "*being born again*":

- [Romans 2:29](#) -- "*But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart ...*"
- [Colossians 2:11](#) -- "*In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands ...*"

Elohim has always asked that we first recognize and trust in Him. To have faith/trust in Him is the "first commandment."

- [Exodus 20:2-3 & Deuteronomy 5:6-7](#) -- "*I am YHWH your Elohim who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other elohim before Me.*"
- [Habakkuk 2:4 & Romans 1:17](#) -- "*The righteous live by faith.*" (Shaul quotes this "Old Testament" verse in Romans to make his point.)
- [Hebrews 11:6](#) -- "*Without faith it is impossible to please Him.*"

In *Kabbalah* (received teaching) the idea of being born again means that one is to clothe themselves with the spiritual garments made in the world of *Atzilut* (the highest world), where Moshe saw the *kavod* (glory) of Elohim . One has to accept YHWH's provision of a garment of honor and light even as Adam was clothed in a garment of light. This is done by coming to the light and practicing Truth/*Emet* (Torah).

- [Soncino Zohar, Shemoth, Section 2, Page 210b](#) - "*Happy is the portion of whoever is found worthy of those garments wherein the righteous are clad in the Garden of Eden. [i.e., Yezirah] Those garments are made out of the good deeds performed by a man in this world in obedience to the commands of the Torah. In the Lower Paradise [i.e., Yezirah] man's soul is thus sustained by these deeds and is clad in garments of glory made out of them. But when the soul mounts up on high through that portal of the*

firmament, other precious garments are provided for it of a more exalted order, made out of the zeal and devotion which characterized his study of the Torah and his prayer; for when that zeal mounts up on high a crown is made out of it for him to be crowned with, but some of it remains as the man's portion, out of which garments of light are made for the soul to be clad in when it has ascended on high. The former garments, as we have said, depend on his actions, but these depend on his devotion of spirit, so as to qualify their owner to join the company of holy angels and spirits. This is the correct exposition of the matter as the Holy Lamp learned it from Elijah. The garments of the Lower Paradise [i.e., Yezirah] are made of man's actions; those of the celestia Paradise [i.e., Beriah] of the devotion and earnestness of his spirit.

- **Soncino Zohar, Shemoth, Section 2, Page 229b** *are they” (Lev. XVI, 4.) Of Israel, also, Scripture says: “Israel is YHWH's hallowed portion, the first-fruits of the increase” (Jer. II, 3), thus calling Israel holy, for the reason that in Israel are to be seen all shades of color, as displayed by Priests, Levites, and Israelites; and these are the colors which may be exhibited in the inner holy place. ‘Observe that man's soul does not ascend to appear before the Holy King unless she is first worthy to be attired in the supernal raiment. Likewise, the soul does not descend into this world until clad in the garments of this world. Similarly, the holy heavenly angels, of whom it is written, “Who makest thy angels into winds and thy ministers into flaming fire” (Ps. CIV, 4), when they have to execute a message in this world do not come down to it before they clothe themselves in the garments of this world. The attire thus has always to be in harmony with the place visited; and the soul, as we have said, can only ascend when clad in ethereal raiment. Adam in the Garden of Eden was attired in supernal raiment, of celestial radiancy. As soon as he was driven from the Garden of Eden and had need of forms suited to this world, “YHWH Elohim”, Scripture says, “made for Adam and for his wife garments of skin (‘or), and clothed them” (Gen. III, 21). Formerly they were garments of light (‘or), to wit, of the celestial light in which Adam ministered in the Garden of Eden. For, inasmuch as it is the resplendency of the celestial light that ministers in the Garden of Eden, when first man entered into the Garden, the Holy One, blessed be He, clothed him first in the raiment of that light. Otherwise he could not have entered there. When driven out, however, he had need of other garments; hence “garments of skin”. So here also “they made residual garments to minister in the holy place”, so as to enable the wearer to enter the Sanctuary. Now, it has been already taught that a man's good deeds done in this world draw from the celestial resplendency of light a garment with which he may be invested when in the next world he comes to appear before the Holy One, blessed be He. Appareled in that raiment, he is in a state of bliss and feasts his eyes on the radiant effulgence. So Scripture says: “To behold the graciousness of YHWH, and to*

visit early in his temple” (Ps. XXVII, 4). Man's soul is thus attired in the raiments of both worlds, the lower and the upper, thereby achieving perfection³. Of this Scripture says: “Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name”; to wit, in this world-’The upright shall dwell in thy presence” (Ibid. CXL, 14); namely, in the other world.’ **Zohar Shemot, Section 2, page 229b**

- **Soncino Zohar, Bemidbar, Section 3, Page 214a** - As R. Eleazar and R. Jose were once walking in the wilderness, R. Jose said: ‘When it says of Phineas, “Behold I give him my covenant of peace”, it means peace from the Angel of Death, so that he should never have power over him and that he should not suffer his chastisements. As for the tradition that Phineas did not die, the truth is that he did not die like other men, and he outlived all his generation, because he kept hold of this supernal covenant, and when he departed from the world it was with celestial yearning and beautiful attachment.’ R. Eleazar cited the verse: “And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord”, etc. (Zech. III, 1). ‘The “filthy garments”, as explained elsewhere, are those with which the spirit was clad in this world. It has been asked: When a man is doomed to Gehinnom, what are the garments with which they invest him? And the answer is given in the words, “Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and standing before the angel” (Ibid. 3). This was the angel appointed over Gehinnom, and from this we can learn that the evil deeds of a man make for him these filthy garments, and so Elohim said afterwards to him: “Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee and I have clothed thee with rich apparel”; he was clothed in other proper garments through which a man may see the glory of the Shekinah. So Phineas did not depart from this world until there were prepared for him other garments pleasing to the spirit for the next world.’

³ **Mat 5:48** Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. **Mat 19:21** Yahshua said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. **Luke 6:40** The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master. The "keeping of one's garment" is an allusion to the soul, specifically the "higher soul" called the *Neshamah*. This higher soul is "granted" to man as opposed to the *Nefesh* which is present in all men as well as in all living creatures. The *Neshamah* is man's "divine connection." Because it is linked to the *Nefesh*, which is in turn attached to the physical body, the *Neshamah* is affected by what man does with his body. Thus "keeping one's garments" is directly associated with avoiding sin. Those who maintain their proper spiritual connection ("keep their garments") are contrasted to those who do not. Further, the *Neshamah* is that which was "breathed into" Adam in the Genesis account, making him distinct from the rest of creation. The rectification of all creation will eventually return us to a state similar to Adam in Gan Eden (Garden of Eden) The verse in Revelation have a connection to the account of the failure of Adam and Chawah in Gan Eden, with the reference to; "garments," "naked" and "shame."**Genesis 2:25** - And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. **Genesis 3:7** - Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. **Genesis 3:9-10** - Then YHWH Elohim called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?" So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself." **Genesis 3:21** - Also for Adam and his wife YHWH Elohim made tunics of skin, and clothed them.

- **Rev 3:4** *Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.*⁴
- **Rev 16:15** *Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.*
- **Matt. 22:11 -13** *And the king coming in to look over the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. And he said to him, Friend, how did you come in here without having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, Bind him hand and foot and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*
- **Enoch 62:18** - *The saints and the elects have arisen from the earth, have left off to depress their countenances, and have been clothed with the garment of life. That garment of life is with the Master of spirits, in whose presence your garment shall not wax old, nor your glory diminish.*
- 21 *“But the one doing the truth comes to the light⁵, so that his works are clearly seen, that they have been wrought in Elohim.”* **Yochanan 3:21**
- 23 *For the command is a lamp, and the Torah a light,* **Proverbs 6:23**
- 151 *You are near, O YHWH, And all Your commands are truth.* **Psalms 119:151**

When a person is practicing truth (Torah) and walking in the Light (Torah) then their soul is clothed in the garments of Light. Just as Adam was clothed in Light in creation (before the fall), the soul of the righteous is clothed in the Light and Truth upon his death due to his observance of the *mitzvot*. He was born of the water (physical birth/ also the world of *Yesod*) and the spiritual birth from the *Ruach* (a change of heart that results in Torah observance). The soul must be clothed in the garments of both worlds.

One must be reborn from the womb of the upper *Malchut* (Kingship/Kingdom) of *Atzilut* and experience a change of heart by *teshuvah* (return). *Atzilut*-Nearness is the Universe of the *Sefirot* and *Beriah* –Creation is the Universe of Souls. *Malchut* of *Atzilut* is the closest to the Universe of Souls giving birth into it. Therefore it is called the “womb” Above.

- *“Although *Malchut* –Kingship is the root of the attribute of Justice, this *Sefirah* is also the womb from which all souls flow.* **The Bahir, Part 2, Section 77**

⁴ The (white) garments referred to in the text are not physical raiment, but of the spiritual realm, and associated with the condition of a person's soul. This condition is directly tied to obedience of Torah. Note that those walking with Yahshua in white are said to be "worthy." This indicates a level of achievement on behalf of the person, which reflects the importance of being a "hearer and doer" of Torah, as an integral part of one's "faith."

⁵ Luria's chief disciple Chaim Vital taught that a pure heart and a quiet mind, a person enters contact with the Divine Light and raises the Light up to the Ein Sof, offering the Light to the One in a sacred act of service wholly hidden in the higher worlds. Only then does the person open the channel for the Light to flow down through his or her soul into our world.

The Upper Mother is called *Binah* (Understanding) or the *Shekinah*. The Lower Mother is called *Malchut*. The water is the Torah, which provides a safe environment for growth in the “womb”. The Son or *Tiferet* takes all the powers of the Tree of Life and channels them through the Middle Pillar of the Tree into *Yesod* or Foundation (*Yesod* is fluid like water), which gives to *Malchut*, thus conceiving a “new creation” in the womb of the Lower Mother. One then becomes “born from above” from the water and the *Ruach* (wind/spirit) which is the breath of *Tiferet*.

- “Souls are born through the union of *Yesod* and *Malchut*. Therefore *Yesod* is called the “foundation of all souls”. **The Bahir, Section 157, Part 2**

The growth of the *Neshamah* (the third part of the human soul) is also called a “second birth”. *Da’at* (knowledge) is the descent of the *Ruach Hakodesh* upon the soul. The evolution of the *Neshamah* is the purification of the soul so that it may arise and return up the Tree of Life to its place in the world of Emanation. The Higher Self⁶ achieves the generation and spiritual rebirth as a Divine son of Elohim through a unification. It is this unification of the finite man with his infinite Higher Self that allows this rebirth a son of Elohim. From the earliest traditions and teachings within Judaism there is but one message, the cosmic birthing of the Divine son through the spiritual development of righteous humans, a whole generation that fulfills the purpose of creation and the human purpose of spirituality, the transcendence of mortality through such human unification of the soul with the Divine as can endow it with a Divine personality. This is not a strange doctrine nor heresy as it is taught very plainly by Scripture and well known to Rav Shaul and the other writers of the *Brit Chadasha*.

- **Rom 8:14 -21** *For as many as are led by the Spirit of Elohim, these are sons of Elohim. For ye received not the spirit of bondage again unto fear; but ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of Elohim: and if children, then heirs; heirs of Elohim, and joint-heirs with Messiah; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward. For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of Elohim. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of Elohim.*

⁶ Adam Kadmon is the image and likeness of Elohim in which we are made. It is the Divine blueprint for all the sons and daughters of Elohim. We have strayed from that blueprint but the original matrix of perfection, the divine image and likeness is there, sealed in the Higher Self.

- **Gal 4:6-7** *And because ye are sons, Elohim sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. So that thou art no longer a bondservant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through Elohim.*
- **Heb 2:10** *For it became him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*
- **Luke 3:38** *the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of Elohim.*
- *“The human intellect is the fruit of Elohim,⁷ may He be praised, and by way of the simile is His seed, and he is in truth his son.” **Rabbi Abulafai***
- *“He who knows this measure of our Creator, and the praise of the Holy One, blessed be He, Who is hidden from the creatures, is assured he is a son of the world to come [he will inherit the world to come]...” **Shiur Ooma, The Secret Garden page 32***
- *The ruach and the neshamah are found only in a man who has awakened spiritually “and made a special effort to develop his intellectual powers and religious sensibilities...It is aroused by a man when he occupies himself with the study of Torah and its commandments,⁸ and it opens his higher powers of apprehension, especially his ability to mystically apprehend the G-dhead and the secrets of the universe.. By acquiring the neshamah (the Higher Soul), the Kabbalist thus realizes something of the divine in his own nature.” **Gershom Scholem, Major Trends in Kabbalah , pages 240-241***
- **2Peter 1:4** *whereby he hath granted unto us his precious and exceeding great promises; that through these ye may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in that world by lust.*
- **1Peter 1:22-23** *Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently: having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of Elohim, which liveth and abideth.*

According to **the Bahir**, the personification of *Zeir Anpin* (The Son/The Word) is pictured facing downward with its head in the East⁹ and its feet towards the West, bestowing spiritual sustenance to the world. The Female (*Malchut*) is seen lying with her head towards the East and is therefore in East. Her womb is to the West, and it is from her womb that all seed is mixed together. The seed of Yisrael travels down the spinal cord from the brain (*Mochin*) and therefore comes from the East.¹⁰

⁷ The appearance of the soul, which is the supernal aspect within the human personality, is called a new birth, transforming a person into a son of Elohim according to the Zohar.

⁸ The Zohar states that the neshamah is activated within us when we strive for righteousness and purity.

⁹ East is Tiferet (the Son) and West is Yesod (foundation). Malchut is attached to Yesod in the West, and is also called the sea (yam), which can also mean West. Yisrael was reborn by passing through the Red Sea (Yesod) from the seed of Tiferet.

¹⁰ See Yeshayahu 43:5

- “When Yisrael is good, then this is the place from which I will bring your seed (the East), and new seed will be granted to you. But when Yisrael is wicked (departs from Torah), [then I will bring] seed that has already been in the world. It is thus written (Ecclesiastes 1:4), “A generation goes and a generation comes,” teaching us that it has already come. What is the meaning of the verse, “and from the West I will gather you”? This means I will gather you from the attribute that always points to the West. Why is the West called MaAReV (mixed)? Because it is there that the seed is mixed together (MitAReV). What is it like? It is like a king’s son had a beautiful bride and he hid her in his chamber. He took riches from his father’s house and constantly brought it to her. She, in turn, took everything, constantly put it away, and mixed it all together. Ultimately he seeks to see what he had gathered and accumulated. It is therefore written, “And from the West I will gather you.” And what is the father’s house? It is that regarding which is written, “From the East I will bring your seed.” This teaches us that it is brought forth from the East and sowed on the West. He then gathers what he has sowed.” **The Bahir, Part 1, Section 155-156**

It is interesting that Gentiles must be “born again” if they want to convert to Judaism.¹¹ They must renounce idolatry, accept the Torah, and undergo immersion in a *mikveh*. This is known as becoming a “new creation”, a “new birth” or “like a new born baby”.

- **Talmud- Mas. Yevamoth 62a:** ‘And Resh Lakish said: He has not fulfilled the duty of propagation’ because one who became a proselyte is like a child newly born.
- **Talmud - Mas. Yevamoth 47b:** As soon as he is healed arrangements are made for his immediate ablution, when two learned men must stand by his side and acquaint him with some of the minor commandments and with some of the major ones.⁴ When he comes up after his ablution (immersion/mikveh) he is deemed to be an Israelite in all respects.
- **Soncino Zohar, Bereshith, Section 1, Page 95a** at Mount Sinai when the Law was given to Israel.’ Another then discoursed on the text: An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings and thy peace offerings, etc. (Ex. XX, 24). He said: ‘We have learnt that whoever makes this offering of his son is esteemed no less worthy than if he had offered to Elohim all the sacrifices in the world, and had built an altar before Him. Therefore it is fitting that he should make a

¹¹ According to Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum rabbinic writings uses the term "born again" to refer to at least six different occurrences. Note each of these life changing experiences: (a) When a Gentile converts to Judaism. (b) When an individual is crowned king. (c) At age 13 when a Jewish boy chooses to embrace Torah and be numbered with the believers. (d) When an individual gets married. (e) When an individual becomes a rabbi. (f) When an individual becomes the head of a rabbinical school.

kind of altar in the shape of a vessel full of earth over which the circumcision may be performed, that so Elohim may reckon it to him as if he had sacrificed on it burnt offerings and peace offerings, sheep and oxen, and be even better pleased therewith; for so it is written in the latter half of the text: "in every place where I record my name I will come to thee and bless thee", where the words "I will record my name" refer to the circumcision, of which it is written, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant" (Ps. XXV, 14). So much for the altar of earth. In the next verse we read: "And if thou make me an altar of stone." This alludes to the proselyte who comes from a stubborn and stony-hearted people. The text proceeds: "thou shalt not build it of hewn stones". This means that the proselyte must enter into the service of Elohim, and that he must not be circumcised until he puts out of his mind the alien worship which he practiced hitherto, and removes the stoniness of his heart. For if he is circumcised before he does this, then he is like a statue which, though hewn into shape, still remains stone. Hence "thou shalt not build it of hewn stones", since if he is still obdurate, "thou hast lifted up thy tool upon it and hast polluted it"; i.e. the act of circumcision is of no use to him. Wherefore happy is the lot of him who brings this offering with gladness and pleases Elohim thereby; and it is fitting that he should rejoice in this boon the whole of the day, as it is written, "For all those that put their trust in thee shall rejoice, they shall ever shout with joy, and they that love thy name shall exult in thee" (Ps. V, 12).'

Sometimes it is easier to define something by what it is not rather than what it is. Being "born again" is NOT "believing in Jesus", it is not being "baptized", nor is it being "spirit filled." It most certainly is NOT becoming a convert to the world religion called "Christianity"¹² or being a "Christian". We can clearly see that Yahshua in his discussion of being "born again from above" connected it with a return to the Torah of YHWH through *teshuvah* and obedience to the Word of Elohim.¹³

The Hebrew Renewed Covenant writers, who considered the Torah-based faith of Yisrael as the only valid faith system given by YHWH warned of a coming "spiritual deception" that would deceive many. This counterfeit faith would be based on "lawlessness," (Torah-lessness) and lead up to the coming of the anti-Messiah ("anti" meaning counterfeit), who would be called the "man of lawlessness" (**2 Thessalonians 2:3**). Part of that deception would include a false definition of the term "born from above" based on a foundation of Torah-lessness and a "Christ" who would do away with the Torah. Once again we can see that the "church system" has redefined Scriptural terms and replaced them with definitions that do not require a life of faithfulness to YHWH and Torah.

¹² Christianity is a religion about "Jesus". Torah observance is the faith of Yahshua.

¹³ See Acts 15 for the minimum requirements for the new Yisraelite.