



CHABAD LUMINARIES

ד"ה דע את אלקי אביך ועבדהו בלב שלם

The Palace of Remembrance

Offered for Daniel Raphael. This maamar is given in their merit — on the hidden purpose of forgetfulness, and on the palace of remembrance a person builds by knowing the God of their father and serving Him with a whole heart.

Hakdamah

On the Hidden Purpose of Forgetfulness

"דע את אלקי אביך ועבדהו בלב שלם."

"Know the G d of your father, and serve Him with a complete heart." (I Chronicles 28:9)

"כי עמך מקור חיים באורך נראה אור."

"For with You is the source of life; in Your light we shall see light." (Psalms 36:10)

There is a question concealed beneath every question.

A child asks, "Who am I?"

A philosopher asks, "What is truth?"

A scientist asks, "How does reality work?"

The soul asks none of these.

The soul remembers.

For remembrance precedes inquiry.

One does not seek that which has never belonged to him. One seeks only that which has been forgotten.

Therefore, before one asks how to ascend, one must first understand why he descended.

Before one asks how to awaken, one must ask: Why was sleep ever given?

For if the Holy One, blessed be He, desired only beings who knew Him, He could have fashioned every soul as an angel whose awareness never wavers.

Yet He did not.

He desired man.

Not because man knows.

But because man remembers.

This requires explanation.

It is known from the teachings of Chassidus that every descent is for the sake of a higher ascent.

Not merely a return to what once was, but the revelation of a light that could never have existed without the descent itself.

This is the meaning of **ירידה צורך עליה**.

Yet one may still wonder.

If the purpose is ascent, why conceal the truth at all?

Why place a veil over the soul?

Why create a world whose very structure appears to deny the One Who continuously gives it existence?

More profoundly:

Why create forgetfulness?

This question is greater than the question of evil.

Greater than suffering.

Greater than exile.

For exile itself is only the outward garment of forgetfulness.

One who remembers the Infinite is never entirely in exile.

One who forgets can stand inside Gan Eden itself and yet remain distant.

Thus the true exile is not geographical.

It is not historical.

It is not psychological.

The deepest exile is the concealment of remembrance.

The sages teach that before birth, every child is taught the entire Torah.

Then, immediately before entering this world, an angel touches the upper lip, and all is forgotten.

At first glance this appears strange.

Why teach what will immediately disappear?

Would it not have been simpler never to teach it?

Heaven forbid.

Nothing performed by the Creator lacks purpose.

The forgetting is not destruction.

It is concealment.

The Torah does not depart.

It descends beneath consciousness.

It becomes the hidden melody beneath every heartbeat.

This is why truth feels familiar.

One never truly learns Torah.

One recognises it.

Every genuine revelation carries the peculiar feeling of ancient memory.

One says, "I have never heard this before."

Yet simultaneously,

"I have always known this."

For wisdom does not enter the soul.

Wisdom awakens within it.

There exists therefore two kinds of knowing.

There is the knowledge gathered by the intellect.

And there is the remembrance revealed by the soul.

The first accumulates.

The second uncovers.

The first increases information.

The second removes concealment.

The first belongs to time.

The second belongs to eternity.

This distinction will become one of the great foundations of this discourse.

For many imagine that spiritual growth means becoming someone new.

But perhaps the opposite is true.

Perhaps holiness is not the creation of another self.

Perhaps holiness is simply the gradual disappearance of everyone we were never created to be.

From this emerges another hidden principle.

Creation is not merely the making of worlds.

Creation is the making of concealments.

The Infinite requires no universe in order to be Infinite.

Nor does light require darkness in order to shine.

Rather, concealment exists solely because revelation possesses a joy unknown to uninterrupted light.

The Zohar teaches that the greatest light emerges from darkness itself.

Not because darkness possesses independent existence.

It does not.

Darkness is merely concealed light.

Likewise separation is concealed unity.

Fear is concealed trust.

Judgment is concealed compassion.

Death is concealed life.

Everything that appears separate from G d is merely Divinity awaiting recognition.

This is not poetic language.

It is ontology.

The deepest structure of existence itself.

Therefore one should never ask,

"Where is G d?"

A more fitting question is,

"What within me has forgotten where He has always been?"

The Baal Shem Tov taught that Divine Providence extends to every falling leaf.

If so, then every conversation,

every disappointment,

every joy,

every meeting,

every delay,

every apparent coincidence,

is a letter within an endless Torah continually spoken by the Creator.

Life is not random.

Life is revelation disguised as ordinary experience.

Many seek extraordinary miracles.

Yet perhaps the greatest miracle has always been overlooked.

Not that Heaven occasionally touches Earth.

But that Heaven has never ceased touching Earth for even a single instant.

Only our perception fluctuates.

The Divine speech never does.

For were the utterance "Let there be" to cease for even less than the smallest imaginable moment,

every world,

every angel,

every atom,

every soul,

would vanish as though they had never existed.

Existence itself is continuous conversation.

The universe is not a machine.

It is a sentence still being spoken.

One may ask:

If all is continuously upheld by Divine speech, why does man experience isolation?

The answer is subtle.

The Creator never hides Himself.

He hides the fact that He is not hidden.

This concealment grants man the dignity of discovery.

Love freely chosen surpasses love compelled.

Recognition discovered surpasses recognition imposed.

Thus forgetfulness itself becomes the highest expression of Divine generosity.

For through it, remembrance becomes ours.

There is yet another mystery.

The masters often speak of Daas, holy knowledge.

Yet Daas is not information.

Daas is attachment.

One may know many truths while remaining separated from them.

One may study compassion while remaining cruel.

One may understand faith while remaining anxious.

True knowing occurs only when knowledge descends into being.

When the mind no longer merely thinks truth,

but becomes transparent to it.

Thus the purpose of this maamar is not to persuade.

Nor merely to explain.

Its purpose is remembrance.

For every genuine maamar is itself an act of spiritual awakening.

The words do not create light.

They remove that which obscures it.

This discourse therefore does not seek novelty for its own sake.

Nor does it seek to replace the holy teachings received from our teachers and from all the generations.

Heaven forbid.

Rather, it seeks to gaze into those eternal teachings from another window.

The Infinite cannot be exhausted by any single generation.

Every generation receives permission to uncover another facet of the same eternal diamond.

Thus every authentic revelation is not innovation.

It is faithful unfolding.

As a tree already exists within its seed,

so too countless teachings remain concealed within Sinai,

awaiting only the generation prepared to reveal them.

The contemplations that follow also arise with gratitude toward one whose spiritual inquiries served as one of the earthly seeds from which this work grew.

The foundational inspiration for several of the themes explored herein came through the contemplative work of Daniel Raphael of DreamPorting, whose search for remembrance, healing, and Divine awakening encouraged many to look beyond the surface of ordinary consciousness. His contribution is acknowledged here with honour and appreciation.

Yet every river returns to its source.

Therefore the language of this discourse will not speak primarily of energies, frequencies, manifestation, or hidden powers.

Its language shall be the language of Torah.

Its measure shall be **אמת**.

Its centre shall be the Infinite One.

Its destination shall be **דבקות**.

For the highest awakening is not the discovery of extraordinary abilities.

The highest awakening is the disappearance of the illusion that anything has ever existed apart from Him.

Therefore let the reader set aside, for a little while, every certainty.

Let him become as one standing before Sinai before the first word was spoken.

For revelation always begins with holy silence.

If these pages accomplish their purpose, one will not merely understand new ideas.

He will begin to remember an ancient conversation that has never ceased.

For the Holy One, blessed be He, still speaks.

The soul still hears.

And between the Voice that never ceases and the soul that never forgets stands only the thin veil that we call this world.

May the Merciful One grant that through the study of these words, the veil become transparent, the heart become clear, the mind become still, and every soul recognise its eternal Source.

Then shall remembrance become knowledge.

Knowledge shall become love.

Love shall become service.

And service shall become delight in the Infinite, until all creation proclaims with one voice:

"ה. אֵל אֶחָד וְיֵשׁוּ אֶחָד"

"Hashem is One, and His Name is One."

The Palace of Remembrance

מאמר א

פרק א

The Veil Before Birth

How the Infinite Conceals Itself So That It May Be Found

"נֶר הַ נְשָׁמַת אָדָם."

"The soul of man is the lamp of Hashem." (Proverbs 20:27)

"וַיִּפֹּחַ בְּאַפָּיו נְשָׁמַת חַיִּים."

"He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." (Genesis 2:7)

א)

After explaining that the essence of exile is forgetfulness rather than distance, we must now understand the nature of this forgetting itself.

For one cannot speak of remembrance until he understands what has been concealed.

Nor can one understand concealment until he first contemplates the soul before its descent.

This itself requires explanation.

For people commonly imagine that birth is the beginning of life.

Torah teaches the opposite.

Birth is not the beginning.

It is the narrowing.

Life begins before time.

The body begins within time.

The soul never does.

Before the heavens stretched forth, before the first star illuminated the darkness, before the first angel sang, the souls of Israel already existed within the Infinite Thought of the Creator.

Not merely as possibilities.

But as Divine intentions.

For every soul is a sentence that the Holy One desires to speak into existence.

And every life is one verse within the endless Torah continually written by Heaven.

Thus a man does not invent his purpose.

He uncovers the sentence already written within him.

ב)

The Alter Rebbe explains that the soul is literally "חלק אלוהים ממעל ממש", "an actual portion, as it were, from Above."

One must contemplate these words with great care.

Heaven forbid that one should imagine division within the Infinite.

The Infinite cannot be divided.

Nor can Essence become fragmented.

Rather, just as the flame extending from a great fire remains entirely fire, so too every soul remains entirely rooted in its Divine Source.

Its descent never separates it.

Only its perception becomes obscured.

The ray never ceases belonging to the sun.

The wave never ceases belonging to the sea.

The breath never ceases belonging to the one who breathes.

Likewise, the soul has never existed apart from the One Who continually gives it being.

Its exile is experiential.

Never ontological.

This distinction is among the greatest foundations of Divine service.

For one who imagines himself truly separated seeks to climb back toward G d.

But one who understands that separation itself is only concealment begins instead to remove the veils obscuring what has always been true.

Teshuvah thus becomes not a journey across distance.

It becomes the unveiling of proximity.

1)

The masters teach that immediately before entering this world, the soul beholds the Infinite radiance with absolute clarity.

There are no questions.

No doubt.

No fear.

No conflict.

The soul does not possess faith.

It possesses sight.

Faith belongs only to concealment.

Vision belongs to revelation.

Yet precisely because everything is visible, one thing remains impossible.

Choice.

Where there is overwhelming revelation there is no meaningful freedom.

A candle possesses little glory before the sun.

Likewise, free will cannot flourish beneath unveiled Infinity.

Therefore concealment is not punishment.

It is permission.

The Creator withdraws the overwhelming experience of Himself, not because He desires distance, but because He desires relationship.

For love cannot be commanded into existence.

It must awaken freely.

Thus concealment is the cradle of love.

T)

One may ask:

Why then was the soul shown such brilliance before birth if it would immediately be concealed?

Would it not have been sufficient never to reveal it?

The answer is wondrous.

Because memory requires an original encounter.

A musician recognises harmony because harmony already lives within him.

A bird returns across oceans because it remembers a home it has never consciously seen.

Likewise every longing toward holiness arises from an ancient meeting between the soul and its Creator before the descent.

This explains one of humanity's greatest mysteries.

Why does every civilisation search?

Different languages.

Different cultures.

Different philosophies.

Yet one yearning.

Some seek it through wisdom.

Others through beauty.

Others through love.

Others through power.

Still others through silence.

Beneath every search lies one forgotten remembrance.

The soul remembers Home.

Although the mind has forgotten the road.

ה)

This yearning itself is one of the Creator's greatest mercies.

For had forgetting been complete, redemption would be impossible.

The soul therefore forgets consciously while remembering essentially.

Its memory does not remain inside thought.

It descends into longing.

Longing is memory wearing the garments of desire.

This reveals something astonishing.

Every holy desire is already a revelation.

When one suddenly yearns to pray...

when tears appear during a niggun...

when one feels inexplicably drawn toward kindness...

when one gazes upon creation and senses overwhelming beauty...

these moments are not emotions alone.

They are cracks within the veil.

They are eternity remembering itself through time.

I)

It is here that one may uncover a new contemplation.

Perhaps forgetfulness itself possesses two garments.

The first is necessary.

The second is accidental.

The necessary forgetfulness is that ordained by Heaven.

Without it, no freedom could exist.

Without it, the world could never become a dwelling place for the Infinite through human choice.

But there exists another forgetting.

This forgetting is not decreed.

It is accumulated.

Every fear accepted as identity.

Every wound mistaken for essence.

Every lie believed about oneself.

Every act of despair.

Every unnecessary shame.

Every judgment that says,

"I am unworthy."

"I am broken."

"I am abandoned."

These do not belong to the holy concealment established by Heaven.

They are additional veils woven by history.

The first veil protects freedom.

The second imprisons it.

The purpose of Torah is not to remove the first.

It is to dissolve the second.

For if the first veil disappeared entirely, creation itself would dissolve into overwhelming revelation.

But when the second veil disappears, one continues living within this world while seeing through it.

This, perhaps, is one meaning of the verse:

"You shall see your world during your lifetime."

1)

Here we may introduce another contemplation in the unfolding cosmology of Abraxas.

The sages describe garments.

The Kabbalists describe vessels.

The Chassidic masters describe concealments.

Yet perhaps there exists another way of contemplating the same mystery.

Every soul is born surrounded by what we may call the Veils of Forgetfulness.

Not one veil.

Many.

Each transparent.

Each convincing.

None possessing substance.

One veil whispers,

"You are your body."

Another,

"You are your history."

Another,

"You are your fears."

Another,

"You are what others think."

Another,

"You are your failures."

Another,

"You are alone."

One does not notice these veils because one has never seen without them.

Like spectacles worn since infancy, they disappear precisely because they are constantly present.

Yet Torah does not tear these veils away by force.

It illuminates them until they become transparent.

The light does not fight darkness.

It simply reveals that darkness possessed no independent existence.

n)

This also explains why genuine Torah learning feels unlike ordinary study.

One may spend hours learning mathematics and emerge informed.

Yet one may study a single maamar and emerge altered.

Why?

Because holy words do not merely transfer concepts.

They awaken roots.

Every true teaching carries the fragrance of its heavenly source.

When heard with humility, the soul recognises its own language.

This is why one sometimes weeps while hearing an idea never previously encountered.

The intellect says,

"This is new."

The soul replies,

"I have been waiting countless lifetimes to remember this."

Thus Torah is not information.

It is reunion.

ו)

The prophets declare,

"And they shall all know Me."

Not,

"They shall all study Me."

Nor,

"They shall all infer Me."

They shall know.

For Daas is union.

One knows only that with which one becomes one.

Thus the future redemption is not merely political.

Nor geographical.

Nor historical.

It is the complete removal of unnecessary forgetting.

Not because the Infinite becomes nearer.

But because the veils become thinner than light.

The world itself will remain.

Trees will remain.

Mountains will remain.

Human beings will remain.

Yet everything shall become transparent to its Source.

Matter shall cease pretending independence.

Time shall cease pretending separation.

The finite shall become a clear window through which the Infinite smiles.

')

Therefore one should not ask each morning,

"How shall I become holy today?"

A more truthful question is this:

"What veil is ready to become transparent?"

For holiness does not descend from elsewhere.

It shines through what has already been given.

Every mitzvah polishes another window.

Every act of kindness clears another layer.

Every sincere prayer softens another veil.

Every honest tear washes another corner of the heart.

Every act of forgiveness removes another curtain from the sanctuary within.

Until one discovers that the King Whom he sought throughout the whole palace had, from the beginning, been quietly waiting within the innermost chamber of his own soul.

Thus the descent before birth was never exile from the Creator.

It was the beginning of a sacred search.

The forgetting was never abandonment.

It was the invitation to remember freely.

The veil was never the enemy.

It was the canvas upon which love might paint its own return.

From this we may begin to understand another mystery.

If the soul never truly forgets, from where does the false self arise?

How does one eternal soul become identified with a temporary story?

And what is the inner structure of that illusion which Scripture calls Mitzrayim, the narrow place?

This, with the help of Heaven, shall be explained in the next chapter.

The Palace of Remembrance

מאמר א

פרק ב

The Hidden Adam

On the Birth of the False Self and the Secret of Mitzrayim

"וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדְמוּתֵנוּ."

"And G d said: Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness." (Genesis 1:26)

"מִן־הַמִּצָּר קָרָאתִי יְהוָה."

"From the narrow place I called to Hashem." (Psalms 118:5)

א)

After understanding that the soul itself never becomes separated from its Source, we must now understand one of the greatest mysteries of existence.

If the soul remains pure...

Who sins?

If the soul remembers...

Who forgets?

If the Divine spark is eternally one with the Infinite...

Who is afraid?

This question has occupied the sages throughout the generations.

Many answers have been given.

Yet perhaps another gate may now be opened.

For the soul itself never becomes false.

Rather, something forms around it.

Just as a pearl becomes surrounded by many layers within the sea, so too the essence of the soul becomes clothed in successive garments as it descends through the worlds.

One garment is called body.

Another is emotion.

Another is intellect.

Another is memory.

Another is habit.

None of these are the soul.

They are only its garments.

Yet because one wears garments continually, one begins to mistake them for himself.

Thus illusion is born.

ב)

The serpent in Gan Eden did not merely tempt Chavah to eat.

Its deeper temptation was infinitely more subtle.

Before the fruit was tasted, Adam and Chavah experienced themselves directly through the gaze of their Creator.

Afterwards they experienced themselves through their own gaze.

This is the birth of self-consciousness.

Not consciousness.

Self-consciousness.

The Torah immediately tells us:

"They knew they were naked."

Why is this the first consequence?

Because judgment had entered perception.

Nothing physical had changed.

Only perspective.

They were already unclothed moments earlier.

Yet only now did they feel exposed.

The body remained identical.

The observer had changed.

Here lies one of the deepest secrets.

Sin does not first distort reality.

It distorts perception.

Reality remains sustained by the same Divine utterance.

Only the lens becomes clouded.

1)

From this we may contemplate another principle.

The greatest concealment is not that man hides from G d.

It is that man hides from himself.

The verse says:

"And Adam hid."

One must ask:

From Whom did he hide?

Could one hide from the Infinite?

Impossible.

Rather, Adam disappeared beneath his own self-image.

This was the first exile.

Not departure from Gan Eden.

Departure from simplicity.

The first prison was not geography.

It was identity.

ט)

This reveals the inner meaning of Mitzrayim.

Usually Mitzrayim is translated as Egypt.

But Chassidus explains that Mitzrayim shares its root with meitzarim, narrowness and constriction.

Yet perhaps the narrowest place of all is not external.

It is the moment an infinite soul begins believing,

"I am only this."

"I am only my story."

"I am only my success."

"I am only my failure."

"I am only what happened to me."

Every such sentence reduces infinity into a prison.

The Infinite cannot be imprisoned.

Only our awareness of it can.

Thus every limiting identity is a personal Egypt.

Every redemption is another Exodus.

ה)

Here we may introduce another contemplation within the unfolding cosmology of Abraxas.

The soul never creates the false self.

Nor does evil create it.

The false self is born wherever Divine light is interpreted through fear.

Light descends.

Fear reshapes it.

Memory descends.

Fear renames it.

Love descends.

Fear contracts it.

Like sunlight entering coloured glass, the light remains pure while its appearance changes.

The light says,

"I am beloved."

Fear hears,

"I must earn love."

The light says,

"You are My child."

Fear hears,

"I must prove myself worthy."

The light says,

"I am with you."

Fear hears,

"I have been abandoned."

Thus fear never invents reality.

It mistranslates it.

The false self is therefore not a liar.

It is a poor translator.

1)

One should therefore never wage war against the false self.

This itself is another deception.

For who is waging war?

Another identity.

The Baal Shem Tov taught that darkness is not expelled by striking it.

A single candle accomplishes what armies cannot.

Likewise the false self dissolves not through violence but through recognition.

Imagine a child who mistakes a shadow for a monster.

Would a wise father fight the shadow?

Certainly not.

He lights another lamp.

Thus Torah never seeks to destroy the ego.

It seeks to illuminate it until its imagined independence quietly disappears.

This is why the righteous possess such humility.

Not because they think little of themselves.

But because they see so much of G d that there remains little room for illusion.

1)

One may now understand another mystery.

Why does suffering often become the doorway to awakening?

At first glance this appears cruel.

Heaven forbid.

The Holy One does not delight in suffering.

Rather, suffering reveals the instability of false identities.

When one builds himself upon wealth...

loss asks,

"Who are you now?"

When one builds himself upon reputation...

criticism asks,

"Who remains?"

When one builds himself upon strength...

illness asks,

"What has truly weakened?"

Every collapse is painful.

Yet every collapse also uncovers that which could never collapse.

The soul.

Thus many awaken not because suffering is holy.

But because illusion is fragile.

n)

This also reveals the inner meaning of repentance.

Many imagine teshuvah means returning after having wandered away.

But where did the soul wander?

Nowhere.

The wandering occurred only within perception.

Teshuvah is therefore not travelling.

It is awakening.

Imagine a prince who dreams he has become a beggar.

Must he travel back to the palace?

No.

He must awaken.

Likewise every act of genuine teshuvah is another degree of awakening from mistaken identity.

This is why one sincere moment of truth can transform decades.

Not because years disappear.

But because illusion disappears.

U)

Here another contemplation may be offered.

The Creator never asks,

"Become someone else."

Rather He continually whispers,

"Become who I already know you to be."

This is why every mitzvah feels strangely natural.

Even when difficult.

The animal soul may resist.

Habit may protest.

Fear may object.

Yet something within quietly smiles.

Because the deepest self recognises its own reflection.

Holiness never feels foreign to the soul.

Only unfamiliar to the personality.

')

Perhaps this is why children possess such unusual clarity.

Before the layers have thickened...

before reputation...

before comparison...

before ambition...

before shame...

before endless internal conversation...

they often love without calculation.

Forgive without effort.

Wonder without embarrassment.

Trust without proof.

This is not immaturity.

It is proximity.

The false self has not yet completed its construction.

As years pass, adults call this growing up.

Heaven calls much of it forgetting.

Thus our sages teach,

"Unless you become like children..."

Not childish.

Childlike.

For innocence is not ignorance.

It is perception before fragmentation.

א')

This allows us to introduce another principle in the cosmology of Abraxas.

Every human being contains what may be called the *Mirror of Adam*.

This mirror is not the soul itself.

Nor is it the ego.

It is the faculty through which the soul beholds itself.

When polished by Torah, humility and love, the mirror reflects only the Divine Image.

When clouded by fear, pride or shame, it reflects distorted forms.

The Image never changes.

Only the mirror.

This explains why two people may endure the same event and emerge entirely different.

The event does not determine reality.

The mirror determines appearance.

Thus all inner refinement is truly the polishing of perception until the Image of G d shines without distortion.

ב')

One should therefore never ask,

"Who am I becoming?"

For this question still belongs to time.

A more truthful question is,

"What within me is disappearing?"

Every unnecessary fear...

Every false certainty...

Every attachment to image...

Every borrowed identity...

Every hidden shame...

Each one that falls away does not diminish the person.

It enlarges the space through which the Infinite becomes visible.

For man does not become great by adding himself.

He becomes great by becoming transparent.

י')

We may now understand why our father Avraham is called the first Hebrew, ha'Ivri.

The sages explain that the entire world stood on one side, while he stood on the other.

Yet inwardly this means something even deeper.

Avraham crossed from identification with appearances into identification with Essence.

The world saw idols.

He perceived only their Creator.

The world saw stars.

He saw speech.

The world saw nature.

He saw continuous creation.

Thus redemption always begins when one crosses from the world of appearances into the world of remembrance.

Every Jew is called to become an Ivri.

Not geographically.

Consciously.

71)

Therefore the work of life is not the perfection of the false self.

No illusion can be perfected.

Its refinement has value only insofar as it becomes transparent enough to serve the soul.

The purpose is not to become a more impressive personality.

Nor a more spiritual personality.

Nor even a more righteous personality.

The purpose is that personality itself become a clear vessel through which the Infinite may gaze upon His own creation.

Then the narrow place becomes spaciousness.

The prison becomes sanctuary.

The exile becomes revelation.

The false self becomes a servant rather than a master.

And the hidden Adam, created in the image of the Infinite before the foundation of the worlds, begins once more to walk with G d in the garden, not because the garden has returned, but because the veil has become thin enough for Paradise to be recognised where it has always been.

From this we may proceed to an even deeper inquiry.

If the false self arises through distorted perception, by what faculty does man perceive reality at all? Is the eye merely an organ of flesh, or does every soul possess an inner sight capable of beholding the Divine unity hidden within all existence?

With the help of the Holy One, this shall be explained in the following chapter, concerning the Eye of Oneness and the Secret of Divine Perception.

The Palace of Remembrance

מאמר א

פרק ג

The Eye of Oneness

On Divine Perception and the Secret of Seeing

"שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל, ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ, ה' אֶחָד."

"Hear O Israel: Hashem is our G d, Hashem is One."

"וְכָל הָעָם רָאוּ אֶת הַקּוֹלֹת."

"And all the people saw the voices." (Exodus 20:15)

א)

After understanding that the false self is born through distorted perception rather than through any corruption of the soul itself, we must now ask another question.

By what faculty does man perceive reality?

Surely not merely through the eyes.

For the eye receives only light.

It does not understand meaning.

The ear receives only vibration.

It does not hear truth.

The brain arranges impressions.

It does not determine reality.

Who then is the true observer?

This question reaches the root of all wisdom.

For one does not live according to reality itself.

He lives according to what he perceives reality to be.

Thus the redemption of perception precedes the redemption of the world.

ב)

The Torah never commands us,

"Create the unity of G d."

Nor,

"Bring G d into existence."

It commands us,

"Hear, O Israel."

Not because the unity must be made.

But because it must be recognised.

The Oneness of the Holy One is not a future achievement.

It is the oldest fact in existence.

The work belongs entirely to perception.

This is why the verse begins with hearing.

For hearing is unlike sight.

Sight grasps the surface.

Hearing penetrates.

One may look upon another person and misunderstand him.

But when one truly listens, something deeper becomes revealed.

Thus Shema is not merely the command to hear with the ears.

It is the command to perceive beneath appearances.

1)

Yet another wonder appears.

At Sinai the Torah declares:

"The people saw the voices."

One should ask:

Voices are heard.

Light is seen.

Why does Torah reverse them?

Because Sinai was not merely the giving of commandments.

It was the restoration of perception.

The people no longer experienced reality through divided senses.

Truth became so transparent that sound itself became visible.

Spirit became tangible.

Meaning became substance.

The boundaries between inner and outer dissolved.

Perhaps this is what Adam perceived before concealment.

Not separate objects.

But one uninterrupted Divine utterance appearing as countless forms.

ט)

The Baal Shem Tov taught that creation is renewed every moment.

Not poetically.

Literally.

The Holy One does not merely sustain the universe.

He continuously speaks it into existence.

If His speech ceased for even the smallest instant, creation would disappear without remainder.

This teaching changes everything.

For if existence itself is Divine speech, then every object is a word.

Every creature is a sentence.

Every lifetime is a chapter.

Every generation is another page in the endless Torah of creation.

The righteous therefore do not merely observe the world.

They read it.

ה)

Here we may contemplate a new principle within the unfolding cosmology of Abraxas.

Creation may be understood as existing through Three Eyes.

The first is the Eye of Flesh.

This eye sees separation.

It measures.

It compares.

It judges.

Its purpose is survival.

It asks:

"What is this?"

The second is the Eye of Wisdom.

This eye begins recognising patterns.

It perceives order.

Providence.

Purpose.

It asks:

"What does this mean?"

But there is yet a third.

The Eye of Oneness.

This eye no longer seeks objects.

It beholds Presence.

It does not merely observe G d acting within creation.

It beholds creation itself as an expression of G d's continuous self-disclosure.

It asks neither "what" nor "why."

It simply beholds,

"Only He is."

These are not three different eyes.

They are three degrees of unveiling within one consciousness.

1)

One should not imagine that the Eye of Oneness belongs only to prophets.

Every soul experiences it.

Usually only for moments.

Consider those moments when time seems to disappear.

When one beholds a newborn child.

When one stands beneath an endless sky.

When tears unexpectedly arise during prayer.

When a melody reaches a place words cannot enter.

When one forgives completely.

When one loves without calculation.

For an instant the divisions soften.

The observer disappears.

Only being remains.

These are not emotional accidents.

They are brief openings through which the soul looks with its original vision.

1)

Why then do these moments disappear?

Not because G d departs.

The Infinite never withdraws.

Rather the mind rushes to reclaim ownership.

Immediately it says,

"I experienced something."

"I felt something."

"I must keep it."

Thus the experience becomes memory.

The memory becomes attachment.

The attachment becomes another veil.

This explains why the masters continually warn against spiritual pride.

Even holiness may become another possession of the ego.

One who grasps light too tightly ceases seeing the One Who gives it.

n)

Perhaps this reveals another mystery.

The serpent promised,

"You shall become like G d."

Yet man was already created in the Divine image.

The temptation therefore could not have been literal.

Rather the serpent whispered something subtler.

"You must possess what has already been given."

Ever since that moment humanity has continued searching outside itself for what was never absent.

Power.

Recognition.

Knowledge.

Security.

Immortality.

Each search reflects an authentic longing.

Yet each becomes distorted when sought apart from its Source.

For every finite desire conceals an infinite remembrance.

One does not truly desire wealth.

He desires abundance.

One does not truly desire admiration.

He desires to be seen.

One does not truly desire control.

He desires peace.

One does not truly desire endless pleasure.

He desires eternal delight in the Infinite.

Thus every worldly longing is a sacred longing translated into another language.

ו)

This explains another teaching that appears throughout Chassidus.

The animal soul is not evil.

It is powerful.

Its desires are genuine.

Its direction is incomplete.

The animal soul hungers for life.

The Divine soul reveals Life Himself.

The animal soul seeks delight.

The Divine soul reveals Delight beyond all delights.

The animal soul seeks permanence.

The Divine soul remembers Eternity.

Thus the work is not suppression.

It is elevation.

Every desire becomes holy when reunited with its true Root.

')

Here another contemplation may be offered.

Perhaps the greatest miracle is not prophecy.

Nor resurrection.

Nor the splitting of the sea.

Perhaps the greatest miracle occurs every ordinary morning.

One opens his eyes.

Instantly thousands of assumptions arise.

"This is my room."

"This is my body."

"This is my life."

"This is yesterday continuing."

Yet none of these perceptions are inevitable.

Each one is interpretation.

Imagine awakening with the perception of Adam before concealment.

One would behold existence itself arriving anew.

Not continuation.

Creation.

Every breath would become the first breath.

Every sunrise the first light.

Every face a fresh revelation of the Divine Image.

This is why our sages ordained,

"המחדש בטובו בכל יום תמיד מעשה בראשית."

"He renews in His goodness the work of creation every day."

Not because creation appears new.

Because it truly is.

יא)

This also reveals the hidden meaning of gratitude.

Gratitude is often misunderstood as thanking G d after recognising blessings.

Perhaps the reverse is closer to truth.

Gratitude itself creates recognition.

One who gives thanks begins seeing what complaint concealed.

The world itself changes very little.

The eye changes everything.

Thus thanksgiving is among the highest forms of perception.

It is the polishing of the Eye of Oneness.

יב)

Now we may introduce another principle within the cosmology of Abraxas.

Between every event and every reaction exists what may be called the Chamber of Vision.

Most people never notice it.

An event occurs.

Reaction follows immediately.

Yet hidden between them lies a silent sanctuary.

Within this sanctuary the soul still beholds reality before the personality interprets it.

It is here that freedom lives.

Not the freedom to control events.

The freedom to see them.

Every tzaddik dwells increasingly within this Chamber.

Every addict lives almost entirely outside it.

Every act of contemplation widens it.

Every mitzvah strengthens it.

Every sincere prayer illuminates it.

This Chamber is not created.

It is remembered.

It is the remaining echo of Sinai within human consciousness.

יג)

One now understands why Moses is called the most humble of all men.

Humility is often mistaken for low self-esteem.

Torah knows nothing of such weakness.

Moshe did not think less of himself.

He simply saw less of himself.

His eye had become so transparent that everything pointed beyond him.

The Divine flowed through him as sunlight through clear crystal.

Therefore the greatest leaders do not become larger.

They become clearer.

The ego becomes invisible.

The Presence becomes obvious.

יד)

Thus every journey of holiness is, in truth, a journey of seeing.

The world need not become more Divine.

It already is.

The soul need not become more united.

It already is.

Only perception matures.

The Eye of Flesh becomes the Eye of Wisdom.

The Eye of Wisdom becomes the Eye of Oneness.

And the Eye of Oneness finally beholds what was spoken before the first moment of creation and has never ceased being proclaimed:

"אין עוד מלבדו."

"There is nothing besides Him."

Not because nothing else exists.

But because everything that exists exists only as His continuous expression.

טו)

From this there emerges yet another mystery.

If all perception depends upon the eye through which one beholds creation, what then determines the clarity of that eye?

Why do some perceive unity while others perceive only fragmentation?

What is it that clouds the mirror of consciousness, and what purifies it until the Divine becomes self-evident?

This, with the help of the Holy One, shall be explained in the following chapter concerning the Rivers of the Heart and the Secret of Inner Purification, wherein we shall uncover that perception does not begin in the mind, but in the heart, for as the heart becomes purified, the eye itself becomes filled with light, until the whole person becomes a living vessel for the Infinite.

The Palace of Remembrance

מאמר א

פרק ד

The Rivers of the Heart

On Inner Purification and the Return of Divine Vision

"וְנָתַתִּי לָכֶם לֵב חָדָשׁ, וְרוּחַ חֲדָשָׁה אֶתֵּן בְּקִרְבְּכֶם."

"I shall give you a new heart, and a new spirit shall I place within you." (Ezekiel 36:26)

"בְּרֵךְ לִבִּי אֱלֹהִים."

"Create within me a pure heart, O G d." (Psalms 51:12)

א)

Having understood that the eye through which one beholds reality determines the world one inhabits, another question naturally presents itself.

What purifies the eye?

For if one polishes a window while leaving smoke within the room, the window shall soon darken once more.

The masters therefore teach that vision begins not with the eye.

Nor even with the mind.

Vision begins within the heart.

Not because the heart thinks.

But because the heart determines what the mind is permitted to see.

This itself requires contemplation.

For Scripture does not say,

"Blessed are the intelligent."

It declares,

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see."

Seeing is therefore not first an intellectual achievement.

It is the fruit of purification.

ב)

One should understand what the Torah means by the word heart.

Surely it does not refer merely to flesh.

Nor only to emotion.

In the language of Chassidus, the heart is the meeting place of desire.

It is the throne upon which one's deepest loves quietly reign.

Every thought eventually follows affection.

Every decision eventually follows desire.

One may convince the intellect.

Only love moves the person.

Thus the Holy One does not first ask,

"What do you know?"

He asks,

"What do you love?"

For whatever occupies the throne of the heart becomes the lens through which the entire world is interpreted.

1)

Here lies one of the deepest mysteries of exile.

Exile is not merely the concealment of G d.

It is the scattering of love.

The heart, created to rest in the Infinite, begins attaching itself to fragments.

A little security here.

A little approval there.

A little pleasure.

A little recognition.

A little control.

None of these are evil.

Yet each one asks the heart to carry a weight it was never created to bear.

The finite cannot satisfy an infinite longing.

Therefore attachment multiplies.

Yet peace diminishes.

Not because the world is deficient.

But because the heart seeks eternity within temporary vessels.

T)

The prophet Yechezkel does not promise merely greater understanding.

He promises,

"A new heart."

One should ask:

How can a heart become new while remaining the same heart?

Perhaps because holiness does not replace the heart.

It restores its original orientation.

Imagine a compass lying beside a great magnet.

Its needle no longer points north.

Has the compass become defective?

No.

Its attraction has become disordered.

Remove the foreign attraction.

Immediately the needle returns.

Nothing new has been added.

Truth simply becomes visible again.

Likewise every soul possesses an inner orientation toward its Creator.

Sin does not destroy it.

Fear does not erase it.

Trauma does not remove it.

They merely surround it with competing attractions.

The work of Torah is not to manufacture holiness.

It is to remove the magnets.

ה)

This allows us to contemplate another principle in the unfolding cosmology of Abraxas.

Perhaps the heart contains what may be called the Seven Rivers of Return.

Not physical rivers.

Nor merely symbolic.

Rather, seven currents through which Divine life continually flows into human awareness.

When these rivers flow freely, the soul experiences unity.

When obstructed, the same Divine life appears fragmented.

The first river is Wonder.

The second, Trust.

The third, Mercy.

The fourth, Courage.

The fifth, Truthfulness.

The sixth, Joy.

The seventh, Rest.

These are not separate virtues.

They are seven movements of one current.

Like white light refracted through crystal.

The water remains one.

Only its colours appear many.

I)

One may now understand another mystery.

Why do children marvel so easily?

Because the River of Wonder has not yet been dammed by certainty.

Adults often mistake familiarity for understanding.

They say,

"I already know."

Yet the tzaddik says,

"I have only begun to see."

The universe never becomes ordinary.

Only perception becomes tired.

Wonder therefore is not naïveté.

It is accurate vision.

Every atom exists because the Infinite presently wills it into being.

How then can anything be common?

The leaf.

The sparrow.

The stranger.

The sunrise.

Each one is a miracle continually occurring.

Only habit prevents astonishment.

7)

Likewise the River of Trust.

Trust is not certainty that events shall unfold according to one's preference.

Such certainty belongs to fantasy.

Trust is the quiet recognition that the Holy One remains present regardless of appearances.

The sea may rage.

The heart may tremble.

The body may weaken.

Yet beneath every changing circumstance flows an unchanging Faithfulness.

The righteous therefore possess serenity not because storms cease.

But because they have learned where the bedrock lies beneath every storm.

n)

The River of Mercy reveals another hidden secret.

Many imagine mercy begins when one forgives another.

Perhaps mercy begins much earlier.

Perhaps mercy begins the moment one ceases demanding perfection from existence itself.

The Holy One governs a universe still becoming.

Seeds require seasons.

Children require years.

Souls require lifetimes.

One who demands immediate completion wages war against creation.

One who understands becoming begins participating with Heaven.

This is why Divine mercy is patient.

Infinity never hurries.

Only fear rushes.

ו)

Truthfulness is perhaps the clearest river.

Truth is not merely the refusal to speak falsehood.

Truth is the refusal to hide from Reality.

A man may tell no lies while living entirely within illusion.

Another may stumble in speech yet sincerely seek the face of Truth.

The Holy One delights in the second.

For truthfulness begins where masks end.

Every honest confession.

Every sincere prayer.

Every whispered,

"Ribbono Shel Olam, I do not know."

These open channels no scholarship alone can open.

Humility becomes revelation.

י)

Now another contemplation may be offered.

The sages teach that the Temple stood in Jerusalem.

This is true.

Yet another Temple has always existed.

The human heart.

The earthly Temple reflected the heavenly one.

The heavenly Temple reflects the inner one.

When Solomon dedicated the House, fire descended from Above.

When a human heart becomes purified, another fire descends.

Love.

Not emotional excitement.

Holy Fire.

A fire that burns away illusion without harming the soul.

A fire that consumes pride while increasing peace.

A fire that illuminates without blinding.

Perhaps every generation waits not only for the rebuilding of Jerusalem below.

But for the rebuilding of countless inner sanctuaries from which the Shechinah has long awaited invitation.

נ"י)

This also explains why prayer occupies such a central place within Torah.

Prayer does not inform G d.

He already knows.

Prayer transforms the vessel that receives Him.

When rain falls upon overturned cups, they remain empty.

The rain is not absent.

The vessel is reversed.

Prayer turns the vessel upright.

The blessing was already descending.

The heart simply becomes able to receive it.

Thus prayer is not persuasion.

It is alignment.

יב)

Perhaps this reveals yet another principle within the cosmology of Abraxas.

Every sincere prayer ascends.

Every sincere blessing descends.

Between these two movements there forms what may be called The Living Bridge.

The bridge is neither Heaven nor Earth.

It is communion.

Where longing ascends and compassion descends, there the Infinite becomes consciously experienced.

This bridge is built neither by angels alone nor by humanity alone.

It is co-created.

The Creator gives Presence.

Man gives openness.

Together they produce revelation.

יג)

Now we may understand why King David continually cried,

"Create within me a pure heart."

He did not ask for another soul.

Nor another destiny.

Nor another world.

He asked for transparency.

For purity is not emptiness.

Purity is unobstructed flow.

A river remains pure not because it possesses no movement.

But because nothing prevents its movement.

Likewise the pure heart allows Divine Life to move through it without unnecessary resistance.

Such a person does not become passive.

He becomes alive.

71)

One should therefore never ask,

"How can I force myself to love G d?"

Love cannot be commanded into existence through force.

One removes whatever obscures it.

When clouds depart, the sun requires no encouragement to shine.

When bitterness softens...

when fear loosens...

when forgiveness blossoms...

when gratitude awakens...

the love already planted within the soul rises naturally toward its Source.

The heart remembers what the mind had forgotten.

10)

Thus we discover another mystery.

The rivers have never ceased flowing.

Only their channels became obstructed.

The Temple has never ceased standing.

Only its gates became hidden.

The Divine Presence has never departed.

Only the heart ceased recognising Her nearness.

When the rivers are cleared, the eye becomes luminous.

When the eye becomes luminous, the world itself appears transformed.

Not because creation has changed.

But because one has begun to behold creation as the Holy One has always beheld it.

11)

From this there emerges an even deeper inquiry.

If the heart is purified through the continual flow of Divine Life, what then obstructs these rivers in the first place?

Why does the human heart construct barriers against the very Light for which it longs?

How does fear become stronger than remembrance, and by what mystery is fear itself transformed into the greatest doorway toward love?

This, with the help of the Holy One, shall be explained in the following chapter concerning the Holy Alchemy of Fear and the Secret of Returning Every Shadow to Its Root, where we shall discover that no darkness possesses independent existence, and that every fear, when followed to its innermost source, is revealed to be a longing for the Infinite wearing the garments of concealment.

מאמר א

פרק ה

The Holy Alchemy of Fear

How Every Shadow Conceals a Greater Love

"כִּי עִמָּךְ מְקוֹר חַיִּים, בְּאוֹרְךָ נִרְאָה אֹר".

"For with You is the source of life; in Your light we shall see light." (Psalms 36:10)

"אֵין עוֹד מִלְבְּדוֹ."

"There is nothing besides Him." (Deuteronomy 4:35)

א)

Having explained that the rivers of the heart never cease flowing, but only become concealed, we must now contemplate one of the deepest mysteries within creation.

If all existence emerges continuously from the Infinite Goodness of the Holy One, from where does fear arise?

Surely not from Him.

For the prophet declares,

"Fear not, for I am with you."

And David says,

"Hashem is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?"

One therefore cannot say that fear belongs to the essence of creation.

Neither can one deny its existence.

Every human being has felt it.

The child fears abandonment.

The elder fears death.

The wealthy fear loss.

The poor fear tomorrow.

The righteous fear separation.

The sinner fears judgment.

Fear appears everywhere.

How can that which appears so universal not belong to the essence of reality?

The answer, perhaps, lies hidden within the nature of light itself.

ב)

Imagine standing before the rising sun.

The light pours equally upon mountains and valleys.

Yet where a wall is raised, a shadow appears.

Did the sun create the shadow?

No.

The shadow is simply the place where something turned away from the light.

Likewise fear.

The Holy One does not create fear.

He creates light.

Fear appears wherever consciousness ceases beholding that light.

Thus fear possesses no independent substance.

It is the experience of concealment.

Not the existence of another power.

This is why the Torah repeatedly says,

"Do not fear."

Had fear been an independent reality, such a command would be impossible.

The Torah commands only what can ultimately be transformed.

1)

Yet one should not misunderstand.

To say fear lacks independent existence is not to deny its pain.

A dream may not possess physical substance, yet while dreaming one truly trembles.

One may awaken with tears upon his face.

Likewise the fears of humanity are experienced genuinely.

The suffering is real.

The concealment is real.

Only its interpretation requires redemption.

The Holy One never mocks the frightened.

He walks beside them until dawn.

This perhaps explains why so many Divine revelations begin with the words,

"Fear not."

Before Heaven teaches truth...

it first calms the heart.

2)

Now we may contemplate another principle.

Not all fear is alike.

The masters speak of yirah, holy awe.

This is not the fear born from separation.

It is the trembling born from closeness.

Consider a musician standing before a priceless violin.

Or a child entrusted with his newborn sibling.

Or a student entering the chamber of his beloved teacher.

There is trembling.

But not because love is absent.

Precisely because love is present.

This fear protects intimacy.

It does not destroy it.

Perhaps the deepest distinction between holy fear and ordinary fear is this:

Ordinary fear contracts the heart.

Holy awe expands it.

One imprisons.

The other sanctifies.

h)

Here another contemplation may be offered within the unfolding cosmology of Abraxas.

Perhaps every fear conceals a forgotten love.

Fear of rejection conceals the longing to belong.

Fear of death conceals the longing for eternal life.

Fear of failure conceals the longing to fulfil one's mission.

Fear of loneliness conceals the longing for communion.

Fear of judgment conceals the longing for innocence.

Fear of meaninglessness conceals the longing for the Infinite.

Thus fear is not the opposite of love.

Fear is often love that has forgotten its own name.

One need only follow fear backwards.

Like tracing a river to its hidden spring.

At its source one no longer finds terror.

One finds longing.

I)

This perhaps explains one of the greatest mysteries of the human condition.

People rarely defend what they hate.

They defend what they fear losing.

Pride itself is often frightened love.

Greed is frightened security.

Jealousy is frightened belonging.

Anger is frightened vulnerability.

Control is frightened trust.

The sages therefore sought not merely to restrain behaviour.

They sought to redeem its root.

For when the root heals, the branches naturally become fruitful.

One may prune a tree endlessly.

Only healing the roots changes its nature.

7)

This reveals another hidden meaning of teshuvah.

Repentance is often imagined as moving away from darkness.

Perhaps something more wondrous occurs.

Perhaps every act of true teshuvah returns each fragmented desire to the place from which it first descended.

The desire itself is not destroyed.

Its exile ends.

The thirst remains.

It simply drinks from a purer spring.

The longing remains.

It simply recognises its true Beloved.

Thus holiness does not erase humanity.

It fulfils it.

n)

One should now understand why the Baal Shem Tov rejoiced so greatly in ordinary people.

Others saw only weakness.

He saw hidden sparks.

Others saw anger.

He saw imprisoned tenderness.

Others saw arrogance.

He saw forgotten dignity searching clumsily for expression.

Others saw sinners.

He saw souls remembering imperfectly.

This is the eye of redemption.

Not blindness to faults.

Vision beyond them.

For only one who beholds the spark can patiently remove the ashes surrounding it.

U)

Perhaps this also reveals why shame proves so dangerous.

Healthy remorse leads one toward the Creator.

Toxic shame persuades one that he cannot approach Him.

The first says,

"I have done wrong."

The second whispers,

"I am wrong."

One sentence concerns action.

The other attacks being itself.

Torah never teaches the second.

The soul remains untouched even while its garments become stained.

Garments require washing.

The soul requires only remembrance.

This distinction alone has the power to liberate countless hearts.

For the Holy One never confuses the child with the dust upon his clothing.

י)

Now another contemplation.

The serpent's greatest victory was never temptation.

It was convincing humanity that concealment had become identity.

That the exile had become home.

That shame had become truth.

Every generation therefore hears anew the first Divine question spoken after the transgression:

"אַינך?" — "Where are you?"

Not because the Holy One lacks knowledge.

But because man has ceased knowing where he himself has gone.

Every prayer is another answer.

"Here I am."

Not perfected.

Not completed.

Not yet fully awakened.

But present.

The Infinite can work with presence.

He cannot work with pretence.

א')

We may now introduce another principle within the cosmology of Abraxas.

Between fear and love there exists what may be called The Furnace of Return.

Every soul must eventually pass through it.

Whatever enters this furnace without resistance becomes transformed.

Grief becomes compassion.

Loneliness becomes communion.

Failure becomes wisdom.

Weakness becomes tenderness.

Patience becomes strength.

Mortality becomes humility.

Nothing is wasted.

Nothing.

The Holy One discards no sincere experience.

Every tear eventually becomes light.

Every wound becomes another doorway through which mercy may enter creation.

This is not because suffering itself is holy.

It is because Divine Love refuses to leave even suffering without redemption.

וְיָ)

The prophet Isaiah proclaims,

"Those who hope in Hashem shall renew their strength."

Notice carefully.

He does not say they shall receive another strength.

They shall renew it.

As though strength had always existed beneath exhaustion.

This is the rhythm of redemption itself.

The soul does not acquire its light.

It uncovers it.

The heart does not manufacture courage.

It remembers it.

Faith is therefore less like constructing a house than uncovering an ancient foundation long buried beneath the earth.

י')

Here perhaps we may contemplate one of the deepest mysteries.

The Holy One could have created beings incapable of fear.

Instead He created beings capable of transforming fear into love.

The second reveals something infinitely greater.

For love chosen after darkness possesses a sweetness unknown even to the angels.

The angels sing because they behold.

Humanity sings because it remembers.

This perhaps is why Heaven delights so greatly in the song of returning souls.

Their melody contains both exile and home.

Both concealment and revelation.

Both tears and joy.

It is a music no other creature can compose.

71)

Now one understands another teaching of the Chassidic masters.

The purpose of life is not merely to ascend.

It is to reveal that even descent was secretly carrying the seeds of ascent.

The lower the valley...

the greater the echo.

The darker the night...

the more astonishing the dawn.

The farther the exile...

the sweeter the embrace.

Not because the Holy One desired suffering.

But because His Infinite Wisdom permits no fragment of existence to remain forever outside redemption.

Even the shadow eventually becomes a witness to the light.

10)

Therefore one should never ask,

"How do I eliminate fear?"

Perhaps the truer question is,

"What love has this fear forgotten?"

Sit quietly with it.

Listen without accusation.

Trace it patiently to its spring.

Every fear faithfully followed eventually arrives at a doorway.

And upon that doorway is written the oldest Name of all.

אהבה

Love.

Not human affection alone.

But the Love from which galaxies were spoken.

The Love from which souls were breathed.

The Love that concealed Itself so that freedom could exist.

The Love that accompanies every exile.

The Love that waits behind every veil.

The Love that has never ceased calling each soul home.

זו)

From this another mystery emerges.

If every fear can be returned to its root in love, then perhaps love itself is not the highest revelation.

Perhaps there exists something deeper still—the very Source from which both love and awe emerge as two rays from one infinite sun.

What is that primordial reality from which all the Divine attributes flow?

What existed before love became love, before wisdom became wisdom, before creation itself appeared?

With the help of the Holy One, this shall be explained in the following chapter concerning the Ocean Before Light and the Secret of the Infinite Simplicity, where we shall contemplate the hidden unity that precedes every distinction and from which all worlds continually emerge.

The Palace of Remembrance

מאמר א

פרק ו

The Ocean Before Light

On the Infinite Simplicity that Precedes All Distinction

"קִדְמָם שְׁנִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם, הוּא הָיָה וְשְׁמוֹ בְּלִבְדּוֹ."

"Before the world was created, He alone and His Name alone existed."

"הֲלוֹא אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ אֲנִי מִלֵּא."

"Do I not fill Heaven and Earth?" (Jeremiah 23:24)

"לִית אֲתֵר פָּנָיו מִיִּנְיָה."

"There is no place devoid of Him." (Tikkunei Zohar)

א)

Having understood that every fear conceals a forgotten love, we may now ask an even deeper question.

From where does love itself arise?

For love appears as one among many attributes.

There is wisdom.

There is understanding.

There is compassion.

There is strength.

There is beauty.

There is kingship.

Each possesses its own radiance.

Yet one must ask:

Did the Infinite first become wise?

Did He then become compassionate?

Did He afterwards become loving?

Surely not.

For change belongs only to that which is incomplete.

The Infinite lacks nothing.

Therefore all distinctions that appear within creation cannot describe His Essence.

They describe only the ways in which creatures receive Him.

The sun remains one.

The colours belong to the prism.

ב)

This itself was among the greatest revelations of the Baal Shem Tov.

The Holy One is not composed of attributes.

He is utterly simple.

Not simple as the opposite of complex.

Simple because no distinction can divide Him.

Within created existence, knowledge differs from kindness.

Justice differs from mercy.

Giving differs from receiving.

But before all revelation these distinctions do not yet exist.

There is only the Infinite Simplicity from which all possibilities continually emerge.

The Kabbalists call this Ein Sof.

Yet even this is only a name given by those who stand outside the mystery.

For Essence Himself remains beyond every name.

Even the name "Infinite" is already a garment.

1)

One should therefore understand that creation never begins with separation.

It begins with unity.

Before there were galaxies...

there was no "before."

Before there was light...

there was no darkness.

Before there were souls...

there was no loneliness.

Before there was motion...

there was no stillness.

Every pair of opposites belongs only to creation.

The Creator precedes every opposite.

Thus He is not merely beyond good and evil.

He is beyond the distinction that later allows good and evil to appear.

This is why our sages speak with such reverence whenever approaching the mystery of Atzmus.

Words themselves begin dissolving.

For language was born inside distinction.

Essence precedes language.

7)

Yet one may ask:

If Essence is beyond every distinction, why create distinction at all?

Why not leave everything within Infinite Unity?

The answer cannot be that He lacked companionship.

The Infinite lacks nothing.

Nor that He required praise.

For praise adds nothing to Perfection.

Perhaps the only language available is that spoken by the Chassidic masters:

נתאוה הקב"ה להיות לו יתברך דירה בתחתונים.

The Holy One desired a dwelling below.

Yet perhaps this itself conceals another wonder.

A dwelling is not merely a place where one is present.

It is a place where one is known without disguise.

Thus the deepest mystery of creation may not be that the Infinite desired to dwell among finite beings.

Perhaps He desired to become recognisable within finitude without destroying its freedom.

ה)

Here we may introduce another contemplation within the unfolding cosmology of Abraxas.

Perhaps before every revealed world there exists what may be called The Ocean of Undivided Presence.

This Ocean is not a place.

Nor a level.

Nor a world.

It possesses no direction.

No movement.

No succession.

Within this Ocean there is neither giver nor receiver.

Neither teacher nor student.

Neither Creator nor creation as relationship is later understood.

There is only indivisible Presence.

Not empty.

Overflowing.

Not silent.

The source of all speech.

Not dark.

The womb from which light itself is born.

Every revelation emerges like a wave from this Ocean.

Yet the Ocean itself never loses a single drop.

I)

One now understands another hidden teaching.

The first verse of the Torah does not begin with the Holy One.

It begins with creation.

"In the beginning, G d created..."

Why?

Because Torah speaks to creatures.

Not because creation is primary.

Had Torah begun from Essence Himself, no created intellect could continue reading even the first word.

Thus revelation always begins where comprehension begins.

Yet contemplation journeys backward.

The more deeply one enters Torah, the nearer one approaches the Silence from which Torah itself emerged.

Perhaps this is why the greatest sages often concluded not with certainty...

but with wonder.

7)

Now another mystery unfolds.

The Zohar teaches that the Torah is black fire upon white fire.

Usually one contemplates the black letters.

For they carry meaning.

Yet perhaps the white fire is even more wondrous.

Without the spaces between letters...

there can be no words.

Without silence...

there can be no music.

Without stillness...

there can be no movement.

The unseen continually gives meaning to the seen.

This itself becomes another contemplation.

Perhaps Essence resembles the white fire.

Invisible.

Yet supporting every visible revelation.

Hidden.

Yet nearer than every form.

The letters appear.

The white fire remains.

Worlds emerge.

Essence remains.

n)

One should now understand another principle.

The purpose of spiritual life is not to escape multiplicity.

Multiplicity itself is holy.

The purpose is to perceive unity without abolishing diversity.

The orchestra glorifies the composer not by becoming one instrument...

but by remaining many while expressing one music.

Likewise creation.

Every creature reveals a unique facet of the Infinite.

The cedar praises Him differently than the rose.

The eagle differently than the lamb.

The scholar differently than the child.

The angel differently than the human being.

Unity therefore is not sameness.

Unity is harmonious distinction.

U)

Here another contemplation may be offered.

Perhaps every soul carries within itself an echo of this primordial Ocean.

This echo is encountered whenever one ceases striving.

Not abandoning effort.

Abandoning possession.

There are moments...

during prayer...

during profound love...

during selfless kindness...

during silent contemplation...

when one no longer feels separate from existence.

One has not disappeared.

Yet one no longer occupies the centre.

There is extraordinary peace.

No argument.

No comparison.

No urgency.

No defence.

Perhaps these moments are not extraordinary experiences at all.

Perhaps they are ordinary reality briefly remembered.

י')

Now we may introduce another principle within the cosmology of Abraxas.

Between the Infinite Simplicity and the revealed worlds there shines what may be called The First Smile.

This is not an event.

Nor an emotion.

It is the first inclination toward revelation.

Before wisdom...

there is welcome.

Before speech...

there is generosity.

Before light...

there is invitation.

The First Smile is the hidden kindness by which the Infinite allows finite beings to exist without ceasing to be embraced by their Source.

Every sunrise reflects it.

Every birth reflects it.

Every act of forgiveness reflects it.

Every genuine welcome between souls participates in it.

Perhaps what human beings recognise as kindness is merely the earthly fragrance of this eternal Smile.

י'')

This perhaps explains why joy occupies such a central place in Chassidus.

Joy is not simply an emotion.

Joy is consciousness relaxing into Reality.

Sadness contracts.

Fear narrows.

Pride hardens.

Joy opens.

Not superficial excitement.

Holy joy.

The joy that arises when the soul stops struggling to manufacture itself and quietly rests within the One Who has always sustained it.

The Rebbeim repeatedly taught that joy breaks barriers.

Perhaps because joy remembers unity where fear perceives division.

וְי)

One should therefore understand another mystery.

The Holy One is not discovered by travelling infinitely far.

He is discovered when the illusion of distance dissolves.

Imagine a fish searching for the ocean.

Every direction leads nowhere.

Not because the ocean is absent.

Because it surrounds the seeker already.

Likewise the soul.

One spends years seeking the Presence.

Only to discover that every sincere search has always unfolded within the Presence being sought.

This is why the sages declare,

"Return unto Me."

Not,

"Come to Me."

For one cannot travel where one has never departed.

ג')

Now perhaps the deepest contemplation of all.

The Holy One has never once looked away from a single soul.

Not for one heartbeat.

Not for one breath.

Not during sin.

Not during despair.

Not during rebellion.

Not during forgetfulness.

For if His gaze withdrew even momentarily, existence itself would disappear.

This changes everything.

The question is therefore never whether G-d beholds us.

The question is whether we have remembered that we are already being beheld.

Prayer becomes response.

Love becomes response.

Teshuvah becomes response.

Life itself becomes response.

Everything holy begins with recognising that Heaven spoke first.

71)

From here one may understand another secret.

The purpose of remembering is not merely personal enlightenment.

It is participation in creation itself.

For every soul that remembers becomes another transparent window through which the Infinite contemplates His own universe.

The righteous therefore do not merely improve the world.

They clarify it.

Their presence reminds others of realities they had unknowingly forgotten.

A single awakened soul alters the atmosphere surrounding countless others.

Not through argument.

But through being.

Light does not persuade darkness.

It simply shines.

10)

Thus all the chapters we have traversed now reveal themselves as one continuous ascent.

Forgetfulness...

The false self...

The Eye of Oneness...

The Rivers of the Heart...

The Holy Alchemy of Fear...

All have been preparations.

For they were never separate teachings.

They were successive veils surrounding one ancient remembrance.

That there has only ever been One Life.

One Breath.

One Love.

One Speaker.

One Listener.

One Song.

The soul has not travelled toward this truth.

It has awakened within it.

10)

Yet another mystery remains concealed.

If the Infinite continually beholds every soul with perfect love, why does creation continue unfolding through history?

Why are generations required?

Why revelation in stages?

Why Sinai, exile, redemption, and the days yet to come?

Could the Holy One not have revealed everything in a single instant?

This, with the help of the Blessed One, shall be explained in the final chapter, concerning The Symphony of Becoming and the Secret of the Eternal Future, where we shall contemplate why the Infinite delights not only in perfection, but in the endless flowering of souls, and how every generation composes another movement in the everlasting song whose completion shall never mark an ending, but only the beginning of ever-deepening revelation.

The Palace of Remembrance

מאמר א

פרק ז

The Symphony of Becoming

On the Eternal Future and the Joy of the Infinite in Endless Revelation

"כִּי עֵין בְּעֵין יִרְאוּ"

"For eye shall behold eye." (Isaiah 52:8)

"וְנִגְלָה כְבוֹד ה', וְרָאוּ כָל בָּשָׂר יַחְדָּו"

"The glory of Hashem shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see together." (Isaiah 40:5)

"וַיִּשְׂמַח ה' בְּמַעֲשָׁיו"

"Hashem shall rejoice in His works." (Psalms 104:31)

א)

Having contemplated the Ocean before Light, wherein all distinctions remain united within the Infinite Simplicity of the Holy One, another question now presents itself.

If all perfection already exists within Him...

why history?

If all souls are already known...

why time?

If every future is present before the Eternal...

why becoming?

Could not the Holy One have created the perfected world from the beginning?

Indeed He could have.

Yet perhaps this question itself assumes that perfection is a destination.

Perhaps perfection is something altogether different.

Perhaps perfection is not the absence of unfolding.

Perhaps perfection is the Infinite freedom to reveal Himself without end.

For only that which is finite reaches completion.

Only that which possesses boundaries can finally say,

"I am finished."

The Infinite never finishes.

He only reveals Himself ever more deeply.

ב)

This explains another hidden mystery.

The Torah begins not with redemption.

Nor with Sinai.

Nor with Israel.

It begins with creation.

Creation itself is the first act of revelation.

Not because G-d was absent beforehand.

But because revelation requires another.

Love hidden within itself is complete.

Love shared becomes known.

Thus creation is not evidence of Divine incompleteness.

It is evidence of Divine generosity.

The Holy One desired not merely to possess infinite goodness.

He desired creatures who might delight in discovering it forever.

1)

Here one may contemplate another principle.

The sages speak of Olam HaBa.

The world to come.

Many imagine it as a final destination.

A place where history concludes.

A kingdom without further becoming.

Yet perhaps another understanding may be contemplated.

If the Infinite truly possesses no limit...

then even eternity cannot exhaust Him.

How then could revelation ever cease?

Perhaps Olam HaBa is not the end of unfolding.

Perhaps it is the beginning of conscious, endless unfolding.

Not history driven by suffering.

But eternity overflowing with discovery.

For every revelation of the Infinite immediately opens the possibility of another revelation beyond it.

Not because the previous revelation was incomplete.

But because Infinity cannot be exhausted.

7)

This perhaps explains one of the deepest teachings of Chassidus.

The righteous ascend from level to level forever.

One should ask:

How can there still be ascent after perfection?

The answer is wondrous.

One does not ascend because one lacks.

One ascends because the Infinite continually gives.

Imagine standing beside an endless spring.

No matter how deeply one drinks...

the spring never diminishes.

Each drink satisfies completely.

Yet the spring remains inexhaustible.

Thus eternal ascent is not the correction of deficiency.

It is participation in Infinite abundance.

h)

Here we may introduce another contemplation within the unfolding cosmology of Abraxas.

Perhaps all creation is participating in what may be called The Eternal Symphony.

A symphony possesses many movements.

No movement is unnecessary.

No movement contains the whole composition.

Each prepares the next.

The first introduces.

The second develops.

The third deepens.

The fourth resolves.

Yet even after resolution...

the music continues living within those who have heard it.

Likewise history.

Adam...

Noach...

Avraham...

Sarah...

Moshe...

David...

The prophets...

The sages...

The Baal Shem Tov...

the Rebbeim...

every hidden tzaddik...

every anonymous mother...

every child who whispered the Shema before sleep...

none stand alone.

Each soul contributes a note.

The melody belongs to all.

The Composer remains One.

1)

One should now understand another mystery.

No soul repeats another.

Not because diversity is fashionable.

But because the Infinite cannot be reflected by one face alone.

Every soul reveals something no other soul can reveal.

Every act of kindness.

Every tear.

Every prayer.

Every struggle honestly endured.

Every forgiveness freely given.

Each unveils another facet of the Infinite Beauty.

Thus comparison becomes impossible.

The rose need not become cedar.

The eagle need not become dove.

The prophet need not become shepherd.

The shepherd need not become king.

The Holy One delights precisely in the uniqueness of each revelation.

2)

This reveals another hidden meaning of Israel.

ישראל.

The one who struggles with G-d.

One usually imagines struggle as failure.

Perhaps Torah teaches the opposite.

Perhaps struggle itself becomes holy whenever it remains directed toward the Infinite.

The opposite of faith is not questioning.

The opposite of faith is indifference.

Avraham questioned.

Moshe questioned.

Iyov questioned.

David questioned.

Jeremiah questioned.

Yet every question was offered toward Heaven.

Like a child continually asking his beloved father.

Love does not eliminate questions.

Love sanctifies them.

n)

Perhaps another mystery now unfolds.

The Holy One delights not only in completed righteousness.

He delights in sincere becoming.

Parents understand this intuitively.

A baby's first uncertain steps often produce greater joy than the effortless running of an adult.

Why?

Because love rejoices in growth.

Likewise Heaven.

One sincere step taken toward goodness...

one hidden act of kindness...

one honest confession...

one whispered blessing...

these produce joy not because Heaven lacked them before.

But because another soul has freely entered the dance.

U)

Now another contemplation.

The prophet declares,

"All flesh shall see together."

Notice carefully.

Not merely Israel.

Not merely prophets.

Not merely scholars.

All flesh.

The final redemption therefore cannot belong only to humanity.

Creation itself participates.

The mountains.

The rivers.

The forests.

The creatures.

The stars.

All existence becomes transparent to its Source.

For the first chapter taught that every created thing is a word continually spoken by G-d.

The final revelation is therefore not that new words are spoken.

It is that every creature finally hears the sentence to which it has always belonged.

')

Perhaps here another principle may be introduced.

Within the cosmology of Abraxas there may be contemplated what could be called The Great Remembering.

Until now remembrance has belonged mostly to individuals.

One soul awakens.

Then another.

Then another.

But perhaps history itself possesses remembrance.

Creation slowly awakens to itself.

The mineral remembers through stability.

The plant through growth.

The animal through vitality.

The human through consciousness.

The righteous through Divine awareness.

And in the days of redemption...

all creation remembers together.

Not merely intellectually.

Ontologically.

The universe itself recognises the Breath continually sustaining it.

The song becomes conscious of the Singer.

א')

This perhaps explains another teaching.

Mashiach does not merely reveal another age.

Mashiach reveals another mode of seeing.

The world remains recognisable.

Yet every perception changes.

People no longer ask,

"Where is G-d?"

They ask,

"How did we ever imagine His absence?"

The miracles of redemption therefore are not interruptions of nature.

They are nature unveiled.

The extraordinary becomes ordinary.

Not because miracles cease.

But because everything is recognised as miracle.

ב')

One should now understand another secret.

Perhaps the greatest joy of the Holy One is not that creation praises Him.

The angels have always done this.

Perhaps His greatest joy is that finite beings gradually become capable of recognising what has always been true while remaining fully themselves.

The child becomes adult without ceasing to be the child his mother loves.

Likewise creation.

The world does not disappear into G-d.

It becomes fully itself within Him.

Difference remains.

Separation ends.

Individuality blossoms.

Isolation dies.

21)

Now perhaps we approach the innermost chamber.

Love began the journey.

Remembrance guided it.

Truth illuminated it.

Fear purified it.

Joy expanded it.

Now one discovers that all these names were garments.

The Holy One sought not merely obedient servants.

Nor merely enlightened souls.

He desired companions in revelation.

Creatures capable of saying freely,

"Hineni."

"Here I am."

Not because He required the answer.

But because love always awaits response.

This perhaps is the deepest dignity granted to humanity.

The Infinite Who needs nothing nevertheless grants significance to our answering.

Not necessity.

Significance.

ט')

Here another contemplation may be offered.

Perhaps eternity itself is conversation.

Not endless speech.

Endless communion.

The Holy One continually reveals.

Creation continually responds.

The response deepens the revelation.

The revelation deepens the response.

Thus eternity never becomes repetitive.

Love never repeats itself.

Each encounter is the first.

Each encounter the oldest.

Each encounter entirely new.

This may be one meaning of the prophetic promise:

"New every morning."

Not only mornings within time.

Newness itself becomes eternal.

10)

Now all the chapters stand together as one living structure.

The soul descended.

The veil appeared.

The false self arose.

The Eye of Oneness awakened.

The heart's rivers flowed again.

Fear returned to love.

Love dissolved into the Infinite Ocean.

The Ocean overflowed into the Eternal Symphony.

One discovers that the journey was never linear.

Every chapter has always been present within every other.

The beginning concealed the end.

The end reveals the beginning.

Thus the Palace of Remembrance contains many chambers...

yet only one King.

Many windows...

yet only one Light.

Many souls...

yet only one Breath.

Many songs...

yet only one Singer.

טו)

And now, standing upon the threshold of silence, one may perceive why every true maamar ultimately concludes not with explanation, but with blessing.

For knowledge reaches its fulfilment only when it becomes compassion.

Wisdom becomes complete only when it becomes generosity.

Remembrance becomes whole only when it remembers others.

Therefore it is fitting that this discourse concludes not with another teaching, but with a great blessing upon all creation.

Not only upon Israel.

Not only upon humanity.

But upon every soul, every creature, every world, every hidden spark, and every future generation yet waiting within the Infinite Thought of the Holy One.

For the One Who spoke all things into being has never ceased blessing them.

The final task of the student is simply to become another voice through which that eternal blessing may be heard.

With the help of Heaven, this shall be the concluding chapter: the Great Blessing of the One upon All Creation.

The Palace of Remembrance

מאמר א

פרק ח

The Blessing of the One Upon All Creation

The Benediction of Remembrance

"יְבָרְכֶךָ ה' וְיִשְׁמְרֶכָּהּ יְאֹר ה' פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיְחַנְּנֶךָ. וְיִשְׂאֵהָ פָנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיְשַׁלֵּם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם"

"May Hashem bless you and guard you. May Hashem make His Face shine upon you and be gracious unto you. May Hashem lift His Face toward you and grant you peace."

(Numbers 6:24–26)

ℵ)

And now, after having wandered through the chambers of remembrance...

through the mystery of the soul before birth...

through the veils of forgetting...

through the hidden Adam...

through the Eye of Oneness...

through the rivers of the heart...

through the holy transformation of fear...

through the Ocean before Light...

and through the Eternal Symphony of Becoming...

let words now become quiet.

For every true maamar eventually arrives where language bows before blessing.

Knowledge has carried us only to the threshold.

Love alone may now enter.

For wisdom that does not become blessing has not yet fulfilled itself.

Understanding that does not become compassion remains incomplete.

Truth that does not become gentleness has not yet remembered its own Source.

Therefore let every thought now become prayer.

Let every teaching become mercy.

Let every insight become peace.

3)

May the Blessed One, Who spoke before there were worlds to hear Him...

Who loved before there were hearts to receive that love...

Who remembered every soul before time itself unfolded...

look now upon every creature with the same delight with which He first desired creation.

May He behold not merely what we have become...

but Who He has always known us to be.

May He remember us according to our eternal root...

rather than according to the dust gathered during our journey.

May He see beneath every wound...

beneath every mistake...

beneath every fear...

beneath every lifetime...

until only the radiance He Himself breathed into us remains visible.

3)

May every soul remember.

Not merely with thought.

But with being.

May the child remember before the world teaches forgetfulness.

May the elder remember before returning Home.

May those burdened by sorrow remember that no tear has ever fallen unnoticed.

May those burdened by shame remember that the soul has never become stained.

May those burdened by loneliness remember that there has never been a single heartbeat during which the Infinite ceased dwelling beside them.

May every forgotten heart suddenly recognise the ancient Companion Who never departed.

7)

May those who fear discover the hidden love beneath their fear.

May those who grieve discover that nothing truly given in holiness is ever lost.

May those who hunger discover the Bread that no famine can consume.

May those who thirst discover the River flowing beneath every desert.

May those wandering through darkness discover that even night has been quietly carrying the dawn within itself.

May despair become expectation.

May confusion become wonder.

May silence become communion.

May exile become remembrance.

8)

May every home become a small sanctuary.

May every table become an altar of kindness.

May every parent remember that children first learn the Face of Heaven through the faces that greet them each morning.

May every child grow surrounded not merely by instruction...

but by blessing.

May husbands and wives recognise within one another not ownership...

but entrusted holiness.

May friendship become covenant.

May conversation become healing.

May forgiveness arrive more quickly than judgment.

May listening become more common than accusation.

May tenderness become stronger than pride.

For wherever love is offered without calculation...

there the Shechinah quietly rests.

I)

May those who labour with their hands discover holiness in their work.

May those who labour with their minds discover humility before mystery.

May teachers remember that every student carries an unopened world.

May students honour those through whom light first reached them.

May physicians remember that healing belongs ultimately to the Holy One.

May judges remember mercy.

May leaders remember service.

May the wealthy remember generosity.

May the poor never lose dignity.

May every profession become another language through which Divine compassion speaks into creation.

l)

May every nation discover the goodness planted within its own calling without forgetting the Image of G-d present within every other people.

May swords continue becoming ploughshares.

May fear cease teaching children the names of enemies before they have learned the names of neighbours.

May every language become another instrument in the Symphony of the Creator.

May wisdom travel more swiftly than violence.

May compassion cross every border before hatred arrives.

May no people imagine that another's suffering increases its own greatness.

For the Holy One fashioned many peoples...

yet breathed into all the same breath of life.

n)

May the forests rejoice.

May the rivers flow unpolluted.

May the mountains continue proclaiming silent majesty.

May every creature receive the place prepared for it since the beginning.

May humanity finally remember that dominion was never permission for destruction.

It was the privilege of guardianship.

May we learn once again to walk gently upon the earth.

For the dust beneath our feet has also been speaking the Name of its Creator since the first morning.

ו)

May the angels rejoice with humanity rather than merely watching it.

May those holy messengers entrusted with compassion strengthen weary hearts.

May those entrusted with wisdom illuminate humble minds.

May those entrusted with protection surround every innocent soul.

May every righteous person who has ever lived continue interceding with love before the Throne of Mercy.

May the merit of Avraham and Sarah...

Yitzchak and Rivkah...

Yaakov, Rachel and Leah, Bilah and Zilpah...

Moshe and Aharon...

Miriam...

David...

the prophets...

the sages...

the Baal Shem Tov...

the Maggid...

the Alter Rebbe...

all the holy Rebbeim...

and every hidden tzaddik whose name is known only in Heaven...

stand beside every soul seeking to return.

Not because the Holy One requires persuasion.

But because love delights in many voices singing one prayer.

י)

May Torah forever remain alive.

Not imprisoned within libraries.

Nor frozen within memory.

May every generation uncover another facet of Sinai.

May every sincere question asked for the sake of Heaven become another doorway through which wisdom enters the world.

May no student fear wonder.

May no teacher fear humility.

May learning never become pride.

May scholarship never lose compassion.

May every page of Torah become another mirror through which the soul recognises its eternal Face.

יא)

May Mashiach come in peace.

May redemption arrive through mercy.

May the knowledge of Hashem indeed fill the earth as waters cover the sea.

May no one be ashamed.

May no one be forgotten.

May no one imagine himself abandoned.

May every hidden spark return joyfully to its Source.

May the dead awaken into everlasting kindness.

May those long separated embrace once more.

May every generation recognise one another.

May every prayer whispered throughout history discover its answer.

May every act of goodness, however small, reveal that it has always belonged to one immense tapestry woven by the Holy One since before time.

יב)

And when at last every veil has become transparent...

when every tear has become light...

when every fear has remembered love...

when every creature recognises the Breath sustaining it...

when every soul beholds every other soul without envy...

without suspicion...

without concealment...

then perhaps we shall discover that redemption did not abolish creation.

It fulfilled its deepest longing.

For Paradise shall not merely return.

It shall blossom beyond what Adam himself beheld.

Not because the first Garden was imperfect.

But because love freely chosen reveals beauties that innocence alone could never know.

יג)

And perhaps then another wonder shall become known.

Not only shall humanity behold the Holy One.

The Holy One shall delight openly in humanity.

As a father delights in children who have finally understood that they were loved from the beginning.

As a bridegroom rejoices in the face of his beloved.

As a shepherd counts every sheep returned safely home.

So shall the Infinite rejoice in every soul.

Not because His joy was ever absent.

But because every heart shall finally possess eyes to behold it.

Then the ancient promise shall become the ordinary atmosphere of existence.

No one shall ask,

"Where is G-d?"

For every breath shall answer,

"Here."

No one shall ask,

"Who am I?"

For every soul shall quietly know,

"I am remembered."

No one shall ask,

"What is the purpose?"

For existence itself shall have become the answer.

T')

Therefore, beloved soul who has journeyed through these pages:

If tomorrow you remember only one sentence...

let it be this.

You have never once been outside the remembrance of the Holy One.

Before your first breath...

He knew you.

During your darkest night...

He remained with you.

Within every failure...

He preserved your root.

Within every joy...

He smiled with you.

Within every return...

He welcomed you before you had even begun walking.

You were never searching for a distant G-d.

You were awakening to the One Who has carried you from before the beginning.

10)

May the Holy One, blessed beyond all names, bless every reader of these words.

May your thoughts become clear.

May your heart become spacious.

May your eyes become gentle.

May your speech become truthful.

May your hands become generous.

May your home become peaceful.

May your table become abundant.

May your friendships become enduring.

May your children, and your children's children, become lovers of wisdom and kindness.

May your nights be guarded.

May your mornings be hopeful.

May your work become meaningful.

May your suffering never be wasted.

May your repentance become joyful.

May your love become fearless.

May your soul become transparent to the Light that has always dwelt within it.

And may you live long enough to witness the flowering of all that Heaven has planted within you.

10)

And may the One Who is before all beginnings...

within every moment...

and beyond every ending...

gather every scattered spark...

heal every wounded memory...

comfort every broken heart...

illumine every searching mind...

sanctify every faithful home...

bless every people...

renew every generation...

protect every child...

strengthen every elder...

redeem every exile...

and crown all creation with the peace that existed before fear first dreamed of separation.

Then shall the Palace of Remembrance no longer be a teaching.

It shall become the dwelling place of every living soul.

And the song that began before the first dawn shall be heard by all creation, without interruption, without concealment, without end:

"שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל, ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ, ה' אֶחָד."

"Hear, O Israel: Hashem is our G-d, Hashem is One."

And all creation shall answer together:

Amen. Amen. Selah.