

Kisvei Rivash

One Slice Of A Thousand Years

Chizzuk For Our Millenium

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Prepared for Print by Rebecca Allen

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This work is part of a multi-volume general introduction to avodat Hashem by Yehoshua Gerzi called Kitzur B'Derech Ha'Avodah. The purpose of these texts is to assist people in developing a healthy Torah outlook on life and on living it.

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First edition

Foreword

The Kitzur B'Derech Ha'Avodah series is made up of writings and shiurim delivered over a number of years in Eretz Yisrael and abroad. Their purpose is to guide us in how we can live with deeper connection and commitment, inspiration, and the confidence to better ourselves, our families and communities, the human race, and the planet.

A Note to the Reader

Lovingly and respectfully,

As you start this reading, please remember that life is an unfolding journey; your journey is to reflect as you discover and grow. May you test what is written here in your own life, allowing your inner soul-wisdom to guide you in healthful ways. As we listen to life's lessons, as we learn from the people we admire and respect, may we become beings of greater service in the ways of love, respect, strength, and compassion.

***May the ones who graduated from our world be
remembered and have an aliya!***

In memory of:

Mr Binyamin Meir Airley

Binyamin Meir ben Zev Dovid -HY "D

Mr Albert Allen

Reb Avraham Ben Salcha Z"L

Mr. Yosef Neumann

Reb Yosef Refoel ben Chaim Z"L

Miss Yaela Yaffa Tuch

Yaela Yaffa Bas Yitzchak Dov & Naomi Z"L

Mr. Adam Nathan

Reb Avraham ben Yosef Z"L

Kuntres – Divine Plan - 5785/2025

One Slice Of A Thousand Years, Chizzuk For Our Millenium

This kuntres shares the historical framework I learned from my teachers. It is a framework which creates meaningful perspective on current events by placing those events within the history of our millennium and within the larger meaningful progression of human history from creation to Moshiach. It is my hope that using this framework will add comfort and chizzuk to your life.

There is a lot of information presented in these few pages, and also a lot which has been edited out. A significantly larger, unpublished work, written in 2013, contains a detailed survey of all 6000 years of human history through the lens of Chazal and Kabbalistic sources. That work was the basis for a shiur given in June 2024, which in turn became the basis for this piece, edited in 2025. This work reflects the environment and events of the time period in which it was edited.

An open invitation to all who are seeking wisdom, purpose, connection, and happiness.

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Introduction



We live in interesting, fast-moving times. They are so intriguing and so fast moving that we can sometimes feel that the moment itself is inviting us to pause in order to contemplate, observe and try to make sense of the events around us. In response to this invitation, I would like to share some wisdom teachings from our tradition about the nature and the progression of history.

Our tradition views history not as a meaningless passing of days, but rather as a purposeful, meaningful process that moves us toward an upgraded, rectified reality. What follows is an exploration of some patterns in history which highlight the progress of our world toward redemption. In this essay we explore just one slice of our history, the millennium in which we live, from one perspective. This exploration does not seek to change or predict events. Our focus, instead, is on our perspective: our perception, our attitude and the way we understand our world.

Our goal is to create a framework which can give us context so that we can find meaning, strength and even comfort when times are challenging. The meaning comes from recognizing that everything occurring in our historical journey was spoken about hundreds of years ago. It is all part of the plan. Our strength and our *nechamah*, our comfort, comes from knowing that we are following a path, laid out by Hashem, that is bringing us to something wonderful beyond what we can imagine. There may be challenges along the way, but together we'll get there. My hope is that sharing these teachings will help us upgrade the way we experience the exciting, challenging, and beautiful era we in which we live.

We have a tradition that the history of humanity will take place over the course of 6000 years and will lead to a time of global Shabbat.¹ Our progress toward the year 6000 happens through a naturally unfolding process. As it says in *Tehillim* 85:12, “truth will sprout from the ground.” The *Talmud Yerushalmi* comments,

אָמַר רַבִּי חֵיָא רַבָּא לְרַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן חֶלְפָתָא בִּירְבִי כִּף הִיא גְּאֵלְתָּן וְשֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתַחֲלִילָה קִמְאַה קִמְאַה
כָּל־מָה שֶׁהִיא הוֹלְכָת הִיא רַבָּה וְהוֹלְכָת

The great Rabbi Ḥiyya said to Rabbi Simeon ben Ḥalaphta, “Rabbi, this is how the redemption of Israel will be. At first it will be little by little and as it progresses, it grows greater and progresses.” (*Brachot* 1:1)

The *Kol HaTur* (1:16) comments on this *Gemara*:

קִימְעָא קִימְעָא, לְדַעַת מְרַאשׁ כִּי אֶתְחַלְתָּא דְגֵאוּלָּה בְּאֵה קִימְעָא קִימְעָא מְעַט מְעַט

little by little. We must know beforehand that the beginning of the Redemption will come gradually, a little at a time.

This process takes time, and it can also be a bit of a bumpy ride. As a nation, we have experienced our moments of failure. However, as we know from *Mishlei* (24:16), “A righteous man can fall seven times and rise.” Each millennium of our history includes falls, yet *Michah* (7:8) tells us, “Although I have fallen, I will rise.” The *Maggid of Mezeritch* teaches that every time the *tzaddik* gets up there’s a *tikkun*. Every time we get up, we could be stronger. Intrinsically, the constant process of fixing and healing strengthens us.

¹ See *Sanhedrin* 97a with *Rashi*, *Rosh Hashana* 31a, *Avodah Zara* 9a, *Pirkei De-Rabbi Eliezer*, 18:12, *Zohar* 1:117a, and *Zohar*, I:119a, amongst the many, many sources for this tradition.

The Zohar tells us that the redemption will come about through the mystical source of the letter *vav*.² In its simplest sense, the letter *vav*, which is the sixth letter of the *aleph bet*, indicates our current time period, the sixth millennium. However, there is also a deeper idea being shared. The letter *vav* is a connector: it is designed like a hook, literally means a hook, and grammatically connects words together. The Zohar is sharing with us something about the quality of our experience in this millennium, and about the nature of our *avodah* during this time period.

This millennium is the millennium of connection. All around us, people are searching for connection. And they are not just searching for superficial connection. People are looking for ways to express connection through identity, consciousness and personal expression. Avenues of expression and connection are becoming more and more available to us. As we move closer and closer to the time of Moshiach, we have a greater and greater opportunity to expand our consciousness. Individually and collectively, we have been given amazing spiritual and physical tools. And we are learning, by using them, to connect to ourselves, to Hashem, to each other, and to our world, from a deeper place.

One Day Is A Thousand Years



כי אלף שנים בעיניך כיום אתמול כי יעבר ואשמורה בלילה

For a thousand years are in Your eyes like a day which passed, and a watch in the night. (Tehillim 90:4)

Rav Chaim Vital teaches that the Torah's description of the creation of the world serves as a key to understanding our history. There are six days of creation, leading into

² Zohar 1:119a

Shabbat, and each thousand years of our history correlates to one day.³ Within each millennium, the progression of years corresponds to the progression of the day, beginning with the evening. Studying these correlations can give us insight into our millennium.⁴

The sixth millennium (5001 to 6000) corresponds to the secular years 1240-2240 CE.⁵ The *Kol HaTur* teaches that if we would compare this time period to a day, and divide it into 24 parts, each hour would be equivalent to 41 years and eight months.⁶

Daily, in the natural world, we witness how different qualities and quantities of light are available at different times, and how this affects the way we relate to our world. We interact with our world differently at midnight than we do at noon, especially if we are in an environment without artificial light. Our millennium-long day has a similar quality from a spiritual perspective. As the millennium progresses, humanity receives different qualities and quantities of spiritual light at different times. These different spiritual infusions of light create shifts in history, which move the world forward in a certain direction, and which are much bigger than one person or group of people.

Historians sometimes call these shifts revolutions. This includes not only political revolutions but also cultural, intellectual, philosophical and technological revolutions. These shifts happen in both the Jewish and secular worlds, sometimes in ways that mimic each other.

³ See also *Em Lamiqra*, Bereishit 1:5, where Rabbi Elijah Benamozegh mentions that one day could be a thousand years, or more.

⁴ Rav Chaim Vital, *Likkutei Chadashim* 7. See also Ramban, *Bereshit* 2:3, *Zohar*, 1:119a, and Vilna Gaon, *Sefer De'tzneyuta*, chapter 5. The *Leshem*, in *Derushei Olam HaTohu*, Part 2, page 151, adds that during each 1000 years we are metaken one of the sefirot, where each sefira is a lens, an energy, in how the Ein Sof is manifesting in our world.

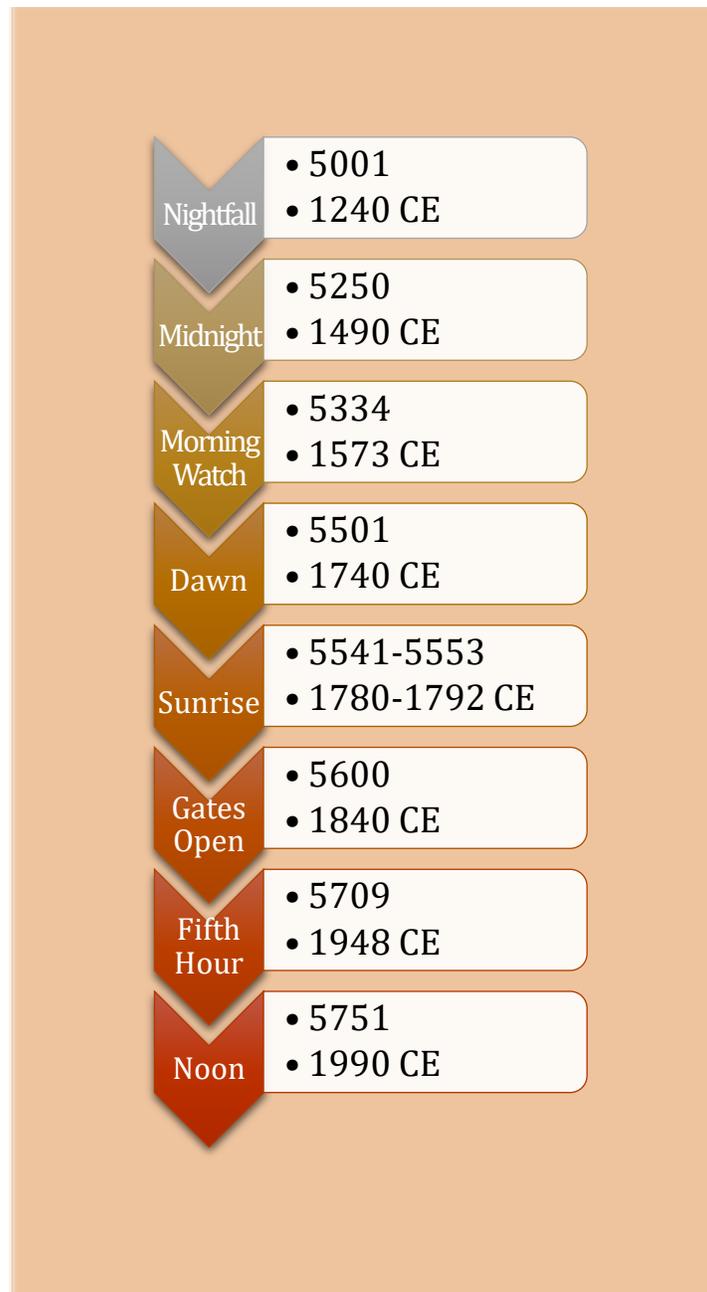
⁵ There are a number of online calculators which convert between Hebrew and Gregorian dates.

⁶ *Kol HaTur* 1:4

Kabbalah asks us to notice these shifts, and to consider how the shifts we witness in history are the result of spiritual shifts above. We might notice a pattern to these shifts. They seem to fall perfectly into alignment with the Kabbalistic understanding of history as a series of six days, and of this millennium as the sixth day.

In this essay we will explore eight global shifts that occurred over the last millennium. We will notice the nature of these shifts, and their context within the secular and Jewish timeline. Some shifts clearly moved our world forward, toward a more healed, expanded consciousness. Other shifts appear, at first glance, to break things apart. However, even these destructive shifts ultimately make space for progression in a new direction. At the end of this essay, we will take a moment to explore our own chaotic, fast-paced era, which relates to the afternoon of the sixth day. It is my hope that as we view the events of our era from this perspective, we will find some inspiration and *chizzuk*.

Eight Notable Shifts of the Sixth Millennium



Nightfall (5001/1240 CE)

Let's begin with some context. In the years that correlate with the afternoon of the fifth day, the most intellectually and politically vibrant cities are in the Islamic world. Cordova and Bagdad are the center of scholarship, literacy, literature, engineering, architecture and philosophy. Culture and philosophy flourish in these cities through libraries, hospitals, and academia, and many Jewish scholars call these cities home, at least for part of their lives, including the Rambam, who is born in Cordova in 1148.

However, this all begins to change by the end of the fifth millennium. As the sixth millennium begins, with evening, a period of darkness falls on the once ascendant Islamic world. The year 1240 CE ushers in both a political and intellectual shift. Ferdinand III of Castile conquers Cordova in 1236, and the Mongols sack Bagdad in 1258. The Golden Age of Islam comes to a close, and power shifts from the Islamic world to Christendom in Europe. The Christian Golden Age of Spain thus begins at the same time as the Sixth Millennium. This is the middle of the Middle Ages, and it is not a time of physical security for the Jews. In the period from the 13th to the 16th centuries, which corresponds to the period from nightfall to midnight, more than 15 European rulers expel the Jews from their countries.

Midnight (5250/1490 CE)

Midnight of the Sixth Millennium comes at the endpoint of the Middle Ages (500 – 1500 CE), and for the Jews, this dark period ends on an especially dark note. The largest and most long-lasting expulsion is declared in March of 1492, just two years after Midnight, by Queen Isabella I of Castile and King Ferdinand II of Aragon.

The Spanish Expulsion of 1492 is a huge tragedy. And yet, as the clock begins to tick toward dawn, we can see, hidden within the destruction, the seeds of growth and rebuilding that are beginning to sprout. The expulsion sends about 200,000 highly educated and globally connected Jews out of Spain and into places such as the Ottoman Empire, North Africa, Portugal, Italy and the Netherlands. This huge population shift impacts many of these countries substantially. For example, although there is almost no Jewish population in the Netherlands before the 1500s, a century later, the Netherlands simultaneously experiences the Dutch Golden Age and the golden age of the Dutch Jews. Jews also thrive in the Ottoman Empire, contributing to its trade and diplomatic relations with Europe. And, since the Ottoman Empire controls the territory of Israel, a good number of Jews are able to make *aliyah*, setting the stage for the mystical revival of Tzfat in the 16th century.

Columbus's first voyage from Castille is also at Midnight, in August 1492. He arrives in the Bahamas in October of that same year. The shift that begins with Columbus results, hundreds of years later, in the Founding Fathers arriving in America in the 17th century. The Pilzno Rav used to point out that the Founding Fathers were religious Puritans, who believed in studying the Bible and Kabbalah in Hebrew, who put Hebrew inside the Liberty Bell, and some of whom wanted to make Hebrew the official language of the newly independent United States. In this new territory, they create a country founded on Judeo-Christian values.

Another shift of this time begins in Germany, around 1440, where Johannes Gutenberg invents the movable-type printing press and starts the Printing Revolution. Books begin to become readily accessible. Knowledge begins to spread. Many Jewish books are published, including Kabbalistic works, like the Zohar which is first printed in the 1550s.

The middle of the night is a dark time, but as the night progresses, the world is naturally moving toward dawn. These population and territory shifts, along with the greater accessibility of books and knowledge, soon change the fabric of society.

Morning Watch (5334/1573 CE)

וְסִימָן לַדָּבָר: מִשְׁמֶרֶת רֵאשִׁוֹנָה תְּמוּרָה נוֹעֵר, שְׁנֵי קָלָבִים צוֹעֲקִים, שְׁלִישִׁית, תִּינוּק יוֹגֵק מִשְׁדֵּי אִמּוֹ, וְאִשָּׁה מְסַפֶּרֶת
עִם בַּעְלָהּ

And signs of the transition between each of these watches in the upper world can be sensed in this world: In the first watch, the donkey brays; in the second, dogs bark; and in the third, people begin to rise, a baby nurses from its mother's breast and a wife converses with her husband. (Brachot 3a)

Throughout the night, when there is no sunlight to mark the hours, sound is used to keep track of time. In the time of the Mishna, there were three watches of the night. The third watch, which happens just before morning, is marked by the sounds of connection. The mother comforts and nurses her child, and the husband and wife have a few moments to converse before the day begins. Echoing these sweet sounds on a global scale, a conversation of healing begins to spread in the world.

We can hear these healing notes in the conversation of the Renaissance, which echoes throughout Europe in 16th century CE. Society becomes interested in exploring an ideal of integration and balance. Renaissance thinkers aim to integrate mind and body, including poetry, art, music, religion, and science in their conversation. In the worldview of the Renaissance everything fits, and everything has a place.

The conversation begins in Italy. Although it is not a Jewish phenomenon, the Renaissance is influenced by Jewish thought. For example, *Oration on the Dignity of Man*, which some scholars call “the Manifesto of the Renaissance,” is written by Pico della Mirandola. Pico della Mirandola not only is a scholar of Kabbalah, he also founds a tradition of Christian Kabbalah based on his studies. The cultural milieu of Italy will later be home to

outstanding Jewish thinkers like the *Ramchal* (1707-1746), his great nephew Shmuel David Luzzato (1800-1865) and Elijah Benamozegh (1823–1900).

Another healing conversation which happens at this time centers around the ideas of the Arizal, who is *niftar* in Safed in 1572. After his death, his revolutionary teachings, focusing on Kabbalah, begin to spread throughout the Jewish world. Among the many teachings shared by the Arizal is the idea that there is a natural process that unfolds through human history, mirroring a kabbalistic evolution. In the Arizal's framework, progression takes place through a continuous process of shattering and fixing. This conversation includes the recognition that after every fall we can heal. In fact, the fall is part of the healing, not separate from it.

In the wake of the Arizal's teachings, the experience of learning Kabbalah shifts from a cerebral experience to an experiential experience. Kabbalah offers healing and comfort to the many people who choose to study it. More people become familiar with the idea that we can take responsibility, as human beings, for helping to bring the world back to its state of pristine unity. People feel empowered to begin the process of returning to a unified consciousness, where humanity is in alignment with Hashem.

The shift toward popularizing the study of Kabbalah in the Jewish world is paralleled in the Christian world. What began with a few people in the late 15th century turns into a movement of Christian scholars who study Kabbalah in the 16th and 17th century which included Sir Isaac Newton. During the Renaissance, Christians begin to create their own version of Kabbalah based on translations of Kabbalah texts into Latin. Kabbalistic ideas begin to impact the world more widely.

The conversations of the Renaissance, with their focus on human dignity, wisdom and integration, lead to the age of Enlightenment. The world begins to progress in technology and science, while at the same time begins to grapple with ideas such as religious tolerance, human dignity and equality at work.

Dawn (5501/1740 CE)

עקבות משיחא בכללות נפתחו תחלה בשעה הראשונה של בוקר יום הששי לשתיאתא, היינו שנת ת"ק לאלף הששי דנא. ומשעה לשעה מתקדמים העקבות מבחינות רבות.

The footsteps of Moshiach, in general, began in the first hour, Friday morning, in the 6th Millennium. That is the year 500 of the sixth millennium. And from hour to hour, the footsteps have continued to progress in many aspects.

(Kol HaTur, Part 1, 4)

Dawn coincides with the start of the Industrial Revolution. There is an outpouring of knowledge and tools, and machines begin to take a prominent role in human life, as they still do today. It is easy to see the straight line of development from the start of the Industrial Revolution to the Artificial Intelligence that is becoming so prominent in our era. However, according to Rabbi Yitzchak Shapira, the roots of our modern technology are actually a reflection of a much earlier time.

The paradigm for advanced technology is the original *nachash*, the snake, in Gan Eden. The Gemara tells us that had we not sinned in Gan Eden we would each have two snakes to do our bidding.⁷ The *nachash* in Gan Eden was created to facilitate our use of the physical world so that we would have the space to focus on our physical and spiritual well-being. Together with this tool, we were gifted with the ability to build or to destroy, and we have the potential to bring blessing or curse. The *nachash* is a symbol of the incredible ability we have

⁷ *Sanhedrin 59b*

דתניא ר"ש בן מנסיא אומר חבל על שמש גדול שאבד מן העולם שאלמלא (לא) נתקלל נחש כל אחד ואחד מישראל היו מזדמנין לו שני נחשים טובים אחד משגרו לצפון ואחד משגרו לדרום להביא לו סנדלבונים טובים ואבנים טובות ומרגליות ולא עוד אלא שמפשילין רצועה תחת זנבו ומוציא בה עפר לגנתו ולחורבתו

As it is taught in a baraita that Rabbi Shimon ben Menasya says: Woe over a great attendant that has been lost to the world; had the snake not been cursed that it should go on its belly, there would have been two fine snakes at the disposal of each and every one of the Jewish people. One he would send to the north, and the other one he would send to the south, to bring him precious sandalbonim, and other precious stones and pearls. Moreover, he would attach a strap under his snake's tail like a harness to an animal, and use it to take dirt out to his garden and to rebuild his ruin, as he does with other animals.

to influence the world around us, both for good and for bad.⁸ We are now in the process of reacquiring the tools we lost in Gan Eden. Our modern technology, which was unleashed at dawn and continues to be the driving force of our age, embodies the function of the *nachash*.

Along with new paths in technological advances, at dawn new paths toward *pnimiut haTorah* are paved for us by tremendous Torah luminaries. The Baal Shem Tov (1698-1760), the Ramchal (1707-1746), the Vilna Gaon (1720-1797), and Rav Shalom Sharabi (1720–1777), are all alive in the year 1740. These Torah luminaries come from very diverse cultural and halachic traditions, ranging from Ukraine to Italy to Vilna to Yemen. They start from points which seem diametrically opposed to each other, yet they all simultaneously disseminate *pnimiut haTorah* in a way that overlaps and is complementary.

The Ramdu, Rabbi Moshe David Valle, a *talmid-chaver* of the Ramchal in Italy, points out how important this was for the spiritual health of our nation. The Ramban, in his introduction to his commentary to *Shir HaShirim*, explains how the Chachamim hid the secrets of the Torah using parables and riddles, and spread them throughout Torah literature, so that they could be easily overlooked. This was a good safeguard. However, as the Ramdu points out, this left Am Yisroel throughout many years of *galut* with hefty books, but without much revelation of *pnimiut haTorah*. For many years, our nation was hungry and thirsty to know the internal dimension of Torah. That situation now begins to change. *Pnimiut haTorah* begins to become readily accessible, and even abundant, from a number of different channels.⁹

⁸ Since early times, a symbol with one or two snakes and a rod has been used to represent healing. Today, the caduceus, a staff with two snakes coiled around it, is the official insignia of the United States Medical Corps. The Staff of Aesculapius, which is a staff with one snake coiled around it, has represented medicine since 800 BCE, and is the current symbol of the World Health Organization.

⁹ Rabbi Moshe David Valle, *Sefer HaLikutim*, p. 23.

Sunrise (5541-5553/1780-1792 CE)

ומהשעה השניה (היינו משנת תקמ"ב) נכנסה בחינתם של כל בית ישראל הן הכלל והן כל איש ואיש

בישראל, בפקידה דמעליתא של משיחא דאתחלתא משיח בן יוסף

Beginning with the second hour (i.e., from 5542 [1782]), the aspect of the entire House of Israel entered the picture, both as a whole, and as each individual member of the nation, through an order from above, of the Mashiach of the beginning of the Redemption, namely, Mashiach ben Yosef. (Kol HaTur, Part 1, 4)¹⁰

With sunrise, the idea of the importance of humanity, and specifically each person within society, begins to take central place on the world stage. This is the era of governmental revolutions around the world, rooted in the belief of the rights of the individual. The main document of the French Revolution, passed by France's National Constituent Assembly in August 1789, was called *The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen*. Similarly, the 1776 Declaration of Independence, the main document of the American Revolution, states clearly that, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights."

There is now a power shift away from the monarchies of the world, away from the establishment and institutions, and towards the people. Instead of a few families with a certain lineage wielding power, citizens wield power. Civilization moves closer to becoming an integrated organism, something that could ultimately become the nervous system of a greater global unified humanity.

At the same time, in the Jewish world, *chassidut*, begins to flourish. The first ever Chassidic book to be published, *Toldot Yaacov Yosef* by R. Yaakov Yosef HaKohen of Polonne,

¹⁰ *The range of years given for Sunrise reflects a halachic debate over the exact time of sunrise.*

was printed by Koretz in 1780. *Chassidut* focuses on the importance of each individual's relationship with God, and on the individual's personal relationship with G-d in the context of the entire world.

The Gates Open (5600/1840 CE)

ובשית מאה שגין לשיתתאה יתפתחון פרעי דחכמתא לעילא ומבועי דחכמתא לתתא, ויתמקון עלמא לאעלא
בשביעאה. כבר נש דמתמקון ביומא שיתתאה מכי ערב שמשא לאעלא בשבתא. אוף הכי נמי. וסימניד
(בראשית ז:י"א) בשנת שש מאות שנה לחיי נח וגו' נבקעו כל מעיינות תהום רבה

In the 600th year of the sixth millennium (5600) the gates of wisdom above together with the wellsprings of wisdom below will open and the world will prepare to usher in the seventh millennium. This is symbolized by one who begins preparations for ushering in the Sabbath on the afternoon of the sixth day. In the same way, toward the end of the sixth millennium, preparations are made for entering the seventh. The hint for this is "In the 600th year of Noah's life ... all the wellsprings of the great deep burst forth and the flood gates of the heavens were opened (Bereshit 7:11)." (Zohar, Part I, p.117)

The Vilna Gaon invested tremendous significance in the year 1840, which corresponds to the 600th year of the sixth millennium. It was a time of monumental advancement both in the secular world and in the Jewish religious world. We could imagine the years from 1790 to 1840 as a time when a spiritual container is being built. In 1840, once that container is formed, then a more advanced light is able to shine into the world. Humanity now has tools to advance in extraordinary ways.

The Zohar compares this era to the flood in the time of Noach. In the secular world, we observe a flood of ideas and inventions. Humanity begins to create devices that harness the knowledge of the Industrial Revolution. In 1844 the first telegraph message is sent. In

1849 Antonio Meucci invents the first basic phone. Collectively, this means the ability to communicate farther and faster than ever before. At the same time, we gain the ability to travel farther and faster than ever before, as train lines expand around the world. In addition, in the 1840s the daguerreotype, which was the first publicly available photographic process, begins to be used widely.

The esteemed Kabbalist R' Shlomo Elyashiv, also known as the Leshem, points out that parallel to the world-wide flood of inventions and ideas in the 1840s, the Jewish spiritual world also experiences a flood.

“From 1840 onwards, permission was granted for those who truly desire to enter *within*. The Kabbalah was no longer the private domain of the initiated masters. Numerous matters whose awesome nature repelled one from even approaching them in previous generations, behold, they are easily grasped today. This is because the gates of human understanding below have been opened up as a result of the steadily increasing flow of Divine revelations above.”¹¹

Torah knowledge floods the world and becomes accessible to anyone who wants access to it. We can feel the reverberations of this today, in the tremendous growth of Torah learning and phenomena such as the emergence of Artscroll, Feldheim, and Koren among others. There may be more people learning Torah today than at any time in the past two millennia.¹²

¹¹ *Leshem, Sh'vo V'Achlamah, Chelek HaBi'urim, p. 21d*

¹² *See Rabbi Yehoshua Gerzi, Aliyat and Yeridot Hadorot, for a more in depth look at some of these ideas.*

The Fifth Hour (5709/1948 CE)

א"ר יוחנן בר חנינא שתיים עשרה שעות הוי היום שעה ראשונה הוצבר עפרו שניה נעשה גולם שלישיית נמתחו אבריו רביעית נורקה בו נשמה חמישיית עמד על רגליו ששית קרא שמות שביעית נזדווגה לו חוה שמינית עלו למטה שנים וירדו ארבעה תשיעית נצטווה שלא לאכול מן האילן עשירית סרח אחת עשרה נידון שתיים עשרה נטרד והלך לו שנאמר (תהלים מט, יג) אדם ביקר בל ילין

The day on which Adam was created consisted of twelve hours. During the first hour his dust was gathered; the second hour it was made into a shapeless mass; the third hour his limbs were stretched out; the fourth hour a soul was placed in him; the fifth hour he stood on his feet; the sixth hour he named the animals; the seventh hour he was paired with Chava; the eighth hour they had two children; the ninth hour he was commanded not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge; the tenth hour he sinned; the eleventh hour he was judged; and the twelfth hour he was sent out from the Garden of Eden and went on his way. (Sanhedrin 38b)

The Talmud tells us that Adam originally stood on his feet in the fifth hour of the sixth day of creation. According to our framework, this corresponds to the year 1948.¹³ This is, of course, the year that we, as a nation, take our place on the modern world stage with a country and a state and a voice. Against the backdrop of a completely realigned world order, we stand on our feet, in a country that can serve as our platform to share our ideals with the world. Power has shifted from Britain to America, a country built on Biblical ideas, and America chooses to stand with Israel.

At the same time, the next big shift is already beginning. In 1947 the first working transistor is created by scientists in Bell Labs. Historians consider the transistor to be the

¹³ According to the Kol HaTur, each hour is 41 years and 8 months, which is 41.6. 41.6 multiplied by 5 is 208 years. Therefore, if dawn is 1740, 208 years later is 1948.

basic building block of modern electronics. Its creation can be seen as one of the key events that ushers in the Information Age. This new era is marked by a global economy, fueled by information and technology, and relies more on knowledge and less on goods and physical wealth.

Noon (5751/1990 CE)



At noon two shifts change the way we experience and perceive our world. First, in 1989 a series of revolutions leads to the fall of communism, seemingly “overnight.” Second, Tim Berners-Lee forms the constructs HTTP and URL, and the World Wide Web is born. It grows quickly. By 1995 the most popular browser at the time, Netscape, has ten million users. Today, there is almost nowhere that the internet cannot reach. These two shifts create an explosion of freedom, of information, and of globalization. Of course, with all of this innovation we are faced with a lot of challenges as well. Our freedom and joy is often combined with an unsettling feeling that the world is speeding up, and possibly, speeding out of control.

Our modern era corresponds to the afternoon of the sixth day of creation. It is not a simple time. In truth, we have known this time would be complex for a very long time. We have a number of prophecies, and fascinating teachings from Talmud and Midrash that describe aspects of this time period. None of them are easily understood, but all of them make clear that this will be a time of upheaval.

Rambam specifically teaches that we have no clear tradition about these matters and will only be able to understand these teachings fully in hindsight.¹⁴ Even so, there are aspects

¹⁴ *Rambam, Hilchot Melachim, 12:2.*

of these teachings which seem to resonate strongly with the world we see around us. We cannot draw any sure conclusions from these teachings; however, we can look to them with humility and curiosity and perhaps draw some inspiration and illumination from them. What follows is just a small taste of the wisdom of these sources.

The Gemara describes an unstable economic situation in the era before Moshaiach. *Sotah* 49b speaks of a world in which there is material abundance, and at the same time, inflation. Food and goods are expensive.¹⁵ The Talmud also describes a border crisis, with migrants moving from city to city, searching for someone to give them assistance.¹⁶ Interestingly, there is an opinion in *Sanhedrin* 97a that Moshiach will not come until “there will no longer be even a *pruta* coin in the purse.”¹⁷ While this could be a description of poverty, the language is particularly resonant in our cashless age. We live in a world of credit cards, peer-to-peer payments, blockchain and cryptocurrency, where the President of the United States recently directed the Treasury to stop producing the penny. Paper money and especially coins seem to be in the process of becoming obsolete.

The sources also describe the years leading up to Moshiach as years of strange weather patterns, and food shortages, as we often observe in our age of global warming.¹⁸ There is also the description of a plague that acts like a flood, engulfing the world, as the Covid epidemic did due to the global nature of our society.¹⁹

Even more striking is the description of what culture will be like in the era before Moshiach. On a national level, the *chachamim* describe a time of secularization and heresy.

¹⁵ בְּרִבֵּיעִית שׁוֹבֵעַ וְאַיִנוּ שׁוֹבֵעַ אֶתְּנוּ פְּרִיָּהּ וְהַיִּין בְּיוֹקֵר . See also *Sanhedrin* 97a

¹⁶ וְאַנְשֵׁי הַגְּבוּל יְסוּבְּבוּ מֵעִיר לְעִיר וְלֹא יִחְזֻנְנוּ

¹⁷ דָּבָר אַחֵר עַד שֶׁתִּקְלָה פְּרוּטָה מִן הַפִּיס

¹⁸ *Sanhedrin* 97a and *Shir Hashirim Rabbah* 2:13

¹⁹ *Tosefta Taanit* 2:11.

רבי יוסי אומר מבול של מים אין אבל מבול של דבר לעובדי כוכבים לימות המשיח יש שנא' (זכריה י"א:י') ואקח את מקלי את גועם וגו' מהו אומר ותופר ביום ההוא

The meeting places of the intelligentsia, which we might translate as the university, become places of immorality.²⁰ The government becomes corrupt, and the nation experiences none of the stability that government is supposed to bring. At the same time, the people are powerless to do anything about it.²¹

Secularization and heresy are described as being rampant throughout society. Ancient wisdom is reviled, and those who fear Hashem are attacked.²² Famously, the generation before Moshiach is described as being a generation where *chutzpah* will increase.²³ Specifically, the younger will have no respect for their elders, and there will be painful corrosion of normal family life and breakdown within the home.²⁴ Rav Twersky once remarked that this type of *chutzpah* comes from an internalization of the message of the Theory of Evolution. The youth feel that they are more evolved and therefore have no need to listen to their elders. In this way, the wisdom of the ages is lost and families come to be torn apart.

The *chutzpa* of our generation is a result of a breakdown of respect, and a breakdown of listening to each other. People are under attack. They're not healthy, they don't feel comfortable with themselves, and so they attack others. In this vein, we might suggest that when the Gemara refers to the informers that will proliferate in the era before Moshiach, it may be hinting to the cancel culture which has become so prevalent today, with people lashing out because of their own sensitivities and insecurities. The "proliferation of informers" described in the Gemara might bring to mind with the cultural phenomenon of people informing on one another and shutting each other down.²⁵

²⁰ *Sotah 49b*. בית נועד ידקה לזנות

²¹ *Sotah 49b*. ומלכות תהפך למינות ואין תוכחת.

²² *Sotah 49b*. חכמות סופרים תסרה, ויראי חטא יפאסו

²³ *Sotah 49b*, בעקבות משיחא חוצפא יקא.

²⁴ *Sotah 49b*. גערים פני זקנים ילבינו, זקנים יעמדו מפני קטנים — בן מגוול אב, בת קמה באמה, פלה בתמותה, אויבי איש אנשי ביתו

²⁵ *Sanhedrin 97a* teaches that "אין בן דוד בא עד ש'יךבו תקסורות"

Another description that might resonate with us today is the feeling that truth has disappeared from public discourse.²⁶ Despite the tremendous access we have to information, our public discourse is often overwhelmed by an equal amount of misinformation. We frequently find ourselves, as a society, with a lot of information, but little truth. The Gemara asks where truth has disappeared to, and the response is that it exists now only in small, separate groups, where each group believes they have the only version of the truth, and refuse to listen to any other perspective. Perhaps this reminds us of the echo chambers our society so often creates, or it might remind us of those small groups of people we can seek out who are interested in the truth and will listen to each other humbly and honestly.

Perhaps one of the most famous descriptions of the generation before Moshiach is that of Rabbi Eliezer Hagadol, in Sotah 49b, who taught that the face of this generation will be like the face of a dog. Understood simply, this is a description of the *chutzpah* of the generation, as we mentioned above. However, dogs in our era are also a symbol of many good things, such as loyalty. Being dog-like could include aspects of expansion, such as having a greater sense of hearing and a much better sense of smell. There is, therefore, a duality in this description.

Notably, Rav Moshe Shapiro mentioned several times that the word *kelev*, dog, in Hebrew can also be read as the word *ka-lev*, like the heart. He taught that the generation before Moshiach will be a generation of the heart, open to a different way of experiencing the world, and open to expansion. The heart is the place of the internal dimension of Torah: Kabbalah, *machshavah* and Chassidut. Ours is a generation that is searching for a deeper education.

In our generation, this duality of *kalev* resonates all around us. We are both the brazen generation with the face of a dog, and also the sensitive generation that wears our heart on

²⁶ *Sanhedrin 97a*-- עָדְרִים וְהוֹלְקֵת לָהּ עָדְרִים שֶׁנֶּעֱשִׂית עָדְרִים מֵאֵי נִתְהִי הָעֲמֻת נֶעֱדָרְתָּ אָמְרֵי דְבֵי רַב מִלְּמַד שְׁנֵי עֲשָׂרֵי עָדְרִים מֵאֵי נִתְהִי הָעֲמֻת נֶעֱדָרְתָּ נֶסֶר מְרַע מִשְׁתוּלֵל מֵאֵי נִתְהִי הָעֲמֻת נֶעֱדָרְתָּ נֶסֶר מְרַע מִשְׁתוּלֵל מֵאֵי נִתְהִי הָעֲמֻת נֶעֱדָרְתָּ נֶסֶר מְרַע מִשְׁתוּלֵל

our face. Some might argue that we care too much, and sometimes not in the right way. The *kelev* is an animal that thrives when it is guided well, as our hearts need to be guided by our minds. However, we are often mismatched in our ability to care for each other. Our sensitivities can be weaponized. We alternate between being heartfelt and acting out from our pain, like attack dogs.

If we look back, even earlier, not just to the Talmud, but to the *Navi*, we can find descriptions of events that particularly resonate with our times in the wake of Simchat Torah, October 7th 2023. Yechezkel describes a series of wars that fall under the heading *Gog and Magog*. In chapter 38 he describes a stage in the redemptive process where Am Yisrael has been ingathered from amidst many nations, brought back from the edge of the sword, into a land that has been desolate for many years. At the beginning of the *nevuah*, Am Yisrael is living securely in the land. Into this setting comes a war that, according to Malbim, will revolve around Yerushalayim, and will include an alliance of nations on each side. On one side there is a Muslem/*Yishameli* alliance, and the other is a Christian/*Edom* alliance.

In language that is amazing to read in the wake of October 7th, the *navi*, speaking to the nation Gog, says, “On that day, words will enter your heart, and you will think a thought of evil. And you will say, ‘I will ascend on a land of open cities; I will come upon the tranquil, who dwell securely; all of them living without a wall, and they have no bars or doors.’” (38:10-11) The *navi* goes on to describe how the enemy plunders the defenseless and peaceful towns.

There is another, deeper aspect to this *nevuah*, which both echoes our national experience in *Mitzrayim*, and resonates with our experience of the October 7th war. In *Shemot*, there is a clear duality that is created in the *pesukim* discussing Pharoah’s evil behavior. On the one hand, Pharoah is held accountable for the evil he committed and is clearly punished for it. At the same time, we learn that Hashem has hardened Pharoah’s heart.

It is clearly Hashem that is in control of the flow of events. At the end of this dual process, the result is a tremendous revelation of Hashem in the world.²⁷

In Yechezkel we find the same duality. As we saw above, the nation of Gog is clearly held responsible for its evil plans. At the same time, Hashem makes clear that He alone is orchestrating events. “And I shall unbridle you, and I shall put hooks into your jaws and bring you forth and all your army, horses and riders, all of them clothed in finery, a great assembly, with encompassing shield and buckler, all of them grasping swords. (38:4)”²⁸ The *nevuah* makes clear that the result of these events will be a greater revelation of Hashem in the world. “I shall bring you upon My land in order that the nations recognize Me when I am sanctified through you before their eyes, O Gog. (38:16)”

This duality is resonant with an experience described by many of us in the wake of October 7th. We are all, as a nation, reeling from the unspeakable evil of our enemies, and we most certainly hold them accountable. At the same time, we stand in awe of the supernatural inner strength and resilience of our nation and the clear revelation, in event after event, big and small, of the revealed hand of Hashem. In the words of one of the freed hostages, Sapir Cohen, “God doesn’t say that I will get what I want, and He doesn’t say that I will be happy all the time, but He promised me just one thing, that behind everything that happened, there is purpose.”

²⁷ See Shemot 4:21, among other places, where Hashem hardens Pharaoh’s heart and Shemot 7:5, among other places, where Hashem asserts that the result of this process is that the Egyptians will know that He is God.

²⁸ It is fascinating to note how this imagery of drawn swords resonates with the official name given by the Israeli government (and possibly randomly generated) to the war that began on October 7th. It is called *Haravot Barzel*, the Swords of Iron War.

Afternoon

ובשית מאה שנין לשיתתאה יתפתחון פריעי דחכמתא לעילא ומבויעי דחכמתא לתתא, ויתסקו עלמא
לאעלא בשביעאה. כבר נש דמתסקו ביומא שיתתאה מכי ערב שמשא לאעלא בשבתא. אוף הכי נמי

In the 600th year of the sixth millennium the gates of wisdom above together with the wellsprings of wisdom below will open up and the world will prepare to usher in the seventh millennium. This is symbolized by one who begins preparations for ushering in the Shabbat on the afternoon of the sixth day. In the same way, toward the end of the sixth millennium, preparations are made for entering the seventh. (Zohar, Part I, p.117)

זכאין אנון כל אנון דישתארונו בעלמא בסניפי אלה שיתתאה למיעל בשבתא

Happy are those who will be left alive at the end of the sixth millennium to enter the Shabbat, which is the seventh millennium (Zohar, Part 1, p.119a)

It is very interesting to notice the similarities between our era and the environment we experience on Friday afternoon, as we prepare to welcome in the Shabbat. We might consider the turbulence of our era as the turbulence of a world preparing to welcome in the *geulah* of a global Shabbat. There is a feeling to Friday afternoons in religious homes. Of course, the flavor is different in every home, but usually there is an anticipation in the air. There's energy in the air. In many, many homes there is also a type of controlled chaos that occurs.

When we look around and wonder why our world is so overwhelming we can draw comfort from erev Shabbat. The Chachamim tell us that the most intense darkness is just before the dawn, and there is no greater light than the light which emerges out of that

darkness.²⁹ We've lived through a flood. The waters have opened from above and from below. There's been an explosion of technology and an explosion in the world of spirituality, in the world of Kabbalah, and in the world of *Chassidut*. We are finally healing after the horrible wound of the Holocaust. It is afternoon in our millennium, and Friday afternoon can be chaotic.

For most people, when you enter the house on Friday afternoon, erev Shabbat, even if it's controlled and calm, it's often still hectic. My wife says, no matter how much she has to prepare or not prepare, it's still the same energy on Friday afternoon. We are living with a certain energy. It's not necessarily always comfortable. We may not know why events happen exactly the way they do. But we do know that there is a pattern here, a pattern of shifts that are moving us towards something beautiful and meaningful.

Recognizing this solid, consistent pattern can give us a sense of safety, even amid the chaos. We might find *nechama*, even in a world of discomfort, by recognizing that big shifts are happening, even if we can't always see them at first.

Rabbi Yaacov Meir Shpilman, the Baal Tal Orot, addresses this idea.³⁰ He notices that when we look around our world, a world we know to be healing, what we see is disfunction. We see falsehood. All our spiritual work can feel like nothing, or worse, can feel as if it is pushing us in the opposite direction. The truth, however, is that this is only what it looks like on the outside. Deeper than what we can see, day and night, we are healing, and Hashem is moving our world toward redemption. It has always been this way. As the Midrash Rabbah (85:1) tells us, as the brothers were engaged in the sale of Yoseph, and as Yoseph and Reuven were both mourning in very different places, and as Yehudah was busy finding a wife, Hakadosh Baruch Hu was busy creating the light of Moshiach.

²⁹ *Midrash Shocheh Tov* 20 and 68. *Shemot Rabbah* 25:8. See also *Zohar* 2:184.

³⁰ *Nachalat Yaacov*, Ikar 12.

Events may not be comfortable, or understandable, but they are still part of the plan. We can be real about this. We can experience *nechama*, and still feel overwhelmed. That's real. It's okay to feel nervous. It's okay for it to feel overwhelming. That's part of our process. Also part of the process is asking the questions, "How do I want to respond?" and "Where do I go from here?"

The Two Aspects of the Geulah Process



We daven every day, three times a day, for the *geulah* in our *Shemonei Esrei* prayers. If we are alert to the language, we might notice that there are actually two distinct aspects of our *geulah* that we mention in our prayers. First, we ask Hashem to rebuild Yerushalayim, and to dwell within it again (בִּוּנָה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם). Then we ask Hashem to cause our salvation to sprout (מִצְמִיחַ קֶרֶן יְשׁוּעָה). These two ways we express our yearning for the coming of Moshiach, building and sprouting, reflect the two-fold nature of the process. The language of building reflects human efforts. The language of sprouting reflects a natural process that happens without our effort. Redemption has a miraculous, natural aspect to it. It also has an aspect that we are responsible for.

Hashem revealed this to us when He placed Adam in Gan Eden and instructed him "to work it and to guard it. (Bereshit 2:15)." The natural process of the world was occurring before we ever had a hand in it. We can respect that. At that same time, we were placed on this earth to guide that growth. We are the stewards of that growth. The same is true of the redemptive process. As we mentioned earlier, the Talmud Yerushalmi teaches that the redemption will occur through a slow process, "*kimah kimah*." This expresses the natural process of the redemption, which unfolds slowly. However, we can take responsibility for guiding the process.

What does it mean to take responsibility? One of the many places where Hashem teaches us that we have responsibility is at the beginning of *parshat Re'eh*. The *parsha* begins with the words, "Behold, I set before you today a blessing and a curse."³¹ Targum Yonatan translates these words for us as ברכתא והילופה, which means a blessing and a reframing. The Shelah Hakodesh explains that there is only one source of influence from above. When it comes into the world as Hashem intended, then we experience that influence as *bracha*. And if we choose to take that process and twist it, then it shows up in our world in a different way. We have the power, both on an individual and on a global scale, to reframe Divine influence in the world. We can experience it as it is meant to be experienced, as a *bracha*, or we can unfortunately reframe it and experience it negatively.³²

Collectively, we are the stewards of how our world experiences the Divine Intelligence that guides it. Our strength is the way that we choose to perceive and interact with our world. We shape how the redemptive process plays out and how we experience it.

The Dry Bones

וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵי הַנְּבִיאַ עַל־הַעֲצָמוֹת הָאֵלֶּה וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵיהֶם הִנֵּנִי שְׂמֵעוּ דְבַר־ה': כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי ה' לַעֲצָמוֹת
הָאֵלֶּה הִנֵּה אֲנִי מְבִיא בְכֶם רוּחַ וְחַיִּיתֶם: וְנָתַתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם גִּידִים וְהַעֲלַתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם בָּשָׂר וְקָרַמְתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם עוֹר וְנָתַתִּי בְּכֶם
רוּחַ וְחַיִּיתֶם וַיִּדְעֻתֶם כִּי־אֲנִי ה':

And He said to me, "Prophecy over these bones, and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of Hashem.' So says Hashem to these bones; Behold, I will cause a spirit to enter into you, and you shall live! And I will lay sinews upon you, and I will make flesh grow over you and cover you with skin and put breath into you, and you will live, and you will then know that I am Hashem." (Yechezkel 37: 4-6 for context, 1-14)

³¹ Devarim 11:26.

³² *Shenei Luchot HaBrit, Parshat Re'eh, Gimmel.*

We are coming out of a long and traumatic exile. At the end of his commentary on *Sefer De'Tzniuta*, the Vilna Gaon poignantly describes how from the time the Temple was destroyed we were left like a body without a soul. Our entrance into exile was like entering the grave. Over time, our nation decayed and disintegrated into pieces. We were perhaps even less than the dried bones of Yechezkel's vision. And then, we began to experience the process of preparing for redemption. We shook off the dust of exile, rose up and sat on our throne.³³

What we translate as evil (in Hebrew *ra*) is a disconnection from our unified source. The Leshem explains that the pain of exile is the pain of spiritual breaking apart and disintegration. The redemption happens through the opposite process. We are moving toward a Seventh Millennium which is a time of deep unity, connection and integration. We arrive there through a process of connective healing.³⁴

Through the *navi* Yechezkel, Hashem gifted us with a *nevuah* which graphically describes the process we are experiencing. In Yechezkel's vision there are stages. First, the dry bones come together, then the sinews, then the flesh, and then the skin. We become connected layer by layer. The layers of interconnectivity build a unified organism, and only then is the vessel ready to hold the spirit that brings it fully alive.

Where are we in this process? We don't know exactly, but we do know that we are no longer dry bones. We live in a world that is becoming more and more connected. We began with a lack of integration between the mind and the body. And we are now remedying that. We are tethering soul consciousness with our body and we are tethering more completely to the various levels of human experience. We are healing from our micro traumas and macro traumas as individuals, as families, as a nation, as humanity, and as multi-generational beings. Humanity has progressed tremendously, and we are

³³ *Vilna Gaon, Commentary on Sefer De'Tzniuta, Chapter 9. With a reference to Yeshayahu 52:2.*

³⁴ *Rabbi Shlomo Elyashiv, Leshem Shevo V'Achlama, Sefer HaDe'ah, Chelek 2, Drush 3, Anaf 6.*

beginning to feel the impact of the expanded consciousness that Hashem will gift us with at the end of the process.

We are becoming more interconnected. That interconnectedness has been building, slowly, slowly over time. A long time ago we began the healing conversation of integration of body and mind and soul. Then we heard Kabbalistic ideas that guided us to take responsibility to heal ourselves and our world. We explored the tremendous power of technology to transform our lives in whatever direction we decide to take it. We recognized the importance of each individual human created in the image of God. We currently have vast amounts of knowledge available at our fingertips. We have the opportunity to use that knowledge to grow and expand our conversation. We are challenged to live in an integrated way with all of humanity.

We are in the process of healing ourselves so that we can hold the expanded consciousness of redemption. Our ability to hold this consciousness is directly related to our ability to heal, and our ability to expand our conversation to all the disparate parts of ourselves, our nation and our world.

Healing



Globally, nationally and individually, we are moving toward a place of integration and unity. This process, which is unfolding naturally, is much bigger than any of us, and bigger than anything we can see clearly. Many things are not in our power to change. What we do have within our power is an invitation to enhance our experience of the process by taking responsibility for our own healing.

We can begin to do this by finding the Torah can guide us in this process, Torah which channels the *pnimiut haTorah*, the *sod* of the Torah. We usually understand *sod* to mean secret, however the word *sod* literally means to gather.³⁵ The *sod* of the Torah is the part of Torah which assembles and connects together the deepest wisdom into a unified whole. We sometimes also use the word kabbalah for this Torah. Kabbalah means a received tradition, but it also has the meaning of *makbil*, parallel or corresponding. Kabbalah is the received knowledge of how our world parallels higher spiritual worlds. It is also a science that reveals patterns that we can recognize in many different fields, including Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Psychology, and History. Recognizing these patterns invites us to navigate and integrate all the parts of our world.

The Torah that helps us find these patterns is thankfully readily available for us. We can learn this Torah through the classic works, such as Sefer Yetzirah, the Zohar, the Ramak and the Arizal if we have the background. However, anyone who is thirsty to learn, from any background, can find this wisdom in books of *Machshava*, *Mussar* and *Chassidut*.

The avodah of our time is to try to foster as much integration and unity as possible. We often hear people speaking about *bitachon* in our generation. *Bitachon* is exactly this integration. Real *bitachon* means feeling safe. What does feeling safe mean, in the context of our chaotic world? It begins with a recognition of who we are. I am consciousness and soul residing in a body. To feel safe means that my body feels safe with me. My body feels safe with my mind, and where my mind is leading it. Safety happens when body and soul are integrated.

In this last leg of our journey as humans, we are asked to create a relationship between spirit, mind and body where integration and healing can occur. The growing recognition of who we truly are as humans is fueling the global conversation around healing. We can foster and facilitate this progress in our own lives.

³⁵ See *Yirmiyahu 6:11*, *Tehillim 25:14*, and *Tehillim 111:1*.

We are allowed to live a good life. We can be present in the moment. We can recognize that we are in a generation which is marked by breakdown and chaos. And, we can choose to see this breakdown as part of a process that leads to breakthroughs and growth. We can choose to live the integrated Abrahamic Vision of caring, sharing, supporting and encouraging with good firm boundaries, regardless of what's going on. We can make space for others, and choose to build each other up, not knock each other down. We are the revealers of Hashem's light, and we can recognize that we do that best when we're strong, well, and healthy. We can look at the big picture, where we have come from, and where we are going, and we can choose to begin to heal.

Reflective Questions

I invite you to take a moment to consider, or even better to journal, your responses to the following prompts. Taking time to digest the information and integrate it will give it that much more ability to upgrade your life.

1. What is one key takeaway that impacted you?
2. What is one way you could bring these teachings into your life?
3. What is one idea you might like to share with a friend?

--Yehoshua Gerzi, Ramat Bet Shemesh, Israel

*Thanks to the Cause of all Causes for the privilege of achieving the completion of this text.
May we ascend from strength to strength, synergizing our efforts to restore and uplift our
nation.*

*May we embody profound gratitude, unwavering hope, and enduring resilience as we
navigate our shared journey.*