חסידות

From the Chassidic Courts

CHABAD · TORAH OHR, TOLDOT

How Yitzchak's well-digging lifts hidden light upward forever

Torah Ohr

Drawing on the Sages' saying that "the Name of Heaven be beloved through me," the Torah Ohr presents Avraham's hospitality as drawing G-d's light down from above, while Yitzchak's digging of wells reveals hidden light from below upward, an ascent without end that will be the source of future joy. Drawing on the tradition that "they give, they do not take," the text links Yitzchak's way to the human task of nullifying the something into nothing, the reverse of the descent from nothing to something. AI SUMMARY

"These are the generations of Yitzchak," etc. It is written, "His left hand is under my head, and his right hand embraces me." "His left hand" is the aspect of Yitzchak, from below upward. "And his right hand," etc., is the aspect of Avraham, from above downward. Now Avraham's trait was hospitality, etc., and Yitzchak was digging wells, etc.

To understand this: it is written, "And you shall love." At first glance, a command to love does not seem to make sense. But first it is written, "Hashem is One," etc. When one contemplates the matter of "One," how nothing can be compared to Him at all, etc., one reaches "Hashem our G-d and G-d of our fathers."

"Our G-d" is the aspect of tzimtzum (divine self-contraction). This means that the aspect of "our fathers," chochmah (wisdom) and binah, should come into being, etc. "You are wise," etc., yet nothing can be compared at all to His essence, may He be blessed: "You are One," etc. Therefore there must first be the aspect of "our G-d," which is the aspect of tzimtzum, and afterward "and G-d of," the aspect of the letter vav, which is drawing down, so that the aspect of "our fathers" should come into being.

When a person contemplates all this, surely every Jew's desire and will will be always to be included in the One Hashem, and not to descend below into a place of darkness. However, this is the aspect of "running forth." Afterward there must be the aspect of "return," as it is written, "like the advantage of light from darkness." It is His will, may He be blessed, to have specifically a dwelling place in the lower realms. Therefore the command "And you shall love" means the opposite, from above downward.

As our Sages of blessed memory said, "that the Name of Heaven be beloved through me." That is, to draw down a revelation of the light of His Divinity from above downward. This was Avraham's deed of hospitality: he gave the Arabs food to eat and afterward told them, "Know Whom you bless," etc., so that there would be a revelation of Divinity below, so that even the Arabs would recognize His greatness, etc. All this is the aspect of Avraham, a drawing down from above downward. And Yitzchak was digging wells, which is the aspect of revelation from below upward, from concealment to revelation. It is like the analogy of a well, where the water is there in concealment, and through digging the water is revealed, etc.

Now although Avraham also dug wells, it is written, "And the Philistines stopped them up," etc., and Yitzchak dug them again "and called them names like the names that his father had called them." The first "names" is spelled full and the second is spelled defective. This is because through Yitzchak's digging their flow never ceased again, and the six attributes, which are the aspect of the letter vav, continue to be drawn forth and to flow. Therefore "names" is spelled with a vav. But Avraham's "names" lacks the vav, because the Philistines stopped them up, and the external forces draw sustenance from them. Therefore, through Yitzchak's digging, "names" is spelled with a vav. (And see what I wrote on a similar matter on the verse "Six days you shall eat matzot," etc., spelled full with a vav.)

In the future to come it is written, "For You are our Father," because the main laughter and joy will come from the aspect of Yitzchak, which is from below upward. This aspect has no end or limit, etc. By contrast, the aspect of Avraham, from above downward, has a limit to its drawing down below.

Therefore, regarding Avraham it is written "Avraham, Avraham" twice. The first is the drawing down by which the aspect of chochmah and binah of Atzilut comes into being, and "G-d of our fathers," as above. The second drawing down is into Beriah, Yetzirah, and Asiyah. Yitzchak, however, is the aspect from below upward, the aspect of no end or limit, and "all shall exalt You, Selah."

From this the main laughter comes into being, for "they have a tradition from Heaven: they give, they do not take," etc. "Giving" is the aspect of the chain of descent from nothing to something, etc. But man's service is the opposite, to bring about the bittul (self-nullification) of the something into nothing. This is the aspect of Yitzchak: laughter and great delight, etc.

Translation: translated by AI (anthropic/claude-sonnet-5.5)