

The Mystery of Teshuvah

By

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*10 For sadness according to Elohim works repentance to deliverance, not to be regretted, but the sadness of the world works death¹. **2 Cor.7:10***

*“And it shall be, when all these words come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you shall bring them back to your heart among all the gentiles where YHWH your Elohim drives you, 2 and shall turn back to YHWH your Elohim and obey His voice, according to all that I command you today, with all your heart and with all your being, you and your children, 3 then YHWH your Elohim shall turn back your captivity, and shall have compassion on you, and He shall turn back and gather you from all the peoples where YHWH your Elohim has scattered you. 4 “If any of you are driven out to the farthest parts under the heavens, from there YHWH your Elohim does gather you, and from there He does take you. 5 And YHWH your Elohim shall bring you to the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. And He shall do good to you, and increase you more than your fathers. 6 “And YHWH your Elohim shall circumcise your heart and the heart of your seed, to love YHWH your Elohim with all your heart and with all your being, so that you might live, 7 and YHWH your Elohim shall put all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who persecuted you. 8 “And you shall turn back and obey the voice of YHWH and do all His commands which I command you today. **Devarim 30:1-8***

*“Now, the sages have said that seven things preceded the world, and one of them is teshuvah, the concept being that teshuvah is primarily in the heart, which is the upper HEH (h)-that is, the soul’s dissolution in quest of Elohim.” **Likkutei Torah, Drushim Ierosh Hashanah /Deut.60d-61a***

*No sin is so light that it may be overlooked; no sin is so heavy that it may not be repented of. **Ibn Ezra Moses: Shorat Yisrael***

*17 From that time Yahshua began to proclaim and to say, “Repent, for the reign of the heavens has drawn near.” **Mattithyahu 4:17***

¹ Two ways of handling sadness. The sorrow, merely being sad or experiencing pain has no virtue in it. It is concerned with self, not with Elohim or with others who have been harmed; and it leads to self-hatred, self-pity, depression, despair and death. Real sorrow, on the other hand, leads to repentance, *t’shuvah*, turning from sin to Elohim, making restitution for wrongs, and resolving to act righteously. Elohim is not interested in one’s merely feeling sorry for having sinned, but in one’s resolute turning from that sin and not doing it again when similarly tempted.

*My sons open for Me an aperture of repentance as narrow as the eye of a needle, and I will open for you gates through which wagons and coaches can pass .**Song R. 5:2 no. 2***

YHWH has placed a mystery within His Torah. It is called *teshuvah* or return. This act is important in the month of *Elul* and *Tishrei*². More importantly, *teshuvah* plays an essential part in the Restoration of both Houses of Yisrael in the latter days. There are a couple Hebrew words for repent or return.

- **H5162** *nâcham* :1) to be sorry, console oneself, repent, regret, comfort, be comforted 1a) (Niphal) 1a1) to be sorry, be moved to pity, have compassion 1a2) to be sorry, rue, suffer grief, repent 1a3) to comfort oneself, be comforted 1a4) to comfort oneself, ease oneself 1b) (Piel) to comfort, console 1c) (Pual) to be comforted, be consoled 1d) (Hithpael) 1d1) to be sorry, have compassion 1d2) to rue, repent of 1d3) to comfort oneself, be comforted 1d4) to ease oneself
- **H7725** *shûb shoob* A primitive root; to *turn* back (hence, away) transitively or intransitively, literally or figuratively (not necessarily with the idea of *return* to the starting point); generally to *retreat*; often adverbially *again*: - ([break, build, circumcise, dig, do anything, do evil, feed, lay down, lie down, lodge, make, rejoice, send, take, weep]) again, (cause to) answer (+ again), in any case (wise), at all, averse, bring (again, back, home again), call [to mind], carry again (back), cease, certainly, come again (back) consider, + continually, convert, deliver (again), + deny, draw back, fetch home again, fro, get [oneself] (back) again, give (again), go again (back, home), [go] out, hinder, let, [see] more, needs, be past, pay, pervert, pull in again, put (again, up again), recall, recompense, recover, refresh, relieve, render (again), repent, requite, rescue, restore, retrieve, (cause to, make to) return, reverse, reward, + say nay, send back, set again, slide back, still, surely, take back (off), (cause to, make to) turn (again, self again, away, back, back again, backward, from, off), withdraw

The ten days between the rebirth of time in the heavenly realms at *Rosh Hashanah*³, and *Yom HaKippurim*⁴, are called the “Ten Days of *Teshuvah*” or the “Ten⁵ Days of Return.” The idea of return is the foremost focus of the Scriptures and of Hebraic thought. *Teshuvah* is more than the return of a wayward person who returns to the path of YHWH, His Moshiach, and the Torah. It is difficult to define the meaning of *teshuvah*.⁶ Let us contrast the word “*teshuvah* or return” with the well known term “law”.

² The 7th Hebrew Month (usually around the end of September or early October) Signifying the 7th sefirot of Malkut

³ Rosh Hashanah is not the first Hebrew month but it is the “HEAD-SEED” month that sets the fruit of rest the year in the spirit

⁴ Literally Day of Atonements (plural)

⁵ Referring on the sod level to the Ten Sefirot

⁶ The Greek word “*metanoiete*,” related to “*nous*” (“mind”), means “change your mind, have a complete change of heart.” The underlying Hebrew concept is expressed in the word “*t’shuvah*” (“turning, returning”), which in the context of religious behavior means “turning” from one’s sins and “returning” to YHWH. Note that there is not only a “from” but a “to,” for turning from one’s sins

A “law” is something that we cannot transgress without experiencing some type of consequence (the Scriptural principle called cause and effect). For example: you place your hand in a fire, and you will get burned (the laws of nature). The same principles apply to the “laws” in the spiritual worlds. All worlds, both physical and spiritual, are governed by set laws.

You cannot transgress the Torah (the blueprint for life) without it having an impact upon your soul and upon all the worlds. Every action is as if you have cast a pebble into a pond, and the ripples begin to reach out until the whole lake has been affected by that one action. Our actions do affect all the worlds. These effects are generally irreversible. For example: I can jump off a roof and then scream, “That is not what I intended to do!”, but that does not change the effect of landing. I can be sorry I jumped, it may even be a mistake, but that does not matter. What is done is done. Eggs cannot be unscrambled. Or can they?

What is true in the material world of *Malkut* is also true in the upper spiritual worlds because they are all governed by the law of cause and effect. If I transgress the Torah in this world, what is done is done. My actions or even the lack of actions, change reality that I live in tomorrow.

Teshuvah runs counter to all known laws, natural and spiritual. *Teshuvah* is saying to YHWH, “I did not want that to happen” or “I am sorry I did that.” Then Divine forgiveness flows from the throne of *chesed* and it is as if these events have never occurred. How can something that has been done no longer exist? The first step of *teshuvah* is not standing before Elohim and hearing Him say, “I have forgiven you.” Before this can happen I must confess⁷ to Him about my life, my past, and my world and ask Him for something much greater than forgiveness.

- *Yisra’el, do not forget Me! 22 “I shall wipe out your transgressions like a cloud, and your sins like a mist. Return to Me, for I shall redeem you.” 23 Sing, O heavens, for YHWH shall do it! **Yeshayahu 44:21b-23***
- ²¹*Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. 22 I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto Me; for I have redeemed thee. **RNKJV***

is impossible unless at the same time one turns to YHWH—otherwise one only turns from one set of sins to another! The Hebraic understanding of repentance, correct on this point, is that each individual must do it, yet it requires YHWH’s grace to be able to do it—“Turn us to you, O YHWH, and we will be turned” (Lamentations 5:21). It is not without wisdom that a Jew raised with little knowledge of Judaism who later adopts an Orthodox Jewish lifestyle is termed a “*ba’al-t’shuvah*,” literally, a “master of repentance,” that is, one who has “turned” from his nonobservant ways and “returned” to an attempt at serving Elohim in the manner prescribed by Orthodox Judaism. My heart’s desire is that all mankind become true *ba’alei-t’shuvah* through Yahshua HaMoshiach.

⁷ 1 Yochanan 1:9

I am asking for my sin to be blotted⁸ out⁹. It is so much more than just changing the future. *Teshuvah* is changing the past, so that yesterday is no longer yesterday. According to the law of cause and effect, this cannot happen.

It can happen when we come before YHWH. The root (bvs, "to return") combines in itself both requisites of repentance: to turn from the evil and to turn to the good.

- *R. Simeon further discoursed thus: 'It is written, Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto YHWH. (Is. XXXVIII, 2.) Observe how powerful is the might of the Torah, and how it surpasses any other force. For whoso occupies himself in the study of the Torah has no fear of the powers above or below, nor of any evil haps of the world. For such a man cleaves to the tree of life, and derives knowledge from it day by day, since it is the Torah that teaches man to walk in the true path, and gives him counsel how to repent and return to his Master so that He may annul the evil decreed against him; nay, even if it has been further decreed that it shall not be annulled, yet it is annulled and no longer threatens that man in this world. Hence it is incumbent upon a man to occupy himself in the study of the Torah day and night without cessation, in accordance with the text, "and thou shalt meditate therein day and night" (Jos. I, 8); and if he abandons such study, it is as though he abandoned the tree of life. Here, then, is a wise counsel for man. When a man goes to bed of a night, he should acknowledge wholeheartedly the Kingship of heaven, and should entrust his soul to the keeping of heaven: he will then immediately be guarded against all diseases and evil spirits, and they will have no power over him. In the morning, when he rises from his bed, he should bless his Master, proceed to His house, bow down before His sanctuary with awe, and then offer up his prayer. For this, he must take counsel of the holy patriarchs, as it is written: "But as for me, in the abundance of thy loving-kindness will I come into thy house: I will bow down towards thy holy temple in the fear of thee" (Ps. V, 8). **Zohar 1:11b***

The motion of turning back implies that sin is not an ineradicable stain but a straying from the right path and that by the act of turning, a power Elohim has given as a gift to all men, the transgressor can change his future.

⁸ mâchâh *maw-khaw*'A primitive root; properly to *stroke* or *rub*; by implication to *erase*; also to *smooth* (as if with oil), that is, *grease* or make fat; also to *touch*, that is, reach to: - abolish, blot out, destroy, full of marrow, put out, reach unto, utterly, wipe (away, out).

⁹ *Rambam's Mishneh-Torah*, Maimonides' comprehensive summary of Judaism's requirements, completed in 1178:

"Let not the *ba'al-t'shuvah* ["Jew who repents/returns to [Orthodox] Judaism"] suppose that because of the iniquities and sins he has committed he is kept at a distance from the level attained by the righteous men. It isn't so. He is loved as tenderly by the Creator as if he had never sinned. Not only that, his reward is great, since he experienced the taste of sin and nevertheless rid himself of it by conquering his *yetzer* ["[evil] impulse"]. The sages said, 'Where the *ba'al-t'shuvah* stands, the completely righteous men cannot stand' (B'rakhot 34b). That is, the level attended by the *ba'al-t'shuvah* is higher than that of someone who never sinned at all, because the former had to strive harder to subdue his *yetzer* than the latter.⁹

- 19 “Repent therefore and turn back¹⁰, for the blotting out of your sins, in order that times of refreshing¹¹ might come from the presence of the Master, 20 and that He sends Yahshua Messiah, preappointed for you, 21whom heaven needs to receive until the times of restoration of all matters, of which Elohim spoke through the mouth of all His set-apart prophets since of old. **Acts 3:19-21**
- “Therefore, make teshuvah (repentance, turning from chet to Elohim), and turn in order that your chatta'im your averos (sins) may be removed.” **Acts 3:19 Orthodox Jewish Brit Chadasha**
- 25 “I, I am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake, and remember your sins no more. **Yeshayahu 43:25**
- ²⁵ I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.
²⁶Put Me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified. **RNKJV**

Before YHWH

One of the key verses in the *Yom HaKippurim* liturgy is “For this day atonement shall be made for you, to cleanse you of all your sins; you shall be pure before Elohim.”

- 30“For on that day he makes atonement for you, to cleanse you, to be clean from all your sins before YHWH”. **Wayyiqra 6:30**

We may interpret the word before as a time rather than a place. What does that mean before YHWH rather than Elohim? The mystics consider the Name YHWH different than the Divine Essence. The Essence of YHWH- His real nature- is totally beyond our understanding. No Name can really define Him as He is indefinable. The Unlimited cannot be subject to limitation or He ceases to be the Infinite One. In the word de-fine there is the finite which is incompatible with the infinite.

However, the Scriptures do give a Name to Elohim-YHWH known as the Tetragrammaton .This is the Name that was used to create the worlds. This Name-YUD-HEH-WAW-HEH is a code.

It is the substrate of all reality and hence all causality. The real point of origin is when there as no Name (YHWH) and there were no laws, just the *AIN SOF*. It is the “time” when there was only the *AIN SOF*, when He made all reality, the “time” outside all space and creation.

¹⁰ Repent and turn to Elohim, literally, “Change your mind and turn.” KJV has “Repent and be converted”; but to the modern reader this suggests changing religions, e.g., from Judaism to “Christianity”, which is not what Kepha was talking about. For at that time “Christianity” as such did not exist; there was Judaism with Yahshua and Judaism without him.

¹¹ Times of refreshing, that is, the Messianic Age. Compare the Mishnah: “Rabbi Ya‘akov used to say, ‘Better is one hour of repentance and good deeds in this world than the whole life of the world to come; and better is one hour of contentment (*korat-ruach*, “cooling of spirit”) in the world to come than all the life of this world.’ ” (Avot 4:17)

- “ When a man takes this to heart-that the entire universe is under time, while the entirety of time is but a single moment before YHWH, Who is above time and before Whom time’s divisions do not apply at all-his heart will burn as a flaming fire and his soul will dissolve (in yearning) to cleave to Him. Thus, teshuvah preceded the world. This is not to say it existed before the world was created; for if there is no world there is no sin, no iniquity, and no teshuvah. Rather, this means that teshuvah with dissolution of the soul reaches higher than time and space.” **Likkutei Torah, Drushim l’Rosh Hashanah 61a**

Teshuvah is returning to this primordial stage when reality is not reality and where the concept of sin is meaningless. It is an Eden without sin. The *AIN SOF*, before YHWH, is also *AIN SOF* before any judgment. Return then is total reversibility. We are going back to square one, and the seemingly impossible annulment of all the past becomes possible because it is natural. This is possible because time is the space between cause and effect. If there is no time in the *AIN Sof* level then there are no effects to be suffered from the cause (action). Thus there is no punishment for the sin.

- 4 For a thousand years in Your eyes are like yesterday that has past, or like a watch in the night. 5 You have swept them away, **Tehillim 90:4-5a** [Time does not exist for *AIN Sof*, He is outside of time and all is a constant NOW]
- Three days face man; yesterday whose time has already passed; today--which is passing and will be no more; and tomorrow--which is hidden beyond all comprehension. **P.Immanuel of Rome**

It is like making a film and the director yelling, “CUT! That scene was awful; let’s film it again.” Thus is what *teshuvah* does to our lives. I can change my past and make it over. I can act as though what happened did not really happen. This is ATONEMENT!¹² A return to the point in time before I sinned. I have returned to the primordial source, to the embryo when all doors are still open. Here, in this state, our lifetime, and deeds are nebulous. In this state I can start anew.

YHWH the Mikveh of Yisrael

This is why we immerse ourselves in a *mikveh* on *Yom HaKippurim*¹³. We return to the womb to come forth “born anew”. *Mikveh* means immersion in a ritual pool and has been mistranslated hope in the following passage.

¹² **H3722** kâphar kaw-far' A primitive root; to cover (specifically with bitumen); figuratively to expiate or condone, to placate or cancel: - appease, make (an) atonement, cleanse, disannul, forgive, be merciful, pacify, pardon, to pitch, purge (away), put off, (make) reconcile (-liation). **G2643** katallagē kat-al-lag-ay' From G2644; exchange (figuratively adjustment), that is, restoration to (the divine) favor: - atonement, reconciliation (-ing).

¹³ Called “The Day” in the Talmud ;see Ivrim 10:25 “The Day” refers to the final day of Atonement

- 13 “O YHWH, the expectation [mikveh] of Yisrael, all who forsake You are put to shame. “Those who depart from Me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken YHWH, the fountain of living waters.”¹⁴ Heal me, O YHWH, so that I am healed. Save me, so that I am saved, for You are my praise.”

Yirmeyahu 17:13

YHWH is the ritual bath for Yisrael! As I immerse myself and disappear under the water, it is as though “I” drowned¹⁴, and a new person emerges from the waters of the Moshiach. I am like a new born babe and I have no past .I am prepared as a maiden Bride to enter under the *chuppah* (*sukkah*) with the Bridegroom. But *mikveh* without *teshuvah* is a “dead work”.

- 4 We were therefore buried with Him through immersion (*tevilah*) into death, that as Messiah was raised from the dead (*techiyah*) by the esteem of the Father, so also we should walk¹⁵ in newness of life (*Chayyim Chadashim*). **Rom.6:4**
- If, then, you were raised with Messiah, seek the matters which are above, where Messiah is, seated at the right hand of Elohim¹⁶. 2 Mind (*machshavot*) the matters above, not those on the earth. 3 For you have died, and your life has been hidden (*nistar*) with Messiah in Elohim. 4 When the Messiah, who is our life (*Chayyeinu*), is manifested, then you also shall be manifested with Him in esteem. 5 Therefore put to death your members (*evarim*) which are on the earth: whoring (*zenut*), uncleanness, passion, evil desire (*zimmah*), and greed of gain (*chamdanut*), which is idolatry (*avodah zarah*). **Col.3:1-5**
- Confession without repentance is of no avail. The ancient parable, as old as **Ben Sira (34:25–26)**, is recounted of a man who immerses himself in purifying waters while still holding in his hand a defiling reptile (**Ta'an. 16a**).

Where are YOU?

Teshuvah is the key to atonement. Atonement causes forgiveness and is the natural outcome in returning to the point of origin. It is like watching a movie of a race while it is rewinding. *Teshuvah* causes a new beginning. *Teshuvah* rewrites cosmic history. I rewrite my own history and at the same time rewrite the history of the world around me.

Teshuvah goes beyond sin and an individual’s perception of his actions. The real issue is not the list of ones sins. The real question is to have Elohim ask us, “Where are you?” Did you hear His Voice and hide?

¹⁴ Bitul HaNephesh –destroying the soul/self

¹⁵ **G4043** peripateō 1) to walk 1a) to make one’s way, progress; to make due use of opportunities 1b) Hebrew for, to live 1b1) to regulate one’s life 1b2) to conduct one’s self 1b3) to pass one’s life

¹⁶ Tehillim 110:1

- 9 “And YHWH Elohim called unto Adam and said to him, “Where are you?” **Bereshith 3:9**

The verb sin –*chet* means to “miss the target”. Sin differs from a breach or a violation. Sin is a failure to fulfill something to oneself. The “sinner” is a person who has missed out on his life, his potential, his purpose; therefore he is a failure in the eyes of YHWH.

So on *Yom HaKippurim* when we address the issue of sin, we ask ourselves, “Where are you?” and “What kind of person have you become?” It is a question Elohim asks us also. We must reach a condition where we are no longer satisfied where we are at in our lives and what we have become. We must also realize what we can be.

When Elohim created the world, He separated the waters.

- 6 And Elohim said, “Let an expanse come to be in the midst of the waters, and it separate the waters from the waters.” 7 And Elohim made the expanse, and separated the waters which were under the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse. And it came to be so. 8 And Elohim called the expanse ‘heavens.’ **Bereshith 1:6-8**

He made the Upper waters and the Lower waters. The Upper waters were close to the Creator, and the Lower waters far from Him. The Zohar says the Lower waters began to weep and say:

- “We, too, want to be in the presence of the King.” **Tikkunei Zohar , Tikkun 5**

The Lower waters wanted to return to their Source. This is the essence of true *teshuvah*! Genuine *teshuvah* is weeping for the separation from YHWH or Source and asking, “Why am I not in the heavens?”

Teshuvah therefore is a return to YHWH, His Moshiach, and His Torah. Water in the Scriptures is often a metaphor for “man”. Man is a river. The water of our life flows onward constantly. *Teshuvah* is a river that wants to reverse its direction and return to its source, rather than merge with the sea. The river desires to return but it must follow its course, and as it flows it picks up dirt and debris. The “mythical” fountain of youth is the desire to return to the innocence of childhood. The desire for the purity of soul is expressed by the term “thirsting “for Elohim. Crying is neither tears nor whining, but it is like the weeping of the Lower waters.

Home of the Soul

All *teshuvah* means is “returning home”. Not to the home of our fathers, but to the home of the soul.

- 17 “But having come to himself, he said, How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I am perishing with hunger! 18 ‘having risen, I shall go to my father and say to him,

*“Father, I have sinned against the heaven, and before you, 19 and I am no longer worthy to be called your son.” **Luke 15:17-19a**¹⁷*

- 4 *“Draw me! We run after you. The sovereign has brought me into his inner rooms”.* **Shir HaShirim 1:4a**

These words express the words of the soul that wishes to enter the Divine Palace! Since we have already been in the King’s inner chambers, I can ask to be led there, or to made to return to my true home.

- 4 *“young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, having insight all wisdom, having knowledge and understanding learning, capable to stand in the sovereign’s palace, and to teach them the writing and speech of the Chaldeans”.* **Daniel 1:4**

We always have a desire to return from whence we came.

- 30 *“For on that day he makes atonement¹⁸ for you, to cleanse you, to be clean¹⁹ from all your sins before YHWH. 31 “It is a Sabbath of rest for you,”* **Wayyiqra 16:30**

Purification and Set- Apart

Yom HaKippurim has two important concepts: purification and holiness. We fast on *Yom HaKippurim* because we are told to afflict our being (soul). This is to separate us from the material world of *Malkut*²⁰.

¹⁷ Raphael Patai cites a Hasidic story with many similar details but in the service of a different moral, the importance of not having “little trust” (Mt 8:26), especially in “hastening the End” (2 Ke 3:1): “A parable about a prince who sinned. And his father expelled him from his house. And he went erring about, aimlessly, in the company of card players and drunkards. And all the time he sank lower and lower. Finally he joined a group of peasant villagers. Of their bread he ate and at their work he worked. One day the king sent one of his lords to search for his son, for perhaps he had improved his ways and was worthy of being returned to his father’s house. The lord found him plowing in the field. And he asked him: ‘Do you recognize me?’ ‘Yes,’ answered the prince. And the lord said: ‘And what is your request of your father the king? I shall tell him.’ The prince answered, ‘How good would it be if my father took pity on me and sent me a garment like those the peasants wear, and also heavy shoes which are suitable for a villager.’ ‘O, you fool, you fool,’ cried the lord, ‘it would have been better for you to ask of your father that he should take you back to his house and his palace. Is, perchance, anything lacking in the house of the king?’

“Thus they [the Jews] cry, ‘Give us this and give us that ...’ It would be better to request and to pray that He should lead us back to our country and build our Temple, and there we shall have everything we need.” (Abraham S. B. H. Michelsohn, *Sefer Shemen haTov* (“The Book of Good Oil”), Piotrkov, 1905, p. 142, as translated and quoted in *The Messiah Texts*, p. 79)

¹⁸ H3722 kâphar *kaw-far*’A primitive root; to *cover* (specifically with bitumen); figuratively to *expiate* or *condone*, to *placate* or *cancel*: - appease, make (an) atonement, cleanse, disannul, forgive, be merciful, pacify, pardon, to pitch, purge (away), put off, (make) reconcile (-liation).

¹⁹ H2891 tâhêr *taw-hare*’ A primitive root; properly to *be bright*; that is, (by implication) to *be pure* (physically *sound*, *clear*, *unadulterated*; Levitically *uncontaminated*; morally *innocent* or *holy*): - be (make, make self, pronounce) clean, cleanse (self), purge, purify (-ier, self).

²⁰ The world of Action-the physical world

- 27 “On the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It shall be a set-apart gathering for you. And you shall afflict your beings, and shall bring an offering made by fire to YHWH. 28 “And you do no work on that same day, for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement (כיפור) for you before YHWH your Elohim. 29 “For any being who is not afflicted on that same day, he shall be cut off from his people. 30 “And any being who does any work on that same day, that being I shall destroy from the midst of his people. 31 “You do no work – a law forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. 32 ‘It is a Sabbath of rest to you, and you shall afflict your beings. On the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you observe your Sabbath.” **Wayyiqra 23:27-32**

Yom HaKippurim (יום כיפור) is a time of purification and a time of being *kodesh*. Being set-apart is being different, separate from others by being on another level. There are degrees of holiness. The best word to describe holiness is transcendence. Purity is a state that is devoid of all else; it is nothingness! Holiness is relative and purity is absolute. If I am set-apart, then I differentiate myself from the profane. I am different, or separated. Purity is intrinsically pure. Holiness then is based upon difference, and purity is based upon indifferentiation. What is pure is not combined. Everything is equal. The word pure “*tahor*-טהור” and the word light or clarity (צוהר –*tzohar*) are related in Hebrew. The word *tzohar* is the root of *tzohorim* meaning “double light”- or noon (צהריים). This makes a connection with the bright light of noon with the word purity.

Purity is perfect clarity, whiteness, with no other colors, shapes or forms. White is indiffereniation White is the color worn on *Yom HaKippurim* and *Shabbat*.

The Yisraelite wears a white *tallit*²¹, *kippah*²², and under the *tallit*, a white robe called a *kittel*. White is the symbol of the world before separation. It brings us back to the time before Creation where we receive atonement, or purification.

Purity and holiness are two stages of the human soul. The Alter Rebbe teaches:

- “Now we will understand the elevation achieved by souls after their descent to clothe themselves in a body. For the source of the soul is from the inner aspect of the vessels, which is the inner dimension of the ten sefirot of the world of Atzilut²³ (Emanation), which are as a body to their soul, the light of AIN Sof (the Infinite) that dwells and clothes itself within them. As it exists in Atzilut, the soul is called the “pure one”. Then “You created it, You formed it,²⁴” and so on. It descends to Beriah (the world of Creation), Yetzirah (the world of Formation), and Asiyah (the world of Action). This is the descent for

²¹ Prayer shawl with fringes

²² a man’s round head covering used in prayer and study

²³ The first of the four worlds that arises from the EN SOF (the Infinite One), the world of Emanation.

²⁴ From the morning prayers “My Elohim, the soul You placed within me is pure. You created it, You formed it, and You breathed it into me.” The soul descends through the other three worlds, which are infinite, and which are Beriah (You created it) and Yetzirah (You formed it) to the world Asiyah (You breathed it).

the sake of ascent for, as we say regarding the fulfillment of the mitzvot in the physical world, “Who sanctified us with His commandments”- the sanctity (kadosh) being loftier than “purity” (tahor), as is known [as evidenced by the fact] “purity” is said regarding the Levites, while “sanctity” (קדושה) pertains to the Kohanim (priests)²⁵. Purity (טוהר) as in the verse “pure as the sky”²⁶ or as in Targum’s²⁷ translation of the tzohorayim (noon) as tihara²⁸ implies brightness. [In its pure state] in Atzilut, the soul is as the brightness of light. And yet, this description applies only to something that is an existence, and to which there is a certain substance; it is only that this is a very bright and pure substance; namely the vessels of Atzilut. On the other hand, “sanctity” implies transcendence [apartness], meaning that it is removed and abstract of all definition and substance, so that one cannot even describe it as “bright”. This is the light of En Sof itself, which no thought can grasp and which possesses no attributes²⁹ at all. The ascent [to this level] is through teshuvah and good deeds. This is the second concept of tashuv heh³⁰ - the return of the upper heh- as opposed to yod.” **Likkutei Torah, Re’eh 27a**

- 3 “And those who have insight shall shine like the brightness of the expanse, and those who lead many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever”. **Daniel 12:3**

Each letter of the Tetragrammaton³¹ refers to a specific world. The YUD y designates Atzilut, Emanation. The HEH h begins the world of Beriah, the definite and the finite. Life begins by a traumatic delivery of the YHWH: The YUD delivers the HEH, and the soul is separated from its womb (Yerushalayim above the mother of us all³²). Through teshuvah (the HEH) our lives return to the YUD. This is reunification that is called Yichud, the supreme unification.

Time Travel

Life is full of separations. Time is separated by past, present, and future. The supreme unification is when all these boundaries are removed and there is no differentiation between what was, what is, and what will be. All will be echad³³! It is the unification of the Name Y-H-W-H. It will be when the Upper Waters descend and the Lower Waters ascend until they become ONE again, as before the separation.

²⁵ A Cohen is superior to the Levite. All Kohanim are Levites but not all Levites are Kohanim.

²⁶ Ex.24:10

²⁷ Onkelos’s Aramaic translation of the Torah, which has the authority of Talmudic commentary.

²⁸ Deut.28:29 (root as tohar-purity).

²⁹ The light of EN SOF is absolute indifferation, and the ten sefirot, its instruments, are not of the same nature; they are conceivable in thought.

³⁰ An acronym of tashuv heh (as read in the Hebrew letters).

³¹ The YUD-HEH-VAV-HEH YHWH יהוה

³² Gal.4:26

³³ Unity -ONE

- 9 And YHWH shall be Sovereign over all the earth. In that day there shall be one YHWH, and His Name one. **Zekaryah 14:9**

This is when there is a total reunification called ‘Atik Yomin (the Ancient of Days). The literal meaning of the word ‘atik is “cut, cut off, torn from, or separated”. We could say ‘Atik is the “one who is separated from days!” or older than time, beyond time. Beyond time, change does not exist. Nothing ever existed.

- 9 “I was looking until thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days was seated. His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like clean wool, His throne was flames of fire, its wheels burning fire. 10 “A stream of fire was flowing and coming forth from His presence, and a thousand thousands served Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him, the Judge was seated, and the books were opened. **Daniel 7:9-10**
- 13 and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Adam, dressed in a robe down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. 14 And His head and hair were white as white wool, as snow, and His eyes as a flame of fire, 15 and His feet like burnished brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters. **Rev.1:13-15**
- 13 “I was looking in the night visions and saw One like the Son of Enosh, coming with the clouds of the heavens! And He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. 14 “And to Him was given rulership and preciousness and a reign, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His rule is an everlasting rule which shall not pass away, and His reign that which shall not be destroyed. **Daniel 7:13-14**
- 22 until the Ancient of Days came and right-ruling was given to the set-apart ones of the Most High, and the time came and the set-apart ones took possession of the reign. **Daniel 7:22**
- “You are the same before the world was created; You are the same since the world has been created. You are the same in this world. You are the same in the world to come.” **Morning Prayer Service**

On *Yom HaKippurim* we are prior to any event, or we exist outside time and thus outside any existence. It is before any sin. Nothing in fact has occurred. The “Ancient of Days” is also called the “Long Face”. This means the Elohim of Patience. Being patient means being able to bear something. In Hebrew it is *naso*³⁴ meaning “to bear or forgive”. Elohim can bear anything.

³⁴ **H5375** nâsâ' / nâsâh **Definition:** 1) to lift, bear up, carry, take 1a) (Qal) 1a1) to lift, lift up 1a2) to bear, carry, support, sustain, Endure 1a3) to take, take away, carry off, forgive 1b) (Niphal) 1b1) to be lifted up, be exalted 1b2) to lift oneself up, rise up 1b3) to be borne, be carried 1b4) to be taken away, be carried off, be swept away 1c) (Piel) 1c1) to lift up, exalt, support, aid, assist 1c2) to desire, long (figuratively) 1c3) to carry, bear continuously 1c4) to take, take away 1d) (Hithpael) to lift oneself up, exalt oneself 1e) (Hiphil) 1e1) to cause one to bear (iniquity) 1e2) to cause to bring, have brought

- 3“Listen to Me, O house of Ya’akov, and all the remnant of the house of Yisra’el, who are borne from the belly, who are carried from the womb: 4even to your old age, I am He, and even to grey hairs I carry! I have made and I bear, and I carry and rescue”. **Yeshayahu 46:3-4**
- 4 “Truly, He has borne our sicknesses and carried our pains. Yet we reckoned Him stricken, smitten by Elohim, and afflicted. 5 But He was pierced for our transgressions; He was crushed for our crookedness. The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed”. **Yeshayahu 53: 4-5**
- When the Messiah hears of the great suffering of Israel in their dispersion, and of the wicked amongst them who seek not to know their Master, he weeps aloud on account of those wicked ones amongst them, as it is written: “But he was wounded because of our transgression, he was crushed because of our iniquities” (Ibid. LIII, 5). The souls then return to their place. The Messiah, on his part, enters a certain Hall in the Garden of Eden, called the Hall of the Afflicted. There he calls for all the diseases and pains and sufferings of Israel, bidding them settle on himself, which they do. And were it not that he thus eases the burden from Israel, taking it on himself, no one could endure the sufferings meted out to Israel in expiation on account of their neglect of the Torah. So Scripture says; “Surely our diseases he did bear”, etc. (Ibid. LIII, 4). **Zohar 2:212a**

Elohim bears the world in His arms.

- 26“O Yeshurun, there is no one like El, riding the heavens to help you, and on the clouds, in His excellency. 27“The Elohim of old is a refuge, and beneath are everlasting arms. And He drives out the enemy from before you and says, ‘Destroy!’ 28“Thus Yisra’el dwells in safety, the fountain of Ya’akov alone, in a land of grain and new wine. His heavens also drop down dew”. **Devarim 33:26-28**

Teshuvah allows us to return to absolute transcendence of AIN SOF. This is called *Sovev kol* ‘almin, Elohim Who encompasses all worlds. It makes a supreme circle, where above and below do not exist. Nothing that occurs in time and space has any meaning compared to the transcendence of AIN Sof. Nothing ever really existed, so on *Yom HaKippurim*, I can choose what will be!

How is it possible for something that has already happened to be changed, before it has ever happened in the first place? The paradoxes in thinking about these things are enough to boggle the mind of even the smartest and wisest human being. Nonetheless, all this transpires as an act of Elohim’s grace. That which, in heaven’s eyes, already was, does not have to manifest for us as what will be. Yet, heaven’s reality simply cannot disappear. In actuality, what does happen reveals to us another wonder about the universe. As Einstein has shown, and the Torah mystics have always known, whenever there is a matter of choice in our physical universe, and more than one possibility exists, rather than just one event occurring, all possible events occur.

Each possibility occurs and causes a shift in space-time, branching off into its own special and unique dimension.

When one changes a course of direction in life, the consequences of one's past sins will never catch up with their owner. The reason is not merely that YHWH has forgiven the sinner, but rather because of the change in his behavior, one has shifted his universe into a parallel plane. The sins of the past and their future consequences lie in the previous universe and cannot follow the soul of the penitent into his new domain. Therefore, a *Ba'al Teshuvah* (repenter) is said to be born anew. This is much more than a mere metaphor; this is a profound scientific fact.

- *“When man takes this to heart that the entire universe is under time, while the entirety of time is but a single moment before YHWH, Who is above time and before Whom time's divisions do not apply at all- his heart will burn as a flaming fire and his soul will dissolve [in yearning] to cleave to Him.” **Likkutei Torah, Drushim L'Rosh Hashanah 61a***

Held Accountable

Everyday we stand accountable for our thoughts, words, and deeds³⁵. Everything we do in our life is important and to be taken into account. This means we are “accountable” in all things.

Then, once a year on *Yom HaKippurim*, we stand before YHWH and say, “Forget all that, pretend nothing happened, and let us return to the starting point of the universe”. As we open the ark to display the Torah we recite:

- *“YHWH, YHWH, an Elohim compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in kindness and faithfulness, extending kindness to the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, and cleansing us.” **Sh'mot (Ex.) 31:6**³⁶*
- *8 “If we say that we have not sin, we are misleading ourselves, and the truth is not in us”³⁷. 9 If we confess our sins, He is trustworthy and righteous to forgive us the sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us” **.1 Yochanan 8-10***

During the upcoming High Holy Days let Yisrael return to YHWH, His Moshiach, and His Torah.

³⁵ This would cover the Two Great Commandments of our Master

³⁶ The thirteen attributes of Mercy.

³⁷ Either of these claims, if true, would provide an excuse for not letting Elohim judge our inmost heart, in accordance with the prayers of Tehillim 19:13–15(12–14), 139:23–24. ³⁷

- “Yisra’el, return to YHWH your Elohim, for you have stumbled by your crookedness. 2 Take words with you, and return to YHWH. Say to Him, “Take away all crookedness, and accept what is good, and we render the bulls of our lips. 3 “Ashshur does not save us. We do not ride on horses, nor ever again do we say to the work of our hands, ‘Our mighty ones.’ For the fatherless finds compassion in You.” ...7 “Those who dwell under his shadow shall return. They shall revive like grain, and blossom like the vine, and become as fragrant as the wine of Lebanon. 8 “What more has Ephrayim to do with idols? It is I who answer and look after him. I am like a green cypress tree; your fruit comes from Me.” 9 Who is wise and understands these words, discerning and knows them? For the ways of YHWH are straight, and the righteous walk in them, but the transgressors stumble in them.” **Hoshea 14:1-3,7-9**
- 31“Him, a Prince and a Saviour, Elohim has exalted to His right hand, to give repentance to Yisra’el and forgiveness of sins. **Acts 5:31**

And daily as we recite the *Sh’ma* three times a day let the words repair our actions, thoughts, and intentions.

- 4“Hear, O Yisra’el: YHWH our Elohim, YHWH is one! 5“*And you shall love YHWH your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your being, and with all your might.* 6“*And these Words which I am commanding you today shall be in your heart, 7and you shall impress them upon your children, and shall speak of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up, 8and shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9“And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates”.* **Devarim 6:4-9**

All your Heart, Soul, and Resources

With ALL your might-*meod*. In Hebrew *meod* is an anagram for ADAM. It is an adverb that means exceedingly and very much.” You will love YHWH your Elohim with your veryness.”This is the supreme form of love, which surpasses the heart and mind.

Learn to go beyond your limits. That is true *teshuvah*. Teshuvah is serious because it goes against the laws of nature. How can I introduce into time, and into my past, actions that I never accomplished? It can only be accomplished through union with the Almighty through the Moshiach.

- 36“Therefore let all the house of Yisra’el³⁸ know for certain that Elohim has made this Yahshua, whom you impaled, both Master and Messiah.” 37And having heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Kepha and the rest of the emissaries, “Men, brothers, what shall we do?” 38And Kepha said to them, “**Repent**, and let each one of you be **immersed** in the Name of Yahshua Messiah for the forgiveness of sins. And you shall receive the gift of the Set-apart Spirit. 39“*For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are far off, as many as YHWH our Elohim shall call.*” **Acts 2:36-39**
- 36 “Teacher, which is the great command in the Torah?” 37 And Yahshua said to him, “‘You shall love YHWH your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your being, and with all your mind.’ 38 “This is the first and great command. 39 “And the second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40 “On these two commands hang all the Torah and the Prophets.” **Matt.22:36-40**

We have to learn to go down before we can go up-Yeridah tzorech ‘aliyyah. We must learn to change life. It is not enough to avoid the evil. We must learn to act. This is the image of the sower from our Master Yahshua³⁹.Elohim only sows in worlds where there can be harvest, a surplus value.

- **Soncino Zohar, Vayikra, Section 3, Page 70 a** from the depths of his heart, as it is written, “From the depths I cried unto thee”.’ R. Abba said: ‘There is a hidden place above, which is “the depth of the well”, whence issue streams and sources in all directions. This profound depth is called Repentance, and he who desires to repent and to be purified of his sin should call upon Elohim from this depth. We have learnt that when a man repented before his Master and brought his offering on the altar, and the priest made atonement for him and prayed for him, mercy was aroused and judgment mitigated and Repentance poured blessings on the issuing streams and all the lamps were blessed together, and the man was purified from his sin.’

As we walk through the Door of Moshiach on Yom HaKippurim everything can change and a full repair can take place. The mighty and the small stand together as equals before the AIN Sof.

- 19The small and great are there, and the servant is free from his master. **Iyov 3:19**

There is no great or small, and no guilty or innocent party. Through *teshuvah*, we can say what Iyov said:

³⁸ How can the Two-Covenant theory survive this climax to Kepha’s sermon? The Two-Covenant theory says, in effect, that Yahshua is for “Gentiles” and Moshe is for the Yehudim. But Kepha’s central point is that all the house of Yisrael, should acknowledge Yahshua as Master and Moshiach. From the viewpoint of YHWH and eternity, the Torah (WORD) became a human being (Yn 1:1, 14; 2:5–11). Under the aspect of time, in Kepha’s experience, Yahshua had just been revealed as who He really is. Non-Messianic Judaism objects that the Renewed Covenant says Yahshua, who to them is only a man, became a “god”. But the Renewed Covenant never says such a thing, not even here. What it says is that YHWH had, from eternity, made Him Who was already equal with YHWH before the universe was created (Co 1:15–17,Heb.1:1–3), both Master of all humanity and the promised Moshiach, King of all Yisrael!

³⁹ Luke 4

- 6 If you sin, what would you do against Him? If your transgressions are increased, what would you do to Him? 7 If you are righteous, what do you give Him? Or what does He receive from your hand? **Iyov 35:6-7**

Everything is nothingness, and hence everything is possible. This *Yom HaKippurim* make the connection to YHWH by *teshuvah* and then the blood of the Moshiach will cleanse you from all your transgressions! Yisrael, rise up and return, and fulfill your purpose and potential. Rise up to your destiny!

- 22 And, according to the Torah, almost all is cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. **Ivrim 9:22**
- 11 'For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your lives, for it is the blood that makes atonement for the life.' **Wayyiqra 17:11**
- 7 "Blessed are those whose lawlessnesses are forgiven⁴⁰, and whose sins are covered⁴¹, 8 blessed is the man to whom YHWH shall by no means reckon⁴² sin." **Romans 4:7**
- 11 And not only this, but we also exult in Elohim through our Master Yahshua Messiah, through whom we have now received the restoration to favor [atonement]. **Romans 5:11**
- 13 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the defiled, sets apart for the cleansing of the flesh, 14 how much more⁴³ shall the blood of the Messiah, who through the everlasting Spirit offered Himself unblemished to Elohim, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living Elohim? 15 And because of this He is the Mediator of a renewed covenant, so that, death having taken place for redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, those who are called might receive the promise of the everlasting inheritance. 16 For where a covenant is, it is necessary for the death of the covenanted one to be established. **Ivrim 9:13-16**
- R. Jose said: 'Woe to the wicked who will not repent of their sins before the Almighty while they are still in this world. For when a man repents of his sins and feels remorse for them, the Holy One, blessed be He, forgives them. But those who cling to their sins and refuse to repent of them will in the end descend to Gehinnom and never come up again. Thus because the generation of Noah were stubborn of heart

⁴⁰ G863 aphīēmi From G575 and (to *send*; an intensive form of eimi (to *go*)); to *send forth*, in various applications: - cry, forgive, forsake, lay aside, leave, let (alone, be, go, have), omit, put (send) away, remit, suffer, yield up.

⁴¹ G1943 epikaluptō Thayer Definition: 1) to cover over

⁴² G3049 logizomai Thayer Definition: 1) to reckon, count, compute, calculate, count over 1a to take into account, to make an account of 1a1) metaphorically to pass to one's account, to impute 1a2) a thing is reckoned as or to be something, i.e. as availing for or equivalent to something, as having the like force and weight 1b) to number among, reckon with 1c) to reckon or account 2) to reckon inward, count up or weigh the reasons, to deliberate 3 by reckoning up all the reasons, to gather or infer 3a) to consider, take into account, weigh, meditate on 3b) to suppose, deem, judge 3c) to determine, purpose, decide

⁴³ *kal v'chomer* argument

*and flaunted their sins openly and defiantly, the Holy One, blessed be He, punished them as here described.’ Said R. Isaac: ‘When a man sins in secret, if he repents, the Holy One, blessed be He, being merciful, relents and forgives him; but if not, He then publishes his sins before the world. We learn this from the treatment of the faithless wife (Sotah). [Tr. note: v. Numbers v.] Similarly here, the wicked were exterminated in sight of all. The manner of their death was as follows: scalding water spurted up from the abyss, and as it reached them it first burnt the skin from the flesh, and then the flesh from the bones; the bones then came asunder, no two remaining together, and thus they were completely blotted out.’ R. Isaac said: ‘The words “they were blotted out from the earth” is analogous to the expression “let them be blotted out of the book of the living” (Ps. LXIX, 29), thus indicating that they will not participate in the resurrection and will not rise in the Day of Judgment.’ **Zohar 1:66a***

- *29How much worse punishment do you think shall he deserve who has trampled the Son of Elohim underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was set apart as common, and insulted the Spirit of favor? **Ivrim 10:29***

