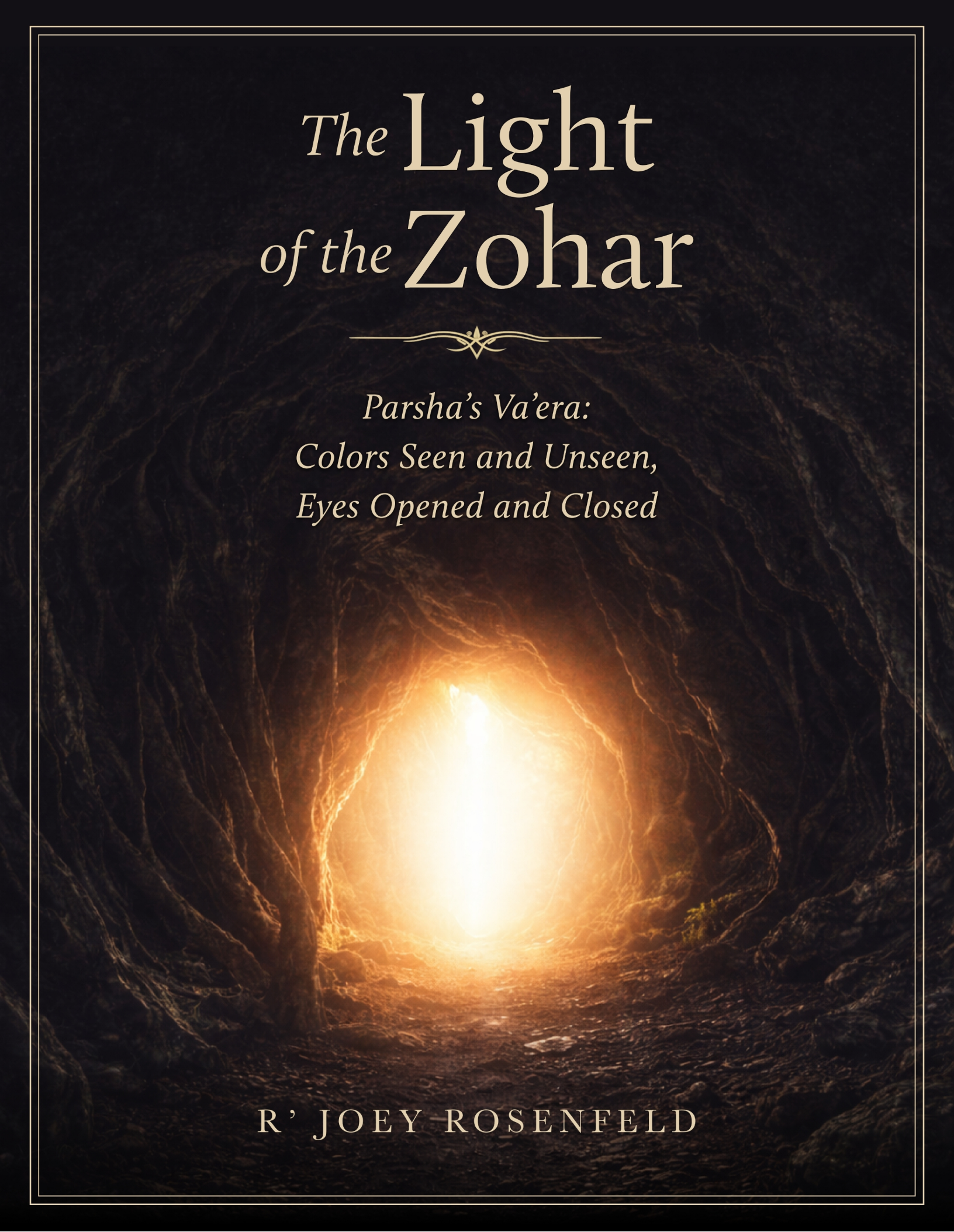




The Light *of the* Zohar



*Parsha's Va'era:
Colors Seen and Unseen,
Eyes Opened and Closed*

R' JOEY ROSENFELD

רבי שמעון הנה יתיב יומא, חד, ורבי אלעזר בריה, (עמיה) ורבי אבא עמיה. אמר רבי אלעזר, האי קרא דכתיב, וארא אל אברהם אל יצחק ואל יעקב וגו'. מהו וארא, ואדבר מבני ליה. אמר ליה, אלעזר ברי, רזא עלאה איהו.

תא חזי, אית גוונים דמתחזין, ואית גוונים דלא מתחזין. ואלין ואלין, אינון רזא עלאה דמהימנותא, ובני נשא לא ידעין ליה, ולא מסתכלין ביה ואלין דמתחזין, לא זכה בהו בר נש, עד דאתו אבהו, וקיימו עליהו. ועל דא כתיב וארא, דחמו, אינון גוונים דאתגליין.

ומאן גוונים דאתגליין, אינון דאל שדי, דאינון גוונים דחזו עילאה (נ"א חזו דגוונים עלאין) ואלין אתחזין. וגוונים דלעילא, סתימין דלא אתחזין, לא קאים איניש עליהו, בר ממשה. ועל דא כתיב, ושמי יי' לא נודעתי להם, לא אתגליתי לון בגוונים עלאין. ואי תימא, דאבהו לא הוו ידעי בהו. אלא הוו ידעי, מגו אינון דאתגליין.

כתיב (דניאל י"ב ג') והמשכילים יזהירו כזהר הרקיע ומצדיקי הרבים ככוכבים לעולם ועד. והמשכילים יזהירו, מאן אינון משכילים. אלא דא הוא, ההוא חכם דיסתכל מגרמיה מלין, דלא יכילין בני נשא למללא בפומא, ואלין אקרון משכילים. יזהירו כזהר הרקיע, מאן (זהר) הוא הרקיע. דא הוא רקיע דמשה, דקיימא באמצעייתא, והאי זהר דיליה, איהו סתים, ולא אתגליא מגוון דיליה קיימא על ההיא רקיעא דלא נהיר, דאתחזין ביה גוונים, ואינון גוונים אף על גב דאתחזין ביה, לא זהרי כזהרא בגין דאינון גוונים סתימין.

תא חזי, ארבע נהורין אינון, תלת מנייהו סתימין, וחד דאתגליא: נהורא דנהיר, נהורא דזהרא, (ואינון) ואיהו נהיר כזהירו דשמיא בדכיו. נהורא דארגוונא, דנטיל כל נהורין. נהורא דלא נהיר אסתכל לגבי אלין, ונטיל לון. ואתחזין אינון נהורין ביה, כעששיתא, לקבל שמשא.

ואלין תלת דקאמרן, סתימין וקיימין על האי דאתגליא. ורזא דא (ויחי רכ"ו ע"א) עינא תא חזי, בעינא אית תלת גוונים, דאתגליין רשימין ביה, וכלהו לא ממזדרי, בגין דקיימי בנהורא דלא נהיר. ואלין אינון כגוונא דאינון סתימין דקיימי עליהו ואלין אינון דאתחזין לאבהו, למנדע אינון סתימין דמזדריין, מגו אלין דלא ממזדרי. ואינון דמזדרי ואינון סתימין, אתגליין למשה, בההוא רקיעא דיליה. ואלין קיימי, על אינון גוונים דאתחזין ביה בעינא.

ורזא דא סתים עינה, ואסחר גלגלה, ויתגליין אינון גוונים דנהרין, דמזדרי, ולא אתייהיב רשו למיחמי, אלא בעינין סתימין, בגין דאינון סתימין עלאין, קיימי על אינון גוונים דאתחזין, דלא ממזדרי.

ועל דא קרינו, משה זכה באספקלריא דנהרא דקיימא על ההוא דלא נהרא. שאר בני עולמא, בההוא אספקלריא דלא נהרא, ואבהו הוו חמאן מגו אלין גוונים דאתגליין, אינון סתימין, דקיימי עליהו דאינון דלא נהרין, ועל דא כתיב, וארא אל אברהם אל יצחק ואל יעקב באל שדי, באינון גוונים דאתחזין.

ושמי יי' לא נודעתי להם, אלין גוונים עלאין סתימין דזהרין, דזכה בהו משה לאסתכלא בהון. ורזא דא, דעינא סתים וגליא, סתים, חמי אספקלריא דנהרא, אתגליא, חמי אספקלריא דלא נהרא, ועל דא, וארא, באספקלריא דלא נהרא, דאיהו באתגליא, ביה כתיב ראיה. באספקלריא דנהרא דאיהו בסתימו, כתיב ביה

יְדִיעָה, דְּכִתְיִב לֹא נִודְעָתִי. אֶתִּי רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר וְרַבִּי אַבָּא וְנִשְׁקֻי יְדִי. בְּכֹה רַבִּי אַבָּא, וְאָמַר, וְיִ כִּד תִּסְתַּלַּק
מֵעֲלָמָא, וְיִשְׁתַּאֲר עֲלָמָא יְתוֹם מִיְנֵהּ, מֵאֵן יְכִיל לֶאֱנַהֲרָא מִלִּין דְּאוֹרֵי־יִתָּא.

Rabbi Shimon was once sitting one day, and Rabbi Elazar his son was with him, and Rabbi Abba was with him as well.

Rabbi Elazar said: “This verse that is written, *‘And I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob...’* — what does *‘I appeared’* mean? It should have said *‘I spoke.’*”

He said to him: “Elazar, my son, this is a supernal mystery.

Come and see: there are colors that are seen, and there are colors that are not seen.

And both these and those are the supernal mystery of faith, yet human beings do not know it, nor do they gaze upon it.

And those colors that are seen — no human being merited them until the Patriarchs came and stood upon them.

And therefore it is written *‘And I appeared’* — for they saw those colors that were revealed.

And which are the colors that were revealed?

They are those of El Shaddai — which are colors of supernal vision — and these are seen.

But the colors that are above, concealed and unseen — no person stands upon them, except Moses.

And therefore it is written: *‘And My Name YHVH I did not make known to them’* — I did not reveal Myself to them in the supernal colors.

And if you should say that the Patriarchs did not know them — this is not so.

Rather, they knew from within those that were revealed.

It is written: *“And the wise shall shine like the radiance of the firmament, and those who bring the many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever.”*

“And the wise shall shine” — who are these wise ones?

Rather, this refers to that sage who gazes from within himself upon matters that human beings cannot articulate with the mouth.

These are called *the wise*.

“They shall shine like the radiance of the firmament” — which firmament is this?

This is the firmament of Moses, which stands in the middle.

And its radiance is concealed and not revealed.

From within its color it stands upon that firmament which does not shine, in which colors are seen —

yet even though those colors are seen, they do not shine with brilliance, because they are concealed colors.

Come and see: there are four lights.

Three of them are concealed, and one is revealed.

There is the light that illuminates.

There is the light of radiance, which shines like the purity of the heavens.

There is the purple light, which gathers all lights.

And there is the light that does not illuminate, which gazes toward the others and receives them.

And those lights are seen within it like glass before the sun.

And these three that we mentioned are concealed and stand upon the one that is revealed.

And this is the mystery: come and see — in the eye there are three colors, whose impressions are visible within it, yet none of them shine, because they stand within a light that does not illuminate.

And these correspond to the concealed colors that stand above them.

And these are the ones that were seen by the Patriarchs — in order to know the concealed ones that shine from within those that do not shine.

But those that shine and are concealed were revealed to Moses, in his firmament.

And these stand upon those colors that are seen within the eye.

And this mystery is hidden: close your eye and turn your pupil, and the shining colors that radiate will be revealed — yet permission is not given to see them except with closed eyes.

For they are supernal concealed colors, standing upon the visible colors that do not shine.

And therefore we say: Moses merited the luminous speculum that stands upon the non-luminous one.

The rest of the world stands in the non-luminous speculum.

And the Patriarchs saw, from within the revealed colors, the concealed ones that stand upon them — those that do not shine.

And therefore it is written: *“And I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as El Shaddai”* — within those colors that are seen.

“But My Name YHVH I did not make known to them” — these are the supernal concealed shining colors, which Moses merited to gaze upon.

And this is the mystery: the eye is both concealed and revealed.

When concealed, it sees the luminous speculum; when revealed, it sees the non-luminous speculum.

And therefore *“And I appeared”* — through the non-luminous speculum, which is in revelation; hence the language of seeing is written of it.

But of the luminous speculum, which is in concealment, knowing is written — as it says, *“I did not make known.”*

Rabbi Elazar and Rabbi Abba came forward and kissed his hands.

Rabbi Abba wept and said:

“Woe to the world when you depart from it, and the world will remain orphaned of you — who will be able to illuminate the words of Torah?”

Illuminating Moshe Through Rabbi Shimon

Okay, so b'ezrat Hashem we're continuing with our shiurim on the Parsha in the Zohar HaKadosh, illuminating the words of Moshe Rabbeinu through the light of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai and vice versa. In this week's Parsha, ***Parshas Va'eira***, we find two very powerful points in the Zohar: one is about bitachon and one is about the colors that can and cannot be seen. We're going to focus on the second part, which is the colors that one experiences in this world and what the experience of color means, and we're going to see in the end how it's connected back also to the secret of bitachon, which we're not discussing.

The pasuk says: ***Va'eira el Avraham v'el Yitzchak v'el Yaakov b'Keil Shakai u'shmi Hashem lo nodati lahem.***

Keil Shakai: Enoughness and the World of the Seen

When HaKadosh Baruch Hu revealed Himself to the Avos HaKedoshim — to Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov — the shem that HaKadosh Baruch Hu used was ***Keil Shakai***. *Keil Shakai* represents a perspective of enoughness, a world of nature, a world where a person has to find satisfaction with what is. *Keil Shakai* represents the worlds of separation: Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah — the worlds of sensual experience where the individual comes in contact with that which can be grasped. There is a limit to it. And that was the grasp that the Avos HaKedoshim had.

The Avos had a grasp of the world through the world itself. HaKadosh Baruch Hu illuminated His light within the world itself, and through the vessel of this world the Avos were able to intuit the deep sense of *hiskashrus* that they had to HaKadosh Baruch Hu. But it was still rooted in a perspective of *Shakai*, of *Keil Shakai*.

Shem Havayah: The Everpresent Invisible Presence

Moshe Rabbeinu, on the other hand — HaKadosh Baruch Hu reveals Himself with the shem *Havayah*. With the essential name, with the name of HaKadosh Baruch Hu which represents that which is invisible, not that which is visible like *Keil Shakai* represents.

Keil Shakai is the name that represents the root of all visibility in the unity of HaKadosh Baruch Hu. *Shem Havayah* is all of that which is invisible — how all of that is also coming from what HaKadosh Baruch Hu is. The *Shem Havayah* that is revealed to Moshe Rabbeinu, that was not revealed to the Avos, is the revelation of a Divine light that is so everpresent that it can only be disclosed by way of concealment: that which is not seen is also full and present.

The Avos and Beholding the Unseen Within the Seen

Certainly the Avos HaKedoshim knew this secret as well. They were able to discern the unseen from within the seen, the distant sense of Divine infinitude within the finite itself. They were able to find that which was invisible within the

visible. They were able to understand the supernatural nature of nature itself, as we understand from the Ramban. This was the way that Avraham Avinu came to understand HaKadosh Baruch Hu, as well as the miracles that Bnei Yisrael experienced when they left Mitzrayim.

The revelation of the miracle is how nature itself is a revelation of HaKadosh Baruch Hu. It's like the *Shem Elokim* — the name that represents the apparent differentiation of *kochos* within this world.

Havayah: Hyperpresence Beyond Identification

The *Shem Havayah*, on the other hand — the essential name which is not yet fully present in a revealed way in this world, *Hayah, Hoveh, v'Yihyeh* — is that which hovers above and saturates from within but is never identifiable with external reality. That is the Name that is revealed to Moshe Rabbeinu.

And so the Zohar HaKadosh is coming to understand how it could be that the Avos, who were theoretically to one degree or another higher — at least

earlier — than Moshe Rabbeinu, and who certainly represent a different mode of spiritual engagement, only grasped *Keil Shakai*, while Moshe Rabbeinu grasped *Havayah*.

The Question of Hasagah: How Could Moshe Grasp More than the Avos

How could it be that the Avos were able to behold *Keil Shakai* — the grasp of HaKadosh Baruch Hu through nature itself, through the enoughness of reality, through the fact that the world itself is testimony to the Ribbono Shel Olam — and only Moshe Rabbeinu was able to grasp the *Shem Havayah*, the invisible essence that gives birth to every expression in every moment?

The *Shem Havayah* that is *mechayeh kulam*, as all the tzaddikim point out, vitality at the core of all existence. As the Baal HaTanya explains, the *osiyos* of *Yud-Kei-Vav-Kei* are found within everything and are the root source of everything, the ultimate upkeep of all things in the *b'chinah* of *v'hu u'shmo echad*.

Letters That Are Not Letters

The essential name of HaKadosh Baruch Hu ultimately beckons us back to the letterless name of HaKadosh Baruch Hu — where the letters are not yet letters, because you can't even write the name. And nevertheless it's still written in the fact that it's not written.

That primordial *Shem Havayah* — that *Shem Havayah bli osiyos* — that invisibility is what gives breath to everything at every moment, for in spite of the fact that it is still just a name, nevertheless at the same point it is paradoxically rooted in the ungraspable essence of the Creator, so to speak, *mekushar b'hechlet l'atzmuso yisbarach*. And it's this *Shem Havayah* that only Moshe Rabbeinu was able to grasp.

Rabbi Shimon Sitting One Day

Rabbi Shimon hava yasiv yoma chad.
Rabbi Shimon was sitting one day.

The Zohar HaKadosh brings us into contact with *olam, shanah, v'nefesh*, the triadic continuum of space, time, and self present in all things. In the world of *nefesh* — Rabbi Shimon. In the world of

olam — *hava yasiv*, he was sitting. And in the world of *zman* — one day.

Each of these details matters. Rabbi Shimon sitting one day. Sitting is a fundamentally different phenomenon than standing, different than walking, than leaning, than lying down, than jumping, than dancing, than falling, just a sampling of the endless spiritual modalities of experience .

Gesture as Avodah

Every gesture that Chazal encounter, every gesture that the human being is capable of, is another way of encountering HaKadosh Baruch Hu. What does it mean that Rabbi Shimon was *yosheiv*? What is the association between sitting, relaxation, and teaching?

And *yoma chad* — one day. An anonymous day that contains all days. Not a calendared moment, but *that* day, because this took place on that day, for whatever day the Tzaddikim find themselves in is the ultimate day itself.

Rabbi Elazar and Rabbi Abba at His Side

Rabbi Elazar brei veRabbi Abba imei.

Rabbi Shimon was with Rabbi Elazar his son and with Rabbi Abba his scribe. Rabbi Elazar his son is always with his father. In the Zohar HaKadosh Rabbi Shimon is always with Rabbi Elazar *brei*.

This is also true in Talmud Bavli. In Bavli as well, Rabbi Shimon is always with Rabbi Elazar. They run away together, they hide together, they emerge together. Rabbi Shimon is referred to as *ayal u'bar* — a notion typically understood as that he went up and he came out. Rabbeinu Chananel points out that it can also be understood as “went up with his son (*bar*)”.

Ascending and Returning

The typical definition implies that there needs to be a proficiency in going in and a proficiency in coming out, like Rabbi Akiva who was *nichnas b'shalom v'yatza b'shalom*. There needs to be a capacity to ascend into the heights of spirituality and to descend back down into consciousness.

But as the R' Yitzchak Meir Morgenstern shlit"brings from Rabbeinu Chananel, *ayal u'bar* can also be understood as "he went up with his son." Meaning that the novelty of Rabbi Shimon was that he was always with his son.

Leaving Behind a Son and a Student

As Rebbe Nachman says (Likkutei Moharan, 2:7), a person must ensure that they leave behind both a *ben* and a *talmid*. The *ikar tachlis* in avodas Hashem is not to run upwards in some transcendental flight, but to ascend for the sake of drawing downwards, to reinform what remains below with a doubled portion of light.

Like how R' Yosef the son of R' Yeshoshua in his illness ascends upwards after falling into unconsciousness,, after finding himself in a state of dire straits, and goes up and sees the an upside-down worlds, *elyonim lema'alah* and the *elyonim lematah* and the *tachtonim lema'alah*. And when he comes back and his father asks what he saw, he answers: *olam hafuch*

ra'isi. I saw the world transformed, how the upper world is ultimately for the sake of the lower world.

The Purpose of Going Up

The purpose of going up is to come back down and invert everything with a new light. Once a person has vision from above, they can re-look at what is happening below with a transformed awareness.

And beyond this structural secret is the deeper secret of love — the love, the compassion, and the act of parenting that Rabbi Shimon embodied with Rabbi Elazar. The reality of a human being is to be present with another: with a child, with a friend, with a spouse. The world of interpersonal relationships, of *nosei b'ol chavero*. Rebbe Shimon's spiritual ascension was not at the sake of his personal world, the opposite is true, his personal world was the deepest site of revelation.

Presence as Revelation

This unimaginably powerful secret — a father with a son, a friend with a friend — is itself the light of Torah. So we see

that on this one day when Rabbi Shimon chose to sit and reveal this Torah, Rabbi Elazar was with him and Rabbi Abba was with him.

Rabbi Abba was silently writing everything down. He understood that something fundamentally significant was taking place and that it needed to be reported.

Rabbi Elazar Opens the Zohar

Amar Rabbi Elazar. Rabbi Elazar opens and says: ***Hai kra dechsiv — Va'eira el Avraham el Yitzchak ve'el Yaakov b'Eil Shaddai u'shmi Hashem lo nodati lahem.***

Mah hu Va'eira? Ve'adaber miba'ei. Why does the passuk describe this as *appearance*, as vision? Was this not a revelation by way of verbalization? Why speak of visualization?

If HaKadosh Baruch Hu expressed Himself through speech, through the word, why does the Torah describe the Avos' apprehension as seeing?

Raza Ila'ah — A Secret That Stays a Secret

Amar lei Elazar brei raza ila'ee. Rabbi Shimon responds: Elazar my son, there is a deep secret here — a *raza ila'ah*.

When the Zohar declares something to be a secret, it is not announcing that it will now be explained away. It is declaring that even after it is spoken, it remains a secret.

Not because the depth is too great to understand, but because the innermost point must always remain a *sod* — even and especially to the one who understands.

The Structure of Sod

The secret is not something hidden because of fear or censorship. It is hidden because the thing itself cannot be revealed. And therefore it gestures endlessly toward itself without ever being grasped.

Sod Hashem lireiav. The world stands upon the secret. The secret is not the information — it is the relationship of

the knower to that which cannot be known.

Yearning as Understanding

Our task is to yearn toward that secret, to grasp and to unknow again, to ascend rung after rung, believing we have found the key — only to discover that the door remains closed. It's not simply that the door remains closed. The door opens but behind it is revealed a cascade of endlessly unfolding levels of ascension and light. And so it remains a *raza de'ila'ee*.

Colors That Are Seen and Colors That Are Not

Ta chazi — come and see.

Is gavnan de-mischazei ve'is gavnan delo mishchazei. There are colors of experience that are seen, and colors that are not seen.

The Zohar is not offering a binary of yes or no. In the Zohar, “no” is not the opposite of “yes.” Rather, when it says “no”, it means that while at first glance it appears that this thing is inaccessible, in truth it is accessed specifically

through the recognition of inaccessibility. Negation itself is a mode of encounter.

Concealment as Presence

Concealment is not absence. Concealment is presence appearing as absence. This is the root of all *pnimiyus haTorah*.

Before this reorientation, only revelation mattered. What was concealed was treated as if it were not there. But *tzimtzum she-lo k'peshuto* teaches that the “no” is another way the “yes” is encountered, often in a far deeper way than simple accessibility.

Knowing What Cannot Be Known

So when the Zohar says there are colors that are not seen, it does not mean they cannot be grasped. It means they are grasped through the knowledge that they cannot be grasped.

This is a relationship that arises through non-relationship. A knowing that feels like unknowing, and in the acceptance of the unknowing, a light of knowing is revealed. But the light of knowing that

is revealed is vastly different than graspable knowledge. It is the knowing of that which cannot be known, described as the apex of knowing is to not-know.

Gvanin — The Colors of Consciousness

A *gvan* is not merely external color or hue. It is the color of experience: narrative frames, perceptual lenses, schematic thinking, cognitive distortions and cognitive strengths, the varieties of daily experience.

Our lives are composed of variegated colors. Some are seen. Some are not.

Razei d'Meheimnuta — The Secret of Faith

Ve-illein ve-illein innun razin ila'in de-meheimnuta. These and those — the seen and the unseen — operate within the secret of faith.

It is only through faith alone that we can allow ourselves to live with the deep truth that not grasping is also meaningful. That limitation itself is a path toward kedushah. Without this

fundamental intervention, any encounter with concealment would be deemed illegitimate and outside the circle of light. It is only through the radical affirmation of the invisible presence of Hashem at the heart of all things that apparently empty existence can be transformed into meaning.

Presence of Absence

The *lo mischazin*, the colors unseen are not nothing. It is presence that appears as absence. And most people walk through the world unaware of this, blind to that which cannot be seen by the naked eye.

U-vnei nasha la yadin lei ve-la mistaklan bei. They do not know it. They do not look. And as a result, life continues to operate according to the external shape of things.

The Cry Within the Zohar

The Zohar is not rebuke — it is a cry. Like the *bat kol* that echoes forth from Har Chorev each day, calling upon the world to awaken and return, *shuvu banim shovavim.*

The students of the Baal Shem Tov and the Gra both ask: where is this voice, for if cannot be heard then of what use is it? Rather, it is an inner silent cry, the *hirhur teshuvah* that arises within the heart at any given moment.

Hirhur Teshuvah is the Ultimate Purpose

Rebbe Nachman teaches at the beginning of his Tales of Ancient Days: *Hayiti baderech vehitchalti lesaper sipurim...* and whoever heard them experienced a *hirhur teshuvah*.

That is the entire *tachlis*, to awaken the soul from within the confines of this worldly exhaustion. To breathe the breath of life back into the body, revealing the endless light of hope and redemption.

The Three Colors That Can Be Grasped

Ve-ilan de-mischazin — these are the colors that are grasped. The Zohar explains that these graspable colors did not become accessible to human consciousness until the Avos arrived and

stood upon them. These are the three elemental colors: red, white, and green. Red corresponds to *gevurah* and the left side, white to *chesed* and the right side, and green to the synthesis of the two — *tiferes* — the living tree that contains fruit and the channel that connects the fruit to its source.

These are not merely symbolic hues but fundamental modalities of experience. They represent ways of seeing, ways of standing in the world, ways of encountering reality. Until the Avos, no one had stabilized these colors as conscious orientations through which existence itself could be read.

Va'eira: Seeing as Orientation

This is what the *pasuk* means when it says *Va'eira*. HaKadosh Baruch Hu “appeared” to them — meaning that He allowed Himself to be apprehended through color, through orientation, through a particular hue of experience. Reality itself was tinted differently depending on who was standing within it. Avraham Avinu saw everything through the whiteness of *chesed*, Yitzchak Avinu through the redness of

gevurah, and Yaakov Avinu through the greenness of tiferes.

The world itself did not change. What changed was the way the Avos stood within it. The blank canvas of reality was illuminated differently depending on the *gvn* through which it was perceived.

Chesed, Gevurah, and the World as Seen

Avraham Avinu saw the world through chesed. The whiteness of openness, of possibility, of generosity colored his entire perception of existence. Reality appeared as something to be given to, something to be welcomed, something fundamentally hospitable. That whiteness — like milk, like healing, like expansiveness — revealed the world as a place capable of rachamim.

Yitzchak Avinu, by contrast, saw the world through gevurah. Through redness, intensity, contraction, and inner force. His perception sharpened reality, intensified it, and demanded that potential be actualized. Through Yitzchak's *gvn*, the world appeared

demanding, exacting, and transformative.

Yaakov and the Green of Integration

Yaakov Avinu was *kelul mitrein avin*. He saw the world through a unified greenness — the blending of white and red into a living synthesis. Green is not a compromise; it is vitality. It is the tree itself, holding tension without collapse, producing fruit precisely through balance. Through Yaakov, disparate elements were unified without erasure.

This greenness is the *kav ha'emtza'i* — the ability to hold contradictions and still remain alive. Through Yaakov's perception, reality revealed itself as coherent without being simplistic, deeply meaningful with light readily available.

Keil Shakai and the Graspable World

These three colors — *chesed*, *gevurah*, and *tiferes* — are the *gvnin* of *Keil Shakai*. They are graspable because they are modes of experience that can be

named, entered, and stood upon. They are knowable orientations within the natural world of *tevah*. A person can say: this is what I am seeing, this is how I am experiencing, this is the color through which reality is presenting itself.

This is why the *pasuk* says *Va'eira, and He appeared*, even though it was revelation by way of speech. The Avos encountered HaKadosh Baruch Hu through vision — through a way of seeing the world that was internally coherent and experientially stable.

Above the Seen: The Colors That Are Not Grasped

Ve-gvanin dile'eila stimin delo itchasun.

Above these graspable colors are colors that are concealed and not grasped. Like we explained above, this concealment is not a punishment and not a denial. Even when one “has” them, they continue to remain ungraspable, endlessly extending themselves into the unknown. The very nature of these colors is ***stimu*** — sealed, withheld from conscious articulation.

This is the *tachlis ha-yedi'ah she-lo neda*. They are grasped precisely by not being

grasped. They are seen by recognizing that they cannot be seen. Their presence is encountered as unavailability.

Moshe and Standing in the Unknowable

Lo kayam inish alaihu bar miMoshe. No one stood upon these concealed colors except Moshe Rabbeinu. Moshe's greatness was not informational. It was ontological. *V'anachnu mah*. He stood in the place of unknowing with affirmation. It was not the result of intelligence or deservedness, but rather an undeserved gift from an utterly unknowable place, expressed through the depth of Moshe's humility and utter *bittul*.

This is the secret of *lo yada ish et kevurato*. Moshe is identified with what cannot be located, cannot be held, cannot be grasped. His standing is between the *keruvim* — a place that is a place and not a place, *makom ha'aron eino min hamiddah*.

Seeing by Not Seeing

Ufanei lo yeira'u does not mean “you will not see My face.” It means that the only way to see My face is by knowing that you cannot see it. This is the color of *Shem Havayah* — the colorless color, the unlocatable Presence that gives rise to all expression.

This is why *u'shmi Hashem lo nodati lahem*. The Avos did not stand in this ungraspable color. Not because they were lacking, but because their *avodah* was still rooted in graspability.

Knowing the Unseen Through the Seen

The Avos did know of the ungraspable — but only from within what was graspable. From within *Keil Shakai*, they intuited that there must be more. From within the natural *tevah*, they sensed a hidden miraculous order. From within what could be known, they felt the pressure of what could not yet be known.

But this is not the same as standing in unknowing itself. This is knowing *about* the unknowable, not living within it.

Maskilim: Knowing the Limits of Speech

This is the meaning of *v'hamaskilim yazhiru k'zohar harakia*. Who are the maskilim? Those who understand from within themselves that which cannot be fully spoken. Those who reach the lip of language and recognize that what they know gestures beyond itself.

The Avos were *maskilim* in this sense. From within what they grasped, they recognized the presence of what they could not grasp. That recognition itself illuminated their grasp.

Moshe, the Rakia, and the Limit of Unknowing

But Moshe Rabbeinu stood in the *rakia* itself. The *rakia* that separates revealed colors from concealed colors. The *rakia* of *lo-yada*. His color does not shine. His light is *d'lo nahir*. And yet it is this non-illumination that illuminates everything else.

The highest clarity is the clarity that I cannot see. The highest knowledge is the knowledge that I cannot know.

The Four Lights and the One That Does Not Shine

Ta chazi. Come and see. There are four lights corresponding to the *Shem Havayah*. Three of them are concealed and one is revealed. The three concealed lights are considered concealed specifically because they are graspable, and therefore limited with shape and form. The one revealed light is the one that does not shine in the ordinary sense, the light that does not illuminate outwardly. For its concealment is not rooted in deficiency but rather its ungraspability.

There is a light that shines, a light that illuminates, a light that is like the clarity of the sky in its purity. There is also the purple light that gathers all lights into itself. And then there is the light that does not shine at all. That light, precisely because it does not shine, is able to receive all the others.

The Lens That Can Look at the Sun

This non-shining light draws all the revealed lights into itself. It does not block them; it absorbs them. It allows

them to be seen in a way that does not blind. Like a lens through which one can look at the sun. Without the lens, the sun overwhelms. With the lens, the sun becomes visible.

And the three lights that are graspable stand upon this one ungraspable light. The concealed supports the revealed. The unseen holds the seen.

Raza d'Eina — The Secret of the Eye

This is the secret of the eyes. And here the Zohar HaKadosh moves from metaphysics into instruction. It gives *eitzah peshutah* — guidance for how to live.

There are revealed colors and concealed colors. Revealed colors correspond to ***psicha d'evin***, opening the eyes. Looking at the world as it is, measuring it, engaging it, encountering *Keil Shakai* in all of its knowability and revelation .

Open Eyes and the World of Measurement

This is the experience of living with eyes open. Seeing reality, working with facts, knowing what can be known. It is the *daas* of this world. It is the posture of the Avos, of living fully within the natural *tevah* while sensing HaKadosh Baruch Hu through it.

But this alone is not sufficient. Because the moment reality exceeds what can be measured, the open eye collapses into anxiety.

Closing the Eyes to Truly See

And then there is *stima d'evin* — closing the eyes. Turning inward. No longer gazing at the external world, but encountering the inner vision. The Zohar teaches that when one closes the eyes and allows them to roll inward and upward, one is not ceasing to see — one is beginning to see fully.

This is the sight of *Shem Havayah*. *Shivisi Hashem l'negdi tamid*. A vision that exists behind the eyelids at every moment of life.

Moshe's Color and the Turn Inward

These are the colors of Moshe Rabbeinu. The colors that cannot be grasped. The inwardness of *achdus hapnimi* and *achdus hashaveh*, an internalized sense of unified equanimity that underlies all multiplicity.

But the Zohar is not advocating escape. One cannot simply close one's eyes to the world. That is a mistake. The goal rather, is to draw the light of closed eye into the opening of the eye itself.

The Third Column: Eyes Open and Closed

What the R' Yitzchak Meir Morgenstern shlit"a reveals — based on all the *tzaddikim* — is the third column. Not only open eyes. Not only closed eyes. But eyes that are open while closed.

This is the secret of *ani v'ayin b'vas achas*, *Selfhood and Nothingness* at once . Seeing every detail of reality while knowing that none of it can be fully known, for at its innermost point its particularity dissolves into the singular unity of it all. . Living fully within the vessels of *Keil*

Shakai while resting inwardly within the light of *Shem Havayah*.

Binah, Chochmah, and the Balance of Kesser

The level of *Keil Shakai* and open eyes is associated with *Binah*. Separation, discernment, structure, and understandability. The level of *Shem Havaya* and closing the eyes is associated with *Chochmah* — pure inwardness, the flash of unity and calm.

The danger of *Binah* is the attempt to control the outside world thereby becoming entangled within it, and the danger of *Chochmah* is detachment from the outside world and a relinquishment of responsibility. The *tikkun* is *Kesser* — the unification of both, the scale of balance revealed within embodied knowing.

Knowing and Not Knowing at Once

To look at reality. To study it. To grasp it. To analyze it. And at the very heart of that effort to know, to stand in a state of absolute *bittul* — knowing that after all is said and done, I know nothing.

This is *psicha d'evin* within *stima d'evin*, eyes that see beyond the externality of this world; visualizing the invisible with the visible itself. It is not denial of knowledge. It is leading knowledge towards and ultimately beyond its limit.

Why We Close Our Eyes in Pain

Rebbe Nachman explains that a person closes their eyes in pain because squinting allows one to see further beyond the momentary experience. Closing the eyes narrows vision towards its singular point, the *tachlis*. It allows a person to touch the unified core of meaning even when detail overwhelms.

But the highest level is not closing the eyes instead of opening them. It is carrying that inner closure even while fully present, to expand the present moment of construction with the expansiveness of the infinite.

The Bat Ayin — The Irreducible Point of Unknowing

Ta chazi. In the eye there are three visible colors. But they all rest upon the **bat ayin** — the tiny black point that cannot be seen.

That point represents *lo-yada*. The limit. The period at the end of the sentence. And at the same time, the infinitesimal point that contains everything.

The Avos and Moshe Interwoven

The visible colors of the eye correspond to the Avos. The black point corresponds to Moshe. And Moshe rests upon the Avos. The ungraspable rests upon the graspable.

Keil Shakai and *Havayah* are not opposites. They are two stages of a singular process.

Closing the Eyes to Receive the Highest Light

Setom einecha. Close your eyes. Move them inward. Allow the colors that cannot be grasped to emerge. These

lights are not given permission to appear while the eyes are open.

Because they rest upon and exceed what is revealed. The hidden fount of endlessness that rests at the core of all that is revealed.

Aspaklaria d'Lo Nehora and Aspaklaria d'Nehora: An (Un)Clouded Lens

The Avos saw through the *aspaklaria d'lo nehora* — a lens that allows grasping by dint of its diminishment. Moshe saw through the *aspaklaria d'nehora* — a clarity that knows it cannot grasp full clarity.

This is the paradox. The clear lens open eyes leads to unknowing. The unclear lens of closed eyes leads to knowing. If you know, then you don't know; and if you don't know, then you know.

The Clearest Vision Is Not Seeing

The clarity of Moshe Rabbeinu is *ad delo yada*. The knowledge that I cannot know. If I could fully know, HaKadosh Baruch Hu would be limited to my mind.

And only HaKadosh Baruch Hu is perfect. Everything else is by definition deficient, including our graspability.

Transforming Keil Shakai Into Shem Havayah

Every moment of grasping must be followed by return to ungrasping, as all roads of knowing lead to the unknown. Every Avos-experience must be buried in Moshe's grave — *lo yada ish et kevurato*.

That burial is not loss. It is continuity.

Rabbi Abba Weeps

Osa Rabbi Elazar v'Rabbi Abba v'nashku yadei. They kiss Rabbi Shimon's hands. Rabbi Abba weeps and says: woe to the world when you leave it.

Why mourn the presence of Rebbe Shimon while he is still present? Perhaps this hints to the fact that true reception of a student includes an awareness of what remains unsaid with the teachers words. .

Yearning as Transmission

Before the Torah is revealed from the mouth of the teacher , the students yearning comes from lack. After the Torah is given over , yearning emerges from an abundance that still cannot be held, a sense of holy saturation.

That yearning is how the Torah continues to grow endlessly from a place of enoughness.

From Zohar to Geulah

This is how Klal Yisrael leaves Mitzrayim. With eyes closed and eyes open. With knowledge which always lead back to *bittul*. With *ad delo yada* guiding *veyissa'u*.

Seeing what is invisible. Trusting the place where sight ends, and leaping into faith and trust.