



“וקראתם דרור בארץ לכל יושביה”

## During the Jubilee Year the Fifty Gates of Binah Are Revealed Representing the Foundation of the Torah

In this week’s parsha, parshas Behar, we learn about the jubilee year—“shnas hayovel.” It represents the culmination of a fifty-year cycle, consisting of seven shemittah cycles. The fiftieth year is the “yovel” year. Here is what the Torah says regarding the “yovel” year (Vayikra 25, 10): “וקידשתם את שנת החמישים שנה” וקראתם דרור בארץ לכל יושביה, יוכל היא תהיה לכם, ושבתם איש אל אחוזתו—**you shall sanctify the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim freedom throughout the land for all its inhabitants; it is a yovel year for you, and you shall return, each man to his ancestral heritage, and you shall return, each man to his family.**

We learn that the “yovel” year possesses a special, inherent kedushah: **“You shall proclaim freedom throughout the land for all its inhabitants.”** Every Jew that was sold into servitude must be set free. Rashi explains that the Torah is speaking here about a person who sold himself into slavery for a period of six years; and the “yovel” year occurred before his six-year period expired. Similarly, this applies to a Jewish slave whose six-year term had concluded, chose not to go free, and had his ear bored. He, too, shall go free in the “yovel” year.

It is worthwhile examining Rashi’s comment in parshas Mishpatim (Shemos 21, 6), citing the Mechilta. He explains why HKB”H commanded that the ear of such a servant be bored: **And what is it about the ear that it should be bored of all the organs of the body? Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai said: This ear that heard at Har Sinai, “You shall not steal,” and he went and stole, let it be bored. And if he sold himself because of poverty: An ear that heard at Har Sinai, “For Bnei Yisrael are slaves unto Me,” and he went and acquired a master for himself, let it be bored.**

Thus, we learn that Jewish slaves that had their ears bored either stole or sold themselves into slavery. Thus, we must endeavor to understand the unique kedushah of the “yovel” year, as per the Torah’s designation: **“You shall sanctify the fiftieth year”**—it is endowed with the power to atone for and free all the slaves who were flawed or had sinned.

### Freedom Will Prevail throughout the Land in the Merit of the Zohar HaKadosh

In honor of the rapidly approaching day of Lag BaOmer—the day celebrating the departure of the holy Tanna, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, from this world, who revealed the Torah of mysticism to the world—it is fitting that we examine a statement from Eliyahu HaNavi, the herald of the future geulah. In the Tikunei Zohar, he extols before Rashb”y the virtues of the Torah of kabbalah that he revealed in his composition, the Zohar hakadosh. He says that in the merit of the Zohar, Yisrael will realize the fulfillment of the passuk: **“וקראתם דרור בארץ לכל יושביה”—you shall proclaim freedom throughout the land for all its inhabitants.** In the merit of the Zohar, HKB”H will redeem us and proclaim an everlasting freedom from all of the exiles. Here is a loose translation of the passage:

**“Rabbi, Rabbi, you are a tall and mighty tree representing the Torah. In your branches, which are holy limbs, how many birds rest there—the embodiments of holy neshamot with a heavenly likeness? As it states (Daniel 4, 18): “In his branches will dwell the birds of the heavens.” And how many people below will sustain themselves from this composition of yours, when it is revealed below in the last generation, at the end of days? Because of it, freedom will be proclaimed throughout the land.”**

Here Eliyahu HaNavi teaches us a tremendous chiddush! Without a doubt, simply understood, this passuk deals with the mitzvah of “yovel.” It applied when the Beis HaMikdash stood in its glory, and when every Jew dwelled in Eretz Yisrael—beneath his grapevine and beneath his fig tree. Yet, viewed from the eternal aspect of the Torah, this passuk contains a clear-cut allusion to the future geulah. It alludes to a time when we will be released from the shackles of galus and all of the misfortunes that we endure. At that time, the ultimate fulfillment of these words will be realized: **“You shall proclaim freedom throughout the land for all its inhabitants.”**

So, who better than Eliyahu HaNavi Zachur LaTov to make such a statement?! After all, it is his task to announce the future geulah to Yisrael, as it is written (Malachi 3, 23): **“הנה אנכי שולח”** לכם את אליהו הנביא לפני בוא יום ה' הגדול והנורא, והשיב לב אבות על בנים ולב **“Behold, I send you Eliyahu HaNavi before the coming of the great and awesome day of Hashem. And he will turn back the hearts of fathers with their sons and the hearts of sons with their fathers.** He himself came and told the divine Tanna, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, that in the merit of the revelation of the Zohar hakadosh in the last generation, at the end of days, we will merit the geulah: **“וקראתם דרור בארץ”**.

### Man's Head Was Created from Eretz Yisrael His Head Was Created from Bavel

We will begin our grand journey by presenting an incredible chiddush from the teachings of the great luminary, the brilliant Rabbi Yosef Engel, ztz"l, in his sefer Otzros Yosef. He explains a fundamental principle concerning the concept of galus and geulah. Why is it that when Yisrael fulfill the will of G-d, they are worthy and deserve to dwell in Eretz Yisrael? Yet, when they sin and do not fulfill the will of G-d, they are exiled from Eretz Yisrael to Bavel and other countries.

To explain the matter, he refers to the passuk related to the creation of man (Bereishis 2, 7): **“וייצר ה' אלקים את האדם”** -- Hashem G-d formed the man of soil from the earth, and blew into his nostrils the soul of life. Rashi comments: **“מכל”** -- G-d collected man's soil from all four corners of the earth; so that wherever he may die, the earth there will take him in for burial. Apropos the creation of man, the following Gemara (Sanhedrin 38b) supplies some specifics:

**“אדם הראשון גופו מבבל, וראשו מארץ ישראל, ואיבריו משאר ארצות”**— **Adam HaRishon's body came from Bavel, his head from Eretz Yisrael, and his limbs from other lands.** Rashi elaborates: **His body was taken from Bavel, because it is low-lying. Apparently, it was taken from there; therefore, it became an abyss. His head was taken from Eretz Yisrael, because it is high and more important than all of the other lands.**

We know from our sacred sefarim that the neshamah encases itself within the brain in the head. Rabeinu Bachayei expresses this fact as follows (Bereishis 2, 7): **“ויפח באפיו נשמת חיים - הנפש”** החכמה נמצאת באדם לבדו... ומשכנה במוח, והיא הנקראת נשמה, שנאמר **“ויפח באפיו נשמת חיים—the intellectual soul is found solely in mankind . . . its dwelling place is in the brain; it is called “neshamah,” as it states: “And He blew into his nostrils the neshamah of life.”** Similarly, the Even Ezra writes (Shemos 23, 25): **“כי הנשמה היא החכמה ומושבה במוח הראש”**—because the neshamah is the intellect and its location is in the head's brain. This is the basis for the formula recited prior to donning the tefillin: **“שהנשמה שבמוחי עם שאר חושי וכוחותי כולם יהיו משועבדים”**—we request that the neshamah, located in the brain, along with with all of our other senses and faculties be subservient to the Almighty's will.

In contrast, the heart, which supplies life to the entire body, is where the yetzer hara is located, as attested to by HKB”H (Bereishis 8, 21): **“כי יצר לב האדם רע מנעוריו”**—because the yetzer of man's heart is evil from his youth. Similarly, it is written (ibid. 6, 5): **“וירא ה' כי רבה רעת האדם בארץ, וכל יצר מחשבות לבו רק רע”**—Hashem saw that the wickedness of man was great upon the earth, and that every yetzer of the thoughts of his heart was but evil always. This is the basis for the Gemara's (Shabbat 105b) elucidation regarding the passuk (Tehillim 81, 10): **“לא יהיה בך אל זר ולא תשתחוה לאל נכר, איזהו אל זר שיש בגופו”**—**“There shall be no strange god within you, nor shall you bow before an alien god.”** What is the “strange god” that is in the body of a person? You should say that it is the yetzer hara. The Gemara specifically emphasizes that it is **“in the body of a person,”** implying that it is located centrally, i.e. in the heart and not in the head.

Accordingly, it should be obvious to us that the purpose and goal of a Jew's holy service is to place the neshamah, located in the brain, in charge of the yetzer, located in the heart. The author of the Tanya discusses this at length in Likutei Amarim (Chapter 12).

## The Head which Was Created from Eretz Yisrael Must Be Made King

Now, let us focus on the explanation of Rabbi Yosef Engel. As mentioned, Adam HaRishon's head was created from the earth of Eretz Yisrael; whereas his body and limbs came from Bavel and other countries. Therefore, when Yisrael subjugate their hearts to the will of the neshamah, located in the head, then the head becomes the king—ruling over all of the limbs. Therefore, in that instance, Yisrael deserve to be in Eretz Yisrael—the place of origin of man's head.

However, when Yisrael neglect to act in accordance with the Almighty's will, the situation changes. Instead of the heart and the bodily functions being subservient to the neshamah in one's head, the situation is reversed. The heart and the bodily functions take control and prevail upon the neshamah and the brain to fulfill their every will and desire. Seeing as man's body and limbs were created from Bavel and the other countries of the world, Yisrael could not remain in Eretz Yisrael, the place of origin of man's head and brain. Perforce, they were exiled to those other places, from which the heart and all of the bodily limbs originated.

Based on this idea, he explains magnificently what we have learned in the Gemara (Sotah 35a). We find that when Yehoshua bin Nun rebuked the meraglim, they responded: "דין ראש קטייעה" "ימלל". Rashi interprets this statement as follows: **"Shall this one with the severed head, who has no sons to take a portion in the land, shall he will speak before us?"** Let us interpret their response based on our current discussion. Since he had no sons to inherit a portion in Eretz Yisrael—the place from which man's head was created—he resembled someone whose head had been cut off. This was a summary of his elegant words with a little added clarification.

### "Whatever You give me I shall surely tithe to You"

It is with great pleasure that we can now enjoy together a brilliant idea from the incredible teachings of the great Rabbi Meir Yechiel of Ostrovtza, zy"l, in Ohr Torah (Vayeitzei 8). He explains the vow that Yaakov Avinu pledged on his way to Charan (Bereishis 28, 20): "וידר יעקב נדר לאמר, אם יהיה אלקים עמדי ושמרני בדרך הזה אשר אנכי הולך, ונתן לי לחם לאכול ובגד ללבוש, ושבתני בשלום אל בית אבי והיה ה' לי לאלקים, והאבן הזאת אשר שמתני מצבה יהיה ביתי." **Then Yaakov took a vow**

saying, "If G-d will be with me, and He will guard me on this way that I am going; and He will give me bread to eat and clothes to wear; and I will return in peace to my father's house, and Hashem will be a G-d to me. Then this stone which I have set as a pillar shall become a house of G-d, and whatever You will give me, I shall surely tithe to You."

He refers to the Gemara (Eiruvim 48a). There it states that man's average height is three cubits. Tosafot prove that this measurement applies to all human torsos excluding the head. In the sefer Mayim Yechezkel, he writes that he was taught that the head measures one third of a cubit. According to these numbers, the head measures one tenth the height of the entire body—head included. For, the three cubits of the torso contain nine one-third cubits.

Based on this information, the great Ostrovtzer Rebbe explains that so long as Yaakov Avinu was in his father's house, studying Torah in the Beis Midrash of Shem and Eiver, there was no need for him to raise his head above his body. Yet, on his journey to Lavan HaArami, where he would have to occupy himself with mundane matters pertaining to Olam HaZeh, it became necessary to elevate his head above all of the other bodily limbs.

This is the implication of the passuk (ibid. 11): "ויקח מאבני" "המקום וישם מראשותיו" **he took from the stones of the place and he put them around his head.** Rashi comments: **"He arranged them like a gutter-pipe around his head, because he feared the presence of wild animals."** Namely, he feared Lavan and his evil companions—lest they corrupt the thoughts in his head. Therefore, he saw fit to put in place a special form of protection safeguarding his head. This then is the significance of Yaakov's vow: **"If G-d will be with me, and He will guard me on this way that I am going . . . and whatever You will give me, I shall surely tithe to You."** In other words, he swore to sanctify the thoughts in his head—which represented one-tenth of his entire body—solely to Hashem. This is the gist of his magnificent explanation.

### The Head Prevails over the Body by Means of Torah Knowledge

So, now, let us proceed on this sacred pilgrimage in order to find a definitive answer to our inquiry. We have seen that HKB"Y Himself attests to the fact that: **"The yetzer of man's heart is evil from his youth."** That being the case, what is the best way

for a human being to ensure that the neshamah in his brain prevails over the yetzer hara in his heart? It seems obvious that this is only possible by means of Torah-study—comprehending and instilling the wisdom of the Torah in one’s brain. This, indeed, is the “segulah”—the unique, beneficial quality—of the Torah. It possesses the ability to subdue the yetzer hara in the heart, as we have learned in the Gemara (Kiddushin 30b): כַּךְ הִקְבֵּה אֱמֹר לְהֵם לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּנֵי בְרָאִתִּי יִצְרַהֲרַע וּבְרָאִתִּי לֹא תוֹרָה תִּבְלִין, וְאִם אַתֶּם “My children, I have created the yetzer hara, and I have created the Torah as its antidote; if you engage in Torah-study, you will not fall prey to it.”

Although it is quite obvious, let us prove the point from what the great Rabbi of Kozhiglov, ztz”l, presents in Eretz Tzvi (Shoftim), in the name of his teacher and Rav, the author of the Avnei Neizer, zy”a. In his own sacred way, he addresses our blessed sages’ statement in the Midrash (D.R. 4, 2): הַסֵּיף וְהַסֵּפֶר יֵרְדוּ כְרוּכִים מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם, אֱמֹר לְהֵם אִם תַּעֲשׂוּ מָה שֶׁכָּתוּב בְּסֵפֶר הַזֶּה, אַתֶּם נִיֻּצְוִלִים “the sword and the book came down from heaven bound together. He said to them: If you observe what is written in this book, you will be spared from this sword; if you do not, you will be killed by this sword.

He explains in his own inimitable way a vital concept concerning man’s actions and service in this world. A person must apply the wisdom located in the brain to determine which actions are good--and therefore are worth doing--and which are bad, and are therefore inappropriate. Having made this determination in his brain, he must send the message to his heart. The brain’s intelligence must illuminate the way and influence the desire of the heart--so that its will affects the bodily limbs that perform a person’s actions. In this manner, a person will perform only good deeds and refrain from the performance of negative, undesirable deeds.

Yet, the yetzer hara, who attempts to ensnare a person, is compared to a sword. The sword kills a person by separating and dividing the head from the heart and the rest of the body. Similarly, the yetzer hara kills a person spiritually by separating the brain from the heart, preventing the intelligent brain from enlightening the heart and its desires with its wisdom. Consequently, the remaining limbs of the body and the limbs that perform external actions are not guided to act in accordance with Torah precepts. The remedy, of course, is that

one should strive to attain Torah-knowledge with the intellect in one’s brain. With the light of Torah in his brain, he will be able to apply his intellect to control the will of the heart and, thus, the limbs of action.

This, then, is the meaning of the Midrash: **“The sword and the book came down from heaven bound together. He said to them: If you observe what is written in this book”**—by engaging in Torah-study to know what is permissible and what is not; **“you will be spared from this sword”**—because the yetzer will not be able to prevent the brain from influencing the desire in the heart; **“if you do not”**—however, if you fail to engage in Torah-study; **“you will be killed by this sword”**—the yetzer will intercede and create a disconnect between the intelligence in one’s brain and the desire in one’s heart; that is tantamount to spiritual death.

In this manner, the Avnei Neizer interprets the statement in the Gemara (A.Z. 17b): “אִי סֵיִפָּא לֹא סֵפֶרָא, וְאִי סֵפֶרָא לֹא סֵיִפָּא”-- the sword and the book are mutually exclusive. In other words, a person who lives by the sword and kills, does not occupy himself with the book—the study of Torah. Conversely, one who studies Torah does not live by the sword. This then is the allusion: “אִי סֵיִפָּא”—if it is apparent that a person’s heart is disconnected from his brain and that he is controlled by his yetzer, this is a clear-cut sign that: “לֹא סֵפֶרָא”—he did not engage in proper Torah study. “וְאִי סֵפֶרָא”—on the other hand, if a person engages in proper Torah study, he is guaranteed: “לֹא סֵיִפָּא”—that the yetzer will be powerless to act as a sword, disconnecting the brain in the head from the body; instead, the brain will continue to use its wisdom and intellect to illuminate and guide the heart. This is the gist of his explanation.

### The Four Senses: Sight Hearing Smell and Speech Correspond to the Four Elements of פָּרֹדֶס

I was struck by a wonderful idea. The Tikunei Zohar (Tikun 69 122a) explains that HKB”H created in the human head four major organs: **eyes, ears, nose and mouth**. These organs give rise to the four senses: **sight, hearing, smell and speech**. These four senses correspond to the four letters of the ineffable name. Sight corresponds to the letter “yud,” hearing to the first “hei,” smell to the letter “vav,” and speech to the final “hei.”

Based on our current discussion, we can suggest a reason as to why HKB”H created man with four of his five senses in his head. As explained, the head houses the brain, which is the

dwelling place of the neshamah. Its sacred task is to rule over the yetzer in the heart. This is impossible if a person does not strive to attain the wisdom of the Torah with the brain in his head. Now, the study of Torah has four unique aspects depicted by the acronym פִּרְדָּ"ס, which stands for: בִּשְׁט רִמְזוּ דְרִשׁ סִוֵּד ("pshat," "remez," "drush" and "sod"). Hence, HKB"H created the four senses contained in the human head to correspond to these four aspects of Torah exegesis.

Accordingly, the Agra D'Pirka (325) explains that this is why the Zohar hakadosh constantly employs the language "תא חזי"—"come and see"; whereas, the Gemara constantly employs the language "תא שמע"—"come and hear." For, in the mystical, concealed Torah—"Toras hanistar"—all of the secrets are visible and revealed; they are seen. In the Talmud Bavli, on the other hand, all the secrets of the Torah are concealed within that which has been revealed. Therefore, the learning is achieved through hearing rather than seeing; it is necessary to hear in order to appreciate the secrets concealed within.

Based on this notion, we can suggest that the four senses located in the head correspond to the four methods of Torah-study known as פִּרְדָּ"ס. Now, let's arrange them in order from bottom to top. The faculty of **speech** corresponds to the aspect of "pshat"; everyone is capable of expressing himself verbally according to his level of erudition. The sense of **smell** corresponds to the aspect of "remez"; just as smell hints to a person what food lays before him, so, too, the aspect of "remez" alludes to him what is concealed within the Torah. The sense of **hearing** corresponds to the element of "drush"—elucidation; as we know, the Torah is elucidated according to thirteen principles; hence, the terminology "**come and hear**"—"תא שמע". The sense of **sight** is superior to all of them; it corresponds to the element of "sod"; hence, the terminology "**come and see**"—"תא חזי".

So, it is for this reason that HKB"H created these four senses in a human being's head. He intended for man to occupy himself in order to attain the four aspects of Torah knowledge symbolized by פִּרְדָּ"ס with the brain in his head. In this manner, he sanctifies the four senses located in his head—**sight, hearing, smell, speech**—which correspond to the four aspects of Torah-study. In this merit, he is assured that he will succeed in elevating his head to prevail over his heart and the rest of his body.

## The "Yovel" Year Alludes to the Torah which Is Comprised of Fifty Levels of Binah

Following this line of reasoning, let us proceed to explain the unique kedushah inherent in the "yovel" year, which is capable of providing geulah from servitude to freedom. The Zohar hakadosh teaches us a vital principle regarding the "yovel" year. During the "yovel" year, which is the fiftieth year, the element of "binah" is revealed to the world. The entire Torah is rooted in "binah." In fact, there are fifty levels of "binah" encompassing the entire Torah, as we have learned in the Gemara (R.H. 21b; Nedarim 38a): "חמישים שערי בינה נבראו בעולם"—**fifty levels of "binah" were created in the world.**

Now, we have an explicit passuk extolling the praise of the Torah (Shemos 32, 16): "והלוחות מעשה אלקים המה והמכתב מכתב" ו"הלוחות מעשה אלקים—**the luchos are the work of G-d, and the script was the script of G-d, etched on the luchos.** We find the following elucidation in the Gemara (Eiruvin 54a): "אל תיקרי חרות אלא חירות"—**do not read the word as "charut" (meaning etched) but rather as "cheirut" (meaning freedom).** This Gemara teaches us that it is the unique ability of the Torah to free a person from the shackles enslaving him to the yetzer hara. Instead, his body and neshamah should only be subservient to HKB"H, the King of the Universe, thereby fulfilling the imperative we heard at Har Sinai: "כי לי בני ישראל עבדים"—**for Bnei Yisrael are slaves unto Me.**

Therefore, when the "yovel" year arrives—the fiftieth year—when illumination from the very foundation of the Torah—from the fifty levels of "binah"—is revealed in the world, the time is ripe to release all Jewish slaves. This includes those slaves who had their ears bored with an awl, indicating that they failed to remember the proclamation they heard at Har Sinai: "כי לי בני ישראל עבדים". For, in this year, the source of the Torah is revealed in its full glory. Hence, all slaves are provided a wonderful tikun, allowing them to go free, no longer slaves to the yetzer. Now, they can devote themselves to serving HKB"H, the true Master of the Universe.

**"כימי צאתך מארץ מצרים אראנו נ-פלאות"**

This provides us with a very nice understanding of a teaching in the Zohar hakadosh (Part 1 261b) regarding the passuk (Michah 7, 15): "כימי צאתך מארץ מצרים אראנו נפלאות"—**as in the days when you departed the land of Egypt, I will show**

**it wonders.** Yisrael's geulah from Mitzrayim was facilitated by illumination from the fifty levels of "binah." Correspondingly, the exodus is mentioned fifty times in the Torah. In similar fashion, HKB"H will redeem Yisrael in the future by means of the fifty levels of "binah." This is implied by the passuk: **"כימי צאתך ממצרים אראנו נפלאות"**—alluding to the fact that the fifty (the numerical value of the letter "nun") wonders of the levels of "binah" will be revealed at the time of the future geulah.

Let us provide an explanation based on our current discussion. At the time of the future geulah, HKB"H will shine a brilliant light on Yisrael, composed of all fifty levels of "binah"—which are the basis of the Torah. As a result, Yisrael will leave galus once and for all; their geulah will be everlasting. We can suggest that this is alluded to by the passuk (Eichah 2, 13): **"כי גדול כים שברך מי ירפא לך"**—**your ruin is as vast as the sea; who can heal you?** The devastation of galus is vast and overpowering like the ocean. Nevertheless: **"Who (מי) can heal you"**—when the fifty levels of "binah" will be unleashed—alluded to by the term **"מי"**, equaling fifty, then HKB"H will cure us of the travails and misery of galus.

We can now begin to appreciate to some small degree Eliyahu HaNavi's remark to Rashb"y. He informed him that in the merit of "Toras hanistar," which he revealed to the world in the Zohar hakadosh, these words would become a reality: **"וקראתם דרור בארץ לכל יושביה"**—HKB"H would redeem us and the

geulah would be everlasting. By revealing the esoteric Torah of mysticism to the world, Rashb"y completed the fifty levels of "binah"—encompassing all aspects of the Torah. They are analogous to the "yovel"—possessing the ability to free Yisrael from the galus's shackles of bondage.

Furthermore, by revealing the esoteric aspects of the Torah, Rashb"y completed the four aspects of Torah exegesis symbolized by **"פרד"ס**—**"pshat," "remez," "drush" and "sod"**—corresponding to the four senses located in one's head. As we explained, these four senses enable a person to establish the head as king and ruler of the entire body. Thus, we will merit geulah, entitling us to return to Eretz Yisrael, the place of origin of the head.

In truth, the Torah of "sod" is beyond our grasp. Nevertheless, our holy sources teach us that by including ourselves in the simchah of Rashb"y and his disciples, who immersed themselves in the Torah of "sod," it is considered as if we, too, possess a part and parcel of it. This is the basis of the jubilation on Lag BaOmer, prompting all of Yisrael to participate in the celebration of Rashb"y. In this merit, we will realize the prophetic words of Eliyahu HaNavi: **"וכמה בני נשא לתתא יתפרנסון מהאי חיבורא דילך, כד יתגלי לתתא כדרא בתראה בסוף יומיא, ובגיגיה וקראתם דרור בארץ"**—due to Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai's revealing work, the world would ultimately know an everlasting freedom—swiftly, in our times. Amen.



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