

Unlocking the Code

The Letters of
Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson

**TRANSLATIONS WITH
PRACTICAL LESSONS**
(Letter from *Erev Shavuot*)

Shlomo Mordechai Hamburger

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson was the father and teacher of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson (the "Rebbe"). Rabbi Levi Yitzchak passed away on the 20th of Av in 1944 (5704). This publication is in commemoration of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak's 75th *yahrzeit*.

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EREV SHAVUOT LETTER, 1928¹

ב"ה ערחה"ש תפר"ח.
דניפראפעטראווסק.

אוהבי יקירי שיחי, שלום לך.

החג ממשמש ובא, יהי רצון שיקויים בנו מ"ש ואתם תהיו לי ממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש, בקדושה היותר עליונה ונפלאה, (שלמעלה מקדושה ספה"ע, שגם בה אומרים ואטרה ואתקדש בקדושה של מעלה, ולטהרנו ולקדשנו בקדושתך העליונה. והקדושה דמ"ת שהוא ביום הני, היא עוד יותר עליונה. והיינו כי ספה"ע הוא תיקון הז' מזות שכ"א כלול מז', ועי"ז נמשך טהרה (מבינה) וקדושה (מוחכ') מחו"ב. ובחו"ב יש שני בח', ישסו"ת או"א תתאין ואו"א עילאין. זהו כפל הלשון, ואטרה ואתקדש, ולטהרנו ולקדשנו. ולהמשיך מאו"א עילאין יו"ד שבשם הוא דוקא ע"י רבים צבור שאינו פחות מי', ולכן לטהרנו ולקדשנו הוא ל' רבים, לא כמו אטרה ואתקדש. אך הקדושה שע"י מ"ת, גוי קדוש, שהוא ביום הני, שער הני שהוא כתר עליון, המשכת הקדושה הוא מכתר, וכמ"ש על מ"ת בעטרה שעטרה לו אמו כו', וזהו שמ"ת מתחיל באנכי שרומז על כתר. אך גם בזה יש כמה בח', כי בשבת פ' הבונה איתא ג' נוטריקין על אנכי, שנים בסר ישר, אנא נפשי כתבית יהבית, אמירה נעימה כתיבא יהיבא, וא' למפרע יהיבא כתיבא נאמנין אימרי'. ובילקוט במקומו כמדומה, הנם באופן אחר, א', אנא נפשי כתבית יהבית, ב', יהיבא כתיבא נעימה אמירא, למפרע, ג', אנא נהורך כלילך יאותך. הנך רואה השינוים שביניהם, ושרשי הדברים י"ל, הר"ת בסדר ישר הוא מצד קו הימין חסדים, ולמפרע (שכל למפרע הוא בח' דינים) הוא מצד קו השמאל, גבורות. ומצד קו האמצעי, מצד שהוא נוטה יותר לימין מלשמאל, (כי יעקב נוטה יותר לאברהם מליצחק כידוע) מצדו ג"כ הסדר בסדר ישר. וכידוע בענין שם ע"ב היוצא מג' פסוקים ויסע ויבא ויט, שהם ישר והפוך וישר. ומ"מ מאחר שקו האמצעי כולל גבורות ג"כ, יתכן לומר גם בו בסדר למפרע. (והראי' מא"ב דאתב"ש כו' שהאותיות תשר"ק כו' הולכים בו בסדר למפרע, ומ"מ התגברות הימין בו יותר משמאל, כי מתחלה הוא הא' ואח"כ הת', ולא בהיפך תאש"ב כו').

1 See *Likutei Levi Yitzchak*, Vol. 3, p. 199-200.

והנה שרש כל הג' קוין האלו הוא בכתר, היינו בהתלת רישין, גלגלתא, אורא וקרומא וח"ס. וזהו שאנכי שרומז על כתר כידוע יש בו ג' נוטריקין. הנוטריקין בסדר ישר, אנא נפשי כתבית יהבית, הוא מגלגלתא מקור החסידים, והנוטריקין בסדר ישר אמירה נעימה כו', הוא מאורא וקרומא, מקור קו האמצעי, והנוטריקין למפרע, יהיבא כתיבה נאמנין אימרי', הוא מח"ס מקור הגבורות. -- וזהו כשחושבין הב' רישין שבאד"ז שהם גלגלתא וח"ס, הם גופא לג' כמ"ש בע"ח שער א"א פ"ג, אבל הנה בכלל תושבין אותן רק לב' רישין. (כי אורא הוא מוחא בערך גלגלתא, וגלגלתא בערך ח"ס, ודו"ק). ויש עוד ראש היותר עליון שהוא רדל"א, ג"ר דעתיק. וזהו הנוטריקין אנא נפשי כו' בסדר מגלגלתא, הנוטריקין בסדר למפרע יהיבא כתיבה נעימה אמירה מח"ס עילאה דהיינו אורא. ושייך לומר שם גם למפרע, כי מקור קו האמצעי כולל גם גבורות, ואפילו מצד הדעת דעתיק שבשם שייך לומר ג"כ גבורה, כי דעת כולל חו"ג, ועיין ברמ"ז ר"פ קרח ע"ש. והנוטריקין הג' בסדר ישר, אנא נהורך כליך יאותך, הוא מרדל"א, ג"כ כח"ב דעתיק ולגדם הוא הג' לשונות, נהורך כליך יאותך. ועתה יובן שהגמרה מדברת רק באנכי המשכת הכתר מא"א מהג' בחי' גלגלתא אורא ח"ס, ולכן לא קנקטה הנוטריקין דאנא נהורין כו'. והילקות מדר גם מהמשכה שמעתיק מכל הג' רישין, ולכן קנקט הילקות הנוטריקין הזה, ולא קנקט הנוטריקין דיהיבא כתיבא נאמנין אימרי', כי די הנוטריקין שלמפרע דיהיבא כתיבא נעימה אמירא. ואולי י"ל התיבות גוי קדוש, גוי גימט' י"ט רומז על רדל"א הבין דעתיק, שהוא מי"ט בחי', כמ"ש בשער עתיק פ"א. וקדוש ירמוז על המ"ה דעתיק, ודו"ק והבין. שנהי' קדושים ע"י גופא ונשמתא דתורה, שהם נגלה ונסתר דתורה, בגופותינו ונשמותינו גם יחד. וכל מעשינו ודרכינו יהיו רק לשם שמים, והקדושה יהי' הן באיש והן באשה, שזהו ביום חתוננו זו מ"ת (והשרש הא מהבין ומ"ה היותר עליונים כנ"ל בפ' גוי קדוש). וזהו מה שהתחברות איש ואשה נק' קדושין. ובכן גם אצלך במהרה יהי' הדבר הזה בפועל ממש בבנין עדי עד. (עדי עד דוקא, שרומז על הכתרים העדיים שבמ"ת. ועיין בלקו"ת בהביאור דאלה פקודי). לשמחת לב כל אוהבין ומחבבין, ובתוכם גם (ועיין בע"ח שער א"א פ"ג, ושער הזיווגים סופ"ב) אני אביך אוהבך בלו"נ וחפץ בטובך האמתי תכה"י.

לוי יצחק שניאורסאהן

SYNOPSIS

B”H

Erev Chag HaShavuot, 5688 {1928}

Dnepropetrovsk²

My dear son, Greetings to you.

The holiday {*Shavuot*} is approaching. May it be His will that we merit what is written {*Shemot* 19:6} “And you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation,” with a most elevated and wondrous level of holiness ... that we should be holy through the body and soul of Torah, which represent the revealed and hidden qualities of Torah, with both our bodies and our souls. And all our deeds and ways should be merely for the sake of heaven, and the holiness should be both by the man and by the woman, which is {what is meant when we state that “on his wedding date” refers to} Matan Torah. ... This is why the binding of a man and woman together is called *Kiddushin*. So it {i.e., your wedding} should be by you speedily in actuality, with an everlasting Jewish home. ... With the joy and gladness of heart of all those that love you and like you, and among them also ... I, your father, who loves you with all my heart and soul, and desires that you should have true goodness forever.

Levi Yitzchak Schneerson

2 At the time this letter was written, the Rebbe was in Berlin, Germany. He had enrolled in classes at various institutions, including the University of Berlin. See Oberlander and Shmotkin, *Early Years*, *supra*, pp. 283-284.

TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY

B”H

Erev Chag HaShavuot, 5688 {1928}
Dnepropetrovsk

My dear son, Greetings to you.

The holiday {*Shavuot*} is approaching. May it be His will that we merit what is written {*Shemot* 19:6} “And you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation,” with a most elevated and wondrous level of holiness³

{Explaining the elevated and wondrous level of holiness}

{This “elevated and wondrous” level of holiness should be} one that is even higher than the holiness of *Sefirat Ha’Omer*, about which we also ask {in the prayer after reciting the counting of the Omer}: “and may I become purified and sanctified {*v’etoher v’eskadeish*} with holiness from on high,⁴

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- 3 The letter now explains the depths of this blessing related to an elevated and wondrous level of holiness. What is this level of holiness? Where does it come from? Because it is Shavuot and the time we receive the Ten Commandments (after having counted 49 days of *Sefirat Ha’Omer*), Rabbi Levi Yitzchak connects this blessing to several things, including: (1) That we should be to G-d a kingdom of priests and a holy nation; (2) That we need to understand what the level of holiness to which he refers really is and where it comes from; (3) Understanding how these questions are connected to the Ten Commandments (which begin with the word *Anochi*); and (4) How Rabbi Levi Yitzchak then draws this into a personal blessing to his son who is soon to be married.
 - 4 Later in the same prayer, we ask that G-d repair our souls from baseness and defects, referring specifically to *nefesh*, *ruach*, and *neschama*. There are five levels of the soul, each reflecting a different

and may it purify **us** and sanctify **us** {*u'letahareinu u'lekadsheinu*} with Your supreme holiness. And the holiness of Matan Torah {at the giving of the Torah} which is on the 50th day {after the 49 days of *Sefirat Ha'Omer*} is even higher {than the prior levels of holiness}. This is because *Sefirat Ha'Omer* is a fixing/correction of the seven *middos* {emotive character traits and methods} each one {of the *middos*} of which consists of seven {*middos*},⁵ and through this process,

level of consciousness. See *Bereishit Rabbah* 14:9; *Devarim Rabbah* 2:37. The highest level is *yechida*, the soul's deepest essence. Then comes *chaya*, which is also concealed. Next is the *neschama* (which includes *chaya* and *yechida* within it) which is the part of the soul proper that connects one Jew to another. The fourth level is *ruach*, the spiritual or emotional level of the soul (perhaps it can be thought of as the subconscious part of our soul). Finally, there is *nefesh* which is what animates and is connected to the body (consciousness). The levels of *nefesh*, *ruach*, and *neschama* are the parts of the soul that exist in our physical bodies. The other two levels are at too high of a level to be constrained by or connected to the physical. In asking for a reparation of the soul from baseness and defects, therefore, the prayer for *Sefirat Ha'Omer* references the lower three levels of the soul which are the ones that could be impacted by baseness and defects. Therefore, a higher level of holiness as referred to in the beginning of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak's letter is one above these three soul levels referred to in the *Sefirat Ha'Omer* prayer.

- 5 The seven emotive attributes are *Chesed*, *Gevura*, *Tiferes*, *Netzach*, *Hod*, *Yesod*, and *Malchus*. In counting *Sefirat Ha'Omer*, each of the seven attributes is multiplied by seven because each day reflects a combination of these attributes. For example, the first week of *Sefirat Ha'Omer* is associated with *Chesed*. Thus, the first day has the quality of *Chesed she'b'Chesed*; the second day is *Gevura she'b'Chesed*, and so forth. For further explanation, see Rabbi Simon Jacobson, *Forty-Nine Steps to Personal Refinement According to the Jewish Tradition* (1996 VHH/Meaningful Life Center).

purification (from *Bina*) and holiness (from *Chochma*) from *Chochma* and *Bina* are drawn down.⁶

**{Drawing on Kabbalah
to explain the higher level of holiness}**

Now, with *Chochma* and *Bina* there are two separate qualities: *Yisrael Saba u'Tevunah*⁷ – lower level of *Abba V'Imma* {father

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- 6 *Chochma* is a very high level of conceptual intellect. Left on its own, that spark or flash of intellect does not penetrate the world below. The idea of *Chochma* is drawn down through *Bina* (understanding). This is why *Chochma* is associated with holiness; it is a higher level that then is actualized below through purification (*Bina*). This will be alluded to further in the text below.
- 7 In Kabbalistic terms, and by way of a simplistic overview, *sefiro*s refer to filters through which divine light (or presence) is revealed. The process of divine revelation is one that goes through various “worlds” to descend into our existence. Within each world, there are then multiple levels through which this descent occurs, beginning with “*Kesser*” (crown) and then through the intellectual faculties and emotional faculties. Each of the levels in turn has two qualities (referred to as *partzufim*); one quality receives from that which is above (it “looks up”) and a second “looks down” to reveal to the level below. Technically, the lower level can experience both qualities – there is a revelation descending from the *sefira* that is simply receiving from above and there is a revelation descending from the quality that reveals to that which is below. To understand this letter, the key faculties are three “intellectual” faculties, *Kesser* (crown), *Chochma* (the spark of intellect), and *Bina* (the understanding part of intellect). The two *partzufim* qualities of *Kesser* are referred to as *Atik* (or *Atik Yomin*) {G-d’s pleasure} which “looks up” and receives from the highest level of G-dliness and *Arich Anpin* {G-d’s will} (which “looks down” and reveals to that which is below). In turn, *Chochma* for itself has two of these qualities – *Abba* “looks up” to receive from *Arich Anpin* (which is looking down to *Abba*); and *Yisrael Saba* “looks down” to reveal to the emotional

and mother} and upper level of *Abba V'Imma*. This is why the language used {in the prayer for *Sefirat Ha'Omer* as explained above} is repeated – “and may I become purified and sanctified” “and may it purify **us** and sanctify **us**”. The act of drawing down {i.e., the drawing down of purification and holiness} from the upper level of *Abba V'Imma*, which is represented by the *yud* of G-d's name⁸ is only through the many, a *tzibbur/minyan* {prayer quorum} that cannot consist of fewer than 10 in number, and therefore the language of *u'letahareinu u'lekadsheinu* {“and may

qualities “below” the intellectual faculties. Finally, *Bina* also has two qualities – *Imma* “looks up” to receive and *Tevunah* “looks down” to the emotional qualities. Collectively, *Chochma* and *Bina* represent, respectively, the male and female aspects of the intellectual faculties. *Kesser* has male and female qualities united within itself; however, *Chochma* and *Bina* manifest the male and female qualities separately. Thus, when Rabbi Levi Yitzchak refers to *Yisrael Saba u'Tevnuah*, he refers to the combination of male (*Abba*) (*Yisrael Saba* from *Chochma*) and female (*Imma*) (*Tevunah* from *Bina*). The “upper level” of these aspects refers to the qualities as reflected in *Atik* (the upper level of *Kesser*) and the “lower level” of these aspects refers to the qualities as reflected in *Arich Anpin* (the lower level of *Kesser*). This latter point will become more relevant in the comparison below of the acronyms for *Anochi* used in the Gemara as opposed to those used in the Yalkut.

- 8 This refers to the *yud* which is the first of the four-letter name of G-d known as the Tetragrammaton (*yud* and *hei* and *vov* and *hei*). These four letters each refer to the four-stage process of the creation of this world with the first *yud* drawing down the initial spark of conception from the highest levels. Above the first *yud* is the top part of the *yud* (the “dot” or *kotz* above the *yud*). See *Menachot* 29a and *Tanya, Iggeret Teshuvah*, chapter 8 (explaining the significance of the “*kotz*” of the *yud*). Kabbalah teaches that the uppermost part (*kotz*) of the *yud* refers to *Kesser*, the crown and the Divine Will (*Ratzon*).

it purify *us* and sanctify *us*”} is in the plural, unlike the singular form of *v’etoher v’eskadeish* {“and may I become purified and sanctified”}. Nevertheless, {with regard to} the holiness that was at Matan Torah, {where we became} a “*Goy Kadosh*” {a Holy Nation}⁹, which is on the 50th day, the 50th gate which is *Kesser elyon* (the upper *Kesser*/crown),¹⁰ the drawing down of holiness is from *Kesser*, as is written about Matan Torah “with a crown that he was crowned by his mother, etc.”¹¹

{Connecting the higher level of holiness to Matan Torah and *Anochi*}

This is why Matan Torah begins with *Anochi* {the first word of the Ten Commandments} which alludes to *Kesser*.¹² But also

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- 9 The verse “and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Ex. 19:6), was said on the 2nd day of Sivan. However, it refers to the later time (on the 50th day) at the giving of the Torah so that when G-d gives the Torah to the Jewish people, then they will become to Him a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.
- 10 *Kesser* refers to a transcendent level of G-dliness/Essence. As the crown, *Kesser* sits above the 10 *sefiros*; above *sechel* (intellect) and the emotive attributes. See also note 10 below.
- 11 *Shir Ha’Shirim* 3:11. The full phrase in *Shir Ha’Shirim* is “with a crown that he was crowned by his mother on his wedding date.” The reference in *Shir Ha’Shirim* to “on his wedding date,” refers to the day of giving of the Torah (see Mishnah *Taanis*, end of chapter 4).
- 12 Kabbalistic teachings point out a distinction between *Ani* (אני) and *Anochi* (אנוכי), the latter representing a deeper level of identity (or perhaps source of identity). See *Ohr HaTorah*, Yitro, p. 915. This is indicated by the addition of the letter *chaf* (כ) which represents *Kesser*, the supernal level of “the Crown.” *Rabeinu Bachye* on Genesis 20:17; Rabbi Chaim Vital, *Shaar HaPesukim*, *Shemot* 29b; Rabbi Chaim of Volozhin, *Nefesh HaChaim*, 1:18; *Likutei Torah* of Arizal, *Yitro*, 62b; *Likutei Torah* of Alter Rebbe, *Shir Ha-Shirim*, 35c. This transcendent level of G-dliness includes (a) G-d’s Delight, which is the higher inner level within *Kesser*, and (b) G-d’s Will, the

within this {level} there are many levels, as we see that in the Talmud (*Shabbat*, chapter *Haboneh*, 105a), there are three acronyms of *Anochi* cited in the Talmud, two are “forward” acronyms “*Ana Nafshi Kesavis Yehavis*” {“I myself wrote [the Torah] and gave it”} and “*Amirah Na’ima Kesivah Yehiva*” {“A pleasant saying was written and given”} and one is a “backward” acronym “*Yehiva Kesivah Ne’emanin Amareha*” {“It was given in writing and its statements are true”}.¹³ In the *Yalkut Shimoni*¹⁴ we see a similar construct of three acronyms

outer level within *Kesser*, *Kesser* serves as the intermediate level and bridge between the infinite *Ohr Ein Sof* and the spiritual worlds.

- 13 A forward acronym is one where the first letter of each word (*aleph, nun, chaf, yud*) in the referential phrase spells the acronym (*Anochi* in this case). A backward acronym is one where the first letter of each word in the referential phrase spells the acronym backwards (as in *yud, chaf, nun, aleph*). Rabbi Levi Yitzchak elaborates on the issue of using acronyms for this purpose in his longer essay on *Parshat Yitro*. *Likutei Levi Yitzchak*, Volume 3 pp. 51-57. Interestingly, the phrases used to form the acronym “*Anochi*” are not verses or phrases otherwise used anywhere else in *Tanach* or in other literature; they were constructed specifically to identify and illuminate certain aspects of “*Anochi*” as a concept. That is part of what raises the questions for Rabbi Levi Yitzchak to explore – Why use acronyms at all? Why not explain what is meant? Why use an acronym for *Anochi* specifically (and not just explain what it means)? Why use different acronyms in the Gemara and in the Yalkut? Why use some forward and some backward? All of these questions underlie his explanation in this letter and, even more, in the longer essay.
- 14 The *Yalkut Shimoni* is a compilation of an aggadah (midrash) on the books of *Tanach*. The compiler is frequently cited as R. Shimon of Frankfort, “*rosh hadarshanim*” (the head of exegetes). The Yalkut on *Parshat Yitro* (Part 1, p. 172 in Jerusalem edition) provides three acronyms for *Anochi*. Rabbi Levi Yitzchak’s letter explains the differences between the acronyms in the Gemara and the acronyms

but with some differences. One is “*Ana Nafshi Kesavis Yehavis*” {which is the same as in the Talmud}, a second one “*Yehiva Kesivah Na’ima Amirah*” {which is a backwards version of what is in the Talmud}, and a third “*Ana Nehoreich, Kelileich, Ye’useich*” {“I am your light, your crown, your benefit {when you accept the Ten Commandments”}¹⁵ which is not used in the Talmud at all}. Surely you see the differences among them.¹⁶

{The significance of acronyms}

It is possible to learn the sources of these ideas from the following: Acronyms that are “forward” are from the *kav*¹⁷ on the right side that is associated with *Chesed*/kindness¹⁸ and the “backward” acronyms (since all backward movement is from the aspect of judgment/severity) are from the *kav* on the left, or *Gevuros*. And from the perspective of the middle *kav*, that inclines more toward the right than the left (because *Yaakov* inclined more toward *Avraham* than to *Yitzchak* as is known¹⁹), this *kav* is also represented by a “forward” acronym.

used by the Yalkut. See the longer explanation by Rabbi Levi Yitzchak at *Likutei Levi Yitzchak*, Volume 3, pp. 51-57.

- 15 It seems to be based on *Midrash Tanchuma Parshat Yisro* (Buber edition) (#15): “Rabbi Brechyoh said: *Ana Nehoreich, Kelileich, Ye’useich* (I am your light, your crown, your benefit). When? When you will accept the Ten Commandments”.
- 16 Appendix A includes a chart that shows the different acronyms and then raises the questions about the differences among them.
- 17 A “*kav*” refers to a ray of “light” from *Ein Sof* (G-d’s Essence) which contains the ingredients for worlds below. As a *kav* descends, light is more concealed and continues to fill the worlds below.
- 18 See Appendix A.
- 19 This idea is based on the verse in *Parshat Vayetze* (*Bereishit* 28:13) where G-d called out to *Yaakov* as the G-d of “*Avraham* your father”

This idea {forward, backward, forward and integrating all three} is also seen in the 72-letter name of G-d that is derived from three *Pesukim* (verses) {in *Shemot* 14:19-21} known as ויט, ויבא, ויסע which are forward, backward and forward {and then integrated to form 72 three-letter names of G-d}.²⁰ In all events, the middle *kav* incorporates *Gevuros* (severity or strength) as well. It is also correct to say that it includes within it the backward acronym attribute. (And it is seen in the *alephbet* of אַתב"ש/*atbash*, etc.,²¹ where the letters תשר"ק/*tashrak* (spelling the alphabet backwards from the last letter ת), etc., go in a backward direction.²² In all events, we can see that the right is greater than the left, because *atbash* begins with א (coming from the right side) and then ת (coming from the left side) and not in reverse as in תאש"ב/*tashb*, etc.²³

Now, the root of these three *kavim* is from *Kesser*, which includes the three “heads” – *Galgalta*, *Avira u’Kruma*, and *Chochma Stimaah*.²⁴ This is also true of *Anochi* which hints at

and the G-d of *Yitzchak*, without a mention of *Yitzchak* as *Yaakov*’s father.

- 20 See Appendix B for a further explanation of the 72-letter name.
- 21 The אַתב"ש/*atbash* system is a type of substitution code where the letters of the Hebrew alphabet are reversed and substituted. That is: the first letter א, is substituted for the last letter ת; the second letter ב, is substituted for the second to last letter ש; and so on.
- 22 In other words, when using “*atbash*,” the structure is that the letters progress normally from right to left (א, ב, ג, etc.) and are then combined with the letters from the end of the alphabet backwards from left to right (ת, ש, ר, etc.).
- 23 In *atbash* the א (from the right side of the alphabet) comes before ת (the last letter on the left side of the alphabet); the “code” doesn’t start with ת first (from the left side/*Gevuros*) and then א (from the right side/*Chesed*).
- 24 *Kesser* is the highest root source of the ten *sefiros*; *Chesed*, *Gevura*, *Tiferes* (and even *Da’as*) of *Atik Yomin* (G-d’s pleasure, the *Pnimius*

Kesser and as is known there are three acronyms {associated with *Anochi* as explained above}. The first forward acronym “*Ana Nafshi Kesavis Yehavis*,” is from *Galgalta* which is sourced in *Chesed* {of *Atik*}. The second acronym that is in a forward orientation “*Amirah Na’ima Kesivah Yehiva*,” is from *Avira* and *Kruma*, which is the source of the middle *kav* {*Da’as* and *Tiferes* of *Atik*}²⁵. The one backwards acronym, is from *Chochma Stimaah* which is sourced in *Gevuros* {of *Atik*}.

{Taking it to an even higher level in *Atik*}

This is when one considers the two heads on these words which are *Galgalta* and *Chochma Stimaah*,²⁶ these are the body for the third (*Avira* and *Kruma*) as is written in *Eitz Chaim*, *Sha’ar Arich Anpin*, *perek* 3. Here, however, we consider them as just two heads. (Because *Avira* is diminished or subsumed within *Galgalta* {when compared to *Galgalta*}, and *Galgalta* is diminished or subsumed when compared to *Chochma Stimaah*,²⁷). And there is an even higher head and that would

of *Kesser*) is vested in the three “heads” of *Arich Anpin* (G-d’s will, the *Chitzonius* of *Kesser*), which are: *Galgalta* (the skull), *Avira* and *Kruma* (the membrane between the skull and the brain), and *Chochma Stimaah* (the “hidden” *Chochma* or the “brain”).

- 25 *Chesed* of *Atik* is vested in *Galgalta*, *Gevura* of *Atik* is vested in *Chochma Stimaah*, *Tiferes* of *Atik* is vested in *Kruma*, and *Da’as* of *Atik* is vested in *Avira* (see *Likutei Levi Yitzchak*, Volume 3, p. 52)
- 26 In other words, *Chesed* and *Gevura* are the two essential “heads.” *Tiferes*, being a mixture of *Chesed* and *Gevura* (the other two heads) means the other two become the “body” for *Tiferes*.
- 27 The point here is that when one reduces the three attributes (kindness, severity/judgment, and mercy) to their essential components, one only needs to consider kindness (*Chesed*) and severity/judgment (*Gevuros*). Then, if one further reduces them to their essence and source, severity/judgment (*Gevuros/Chochma Stimaah*) is the key because judgment is essentially for good. By

be *Radla*,²⁸ the first 3 *sefiros* of *Atik*. {Now, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak refers to the acronyms used in *Yalkut*.} And the acronym of “*Ana Nafshi*, etc.” which is in a forward order is from *Galgalta*. The backwards acronym, “*Yehiva Kasiva Ne’ima Amirah*” is from the upper level of *Chochma Stimaah* which is *Avira*. And

contrast, in another context, Tanya suggests that *Chesed* predominates over *Gevura*. *Tanya, Igeret HaKodesh*, chapter 12. “Now, it is well known that Israelites are by their very nature compassionate and performers of kindness. This is so because their souls issued from His blessed attributes in which *Chesed* prevails over the attribute of *din*, *Gevura*, and *tzimtzum*, and as it is written: ‘His *Chesed* prevails over those who fear Him,’ (Ps. 103:11).” This alludes to a view that the Divine attribute of *Chesed* prevails over the Divine attribute of *Gevura*. By contrast, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak is positing that *Tiferes* is diminished when compared to *Chesed*; but we also see *Chesed* diminished when compared to *Gevura*. Look in Rabbi Levi Yitzchak’s longer explanation (*Likutei Levi Yitzchak*, Volume 3, pp. 51-57) for this idea. Also, the gematria (numerological equivalent) for *Gevura* is 216 which is 3 times 72 (gematria of *Chesed* is 72). Each of G-d’s 72 hidden names possesses 3 letters (see Appendix B), in all that is also 216 letters (72 times 3) which corresponds to *Gevura*.

- 28 *Radla* is an acronym for *reisha d’lo ityada* (“the head that cannot be known”). In Kabbalah, this refers to the deepest aspect of G-d’s Essence which is entirely unknowable; unknowable because it is a level of “Essence” that transcends intellect or knowledge entirely. It is unknowable because it simply cannot be known – it is beyond our capacity. *Radla* includes the three higher *sefiros* of *Kesser*, *Chochma*, and *Bina* of *Atik Yomin*. The other seven *sefiros* of *Atik Yomin* are contained within *Arich Anpin*. Because the higher *sefiros* are not contained within any other level, they are “revealed.” It is not a type of revelation that allows for perception or consciousness of revelation; but it is just not concealed within any other level or reality. *Radla* is the source or origin of the purest or most essential faith in G-d.

it is fair to say this also as to the backward acronym, because the source of the middle *kav* includes also *Gevuros* {which is the left *kav*}; even on behalf of *Da'as* of *Atik* that is vested there it is also fair to say that it includes *Gevura*, because *Da'as* includes *Chesed* and *Gevura*. See *Ramaz, Parshat Korach*. And the third acronym that is forward, “*Ana Nehoreich, Kelileich, Ye’useich*” (“I am your light, your crown, your benefit”), is from *Radla*, also *Kesser, Chochma*, and *Bina* of *Atik*, and corresponding to it are the three specific words *Nehoreich* {associated with *Chochma*}, *Kelileich* {associated with *Kesser*}, *Ye’useich* {associated with *Bina*}.²⁹

And now it is understood that the Gemara speaks just of *Anochi* – the drawing down of *Kesser* from *Arich Anpin* {which is lower than *Atik*}, from the three attributes of *Galgalta, Avira* and *Chochma Stimaah*; and, therefore, it does not mention the acronym of *Ana Nehoreich*, etc. The Yalkut, by comparison, speaks also about a drawing down that is from *Atik* from all the three heads and, therefore, the Yalkut mentions this acronym (*Ana Nehorich*, etc.) and the Yalkut does not mention the acronym of “*Yehiva Kesivah Ne’emanin Amareha*,” because it is enough to mention the backward acronym of “*Yehiva Kesivah Na’ima Amirah*.”³⁰

And perhaps one could also learn this from the words “גוי קדוש” {a “holy nation”}. גוי {ג (3), ו (6) and י (10)} has the gematria of 19 which hints at *Radla* the “*ban*” of *Atik*, which has 19 attributes

29 The association of these words with *Kesser, Chochma*, and *Bina* are based on the extended discussion written by Rabbi Levi Yitzchak in the longer explanation. *Likutei Levi Yitzchak*, Volume 3, p. 55.

30 The backward acronym of “*Yehiva Kesivah Na’ima Amirah*” hints at both *Avira* and *Chochma Stimaah*, for the words “*Amirah Na’ima*” correspond to *Avira*, and the fact that the acronym is backwards corresponds to *Gevura* (of *Atik*) which is vested in *Chochma Stimaah* (see *Likutei Levi Yitzchak*, Volume 3 p. 56).

as is written in {*Eitz Chaim*} *Sha'ar Atik, perek 1*,³¹ and קדוש hints at the “*mah*” of *Atik*, look there and understand).

{Holiness and a wedding}

... that we should be holy through the body and soul of Torah, which represent the revealed and hidden qualities of Torah, with both our bodies and our souls. And all our deeds and ways should be merely for the sake of heaven, and the holiness should be both by the man and by the woman, which is {what is meant when we state that “on his wedding date”³² (*Shir Ha'Shirim, ibid*) refers to} Matan Torah³³ (And the source is from the highest levels of *Ban* and *Mah*, as stated above in the explanation of *Goy Kadosh*).

This is why the binding of a man and woman together is called *Kiddushin*. So it {i.e., your wedding} should be by you speedily in actuality, with an everlasting Jewish home (עדי עד which hints at the crowns that bore witness for us at Matan Torah.³⁴ See the

31 Because *Atik* selected from the name “*ban*” as follows: the first 5 levels of *Kesser* of “*ban*”, the first 3 levels of *Chochma* of “*ban*”, the first 4 levels of *Bina* of “*ban*”, and the 7 crowns of each of the lower 7 levels of “*ban*”; $5+3+4+7 = 19$.

32 *Shir Ha-Shirim*, 3:11.

33 Mishnah *Taanis*, end of chapter 4 (G-d's giving of the Torah to the Jewish people is analogized to a wedding between G-d and the Jewish people).

34 The Talmud at explains that at the time *B'nai Yisrael* were at Mt. Sinai 600,000 ministering angels came to each Jew and tied two crowns to each person; one corresponding to “we will do” and one corresponding to “we will listen.” (*Shabbat* 88a) These crowns are a metaphor for kingship and priesthood as G-d alluded to when saying (*Shemot* 19:6) “And you shall be for to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” See *Maharasha*. When *B'nai Yisrael* sinned at the Golden Calf, the Torah states that *B'nai Yisrael* were stripped of their “jewelry from Horeb,” which allude to these same crowns. See *Shemot* 33:6 and Rashi on this verse.

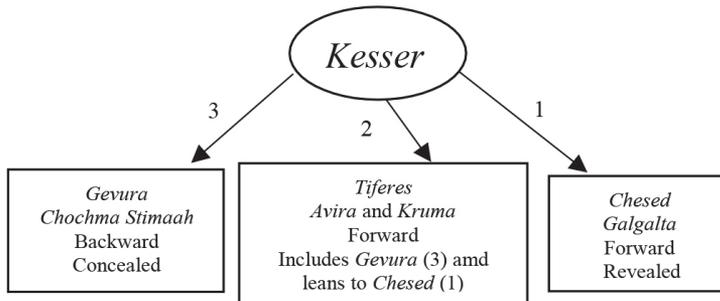
Likkutei Torah in the explanation for *Eileh Pikudei* / “אלה פקודי”³⁵). With the joy and gladness of heart of all those that love you and like you, and among them also (see *Eitz Chaim: Sha’ar Arich Anpin* chapter 13; *Sha’ar Hazivugim* end of chapter 2) I, your father; who loves you with all my heart and soul, and desires that you should have true goodness forever.

Levi Yitzchak Schneerson

35 Page 7b-c, where he explains 3 interpretations of עדי עדיים (Yechezkel 16:7).

APPENDIX A

ANOCHI ACRONYMS IN GEMARA AND YALKUT



Gemara

<p>3. <i>Yehiva Kesivah Ne'emanin Amareha</i> ("It was given in writing and its statements are true") יהיבא כתיבה נאמנין אמריה</p>	<p>2. <i>Amirah Na'ima Kesivah Yehiva</i> ("A pleasant saying was written and given") אמירא נעימה כתיבה יהיבא</p>	<p>1. <i>Ana Nafshi Kesavis Yehavis</i> ("I myself wrote [the Torah] and gave it") אנא נפשי כתבית יהבית</p>
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Yalkut

<p>3. <i>Yehiva Kesivah Na'ima Amirah</i> ("Given and written was a pleasant saying") יהיבא כתיבה נעימה אמירא</p>	<p>2. <i>Ana Nehoreich, Kelileich, Ye'useich</i> ("I am your light, your crown, your benefit [when you accept the Ten Commandments]") אנא נהורך כלייך יאותך</p>	<p>1. <i>Ana Nafshi Kesavis Yehavis</i> ("I myself wrote [the Torah] and gave it") אנא נפשי כתבית יהבית</p>
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The Gemara and the Yalkut each use three acronyms -- #1 and #2 are "forward" acronyms (*aleph, nun, chof, yud*) and one (#3) is a "backward" acronym (*yud, chof, nun, aleph*).

For more information, see Rabbi Levi Yitzchak's longer explanation (*Likutei Levi Yitzchak*, Volume 3, pp. 51-57) which addresses several issues, including:

1. Why does the Gemara not mention the Yalkut acronym *Ana Nehoreich*, etc.? And why does the Yalkut not mention *Yehiva Kesivah Ne'emanin Amareha* (from the Gemara)?
2. Why does the Gemara use the acronym *Amirah Na'ima Kesivah Yehiva* as a forward acronym whereas the Yalkut uses it as a backward acronym?
3. Why do the Gemara and Yalkut express their thoughts in the form of acronyms and not through a text-based explanation?
4. Why do the Gemara and Yalkut express the thoughts specifically using acronyms for *Anochi*?

APPENDIX B

THE “72-LETTER NAME”

In the *Erev Shavuot* letter, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak refers to the 72-letter name of G-d. To clarify, there are two different possible references to the “72-letter” name of G-d. One understanding is to consider the numerological significance of how to “count” the name known as “*Havayah*” (the *yud* (י) and *hei* (ה) and *vov* (ו) and *hei* (ה)). Depending on how these letters are spelled out, they correspond to different numerical equivalent names of G-d. For example, the name of G-d that corresponds to 72 (עב) is determined by using the numeric equivalents of each letter being spelled out as follows:

$$י"ד (20) + ה"י (15) + וי"ו (22) + ה"י (15) = 72$$

Lurianic Kabbalah uses this concept as the “72” name of G-d as opposed to the 72-letter name of G-d described below and as used by Rabbi Levi Yitzchak.

The 72-letter name referred to by Rabbi Levi Yitzchak is constructed by combining three verses from *Shemot* 14:19-21. The three verses are:

יט ויסע מלאך האלקים החלף לפני מחנה ישראל וילך מאחריהם ויסע עמוד הענן מפניהם
ויצמד מאחריהם :

כ ויבא בין | מחנה מצרים ובין מחנה ישראל ויהי הענן והחשן ויאר אותה לילה ולא קרב זה אל
זה פלטה לילה :

כא ויט משה את ידו על הים ויולף י-ה-ו-ה | את הים ברוח קדים עזה פלטה לילה וישם את
הים לתרכה ויבקעו המים :

Each of these verses contains 72 letters. These are the letters of the 72-letter name that explains the unusual fact that three verses in a row are made up of 72 letters (as the Kabbalists pointed out). By combining the verses in the manner illustrated in the box

below, 72 different three-letter combinations are created. The process consists of spelling the first and third verses in a forward direction and the second verse in a backwards direction.

TABLE ILLUSTRATING THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE 72-LETTER NAME OF G-D

The first letter in each box reading from right to left, beginning with the box in the *upper right* corner, spells out the first verse. The middle letter in each box reading from left to right, beginning with the box in the *lower left* corner, spells out the second verse. The third letter in each box reading from right to left, beginning with the box in the *upper right* corner spells out the third verse. See *Talmud Bavli Sukka* 45a where there is a reference to two of the names (*Ani v'ho*) which appear in the shaded boxes.

Using the first letter of the words (in larger font) and going from right to left beginning with the box on the upper right corner of the table, it spells the verse beginning with: ויסע							
Using the third letter of the words (in larger font) and going from right to left beginning with the box on the upper right corner of the table, it spells the verse beginning with: ויט							
כהת	אכא	ללה	מהש	עלם	סיט	ילי	והר
הקם	הרי	מבה	יזל	ההע	לאו	אלד	הזי
חהו	מלה	ייי	גלך	פהל	לזו	כלי	לאו
ושר	לכב	אום	ריי	שאה	ירת	האא	נתה
יין	רהע	העם	אני	מנד	כוק	להח	יחו
מיה	עשל	ערי	סאל	ילה	וול	מיכ	ההה
פוי	מבה	נית	ננא	עמם	החש	דני	והו
מחי	ענו	יהה	ומב	מצר	הרח	ייל	נמם
מלם	היי	יבמ	ראה	חבו	איע	מנק	דמב
Using the middle letter of the words (in larger font) and going from left to right beginning with the box on the lower left corner of the table, it spells the verse beginning with: ויבא							

UNLOCKING THE CODE

The Letters of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson

Translations with Practical Lessons

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson was the father and teacher of Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, the seventh Lubavitcher Rebbe. For about 25 years, the Rebbe lived, for the most part, in his parents' home where the Rebbe and his father developed a close personal bond. The Rebbe and his father last saw each other in the fall of 1927 (29 Tishrei 5688) and would never see each other again in the physical world. During 1928, and pending the Rebbe's wedding date, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak wrote a series of letters to his son all related to the Rebbe's upcoming wedding. Four of the letters were written on the eve of Passover, Shavuot, Rosh Hashanah, and Sukkot. In each letter, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak tied the holiday to his son's upcoming wedding through explaining the Kabbalistic significance of each holiday and how it relates to different aspects of marriage. These letters show not just Torah insights but also very personal insights into the close connection between Rabbi Levi Yitzchak (the then 50-year old father) and the Rebbe (his then 26-year old son).

"It is my obligation and great *zechus* to suggest, request, etc., that everyone study from {my father's} teachings..." From a letter of the Rebbe, *Motzei Tisha B'Av* 5744 (1984).

In this publication, Shlomo M. Hamburger translates and analyzes these four letters. In addition, Mr. Hamburger includes personal essays explaining some practical lessons to learn from these letters.



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