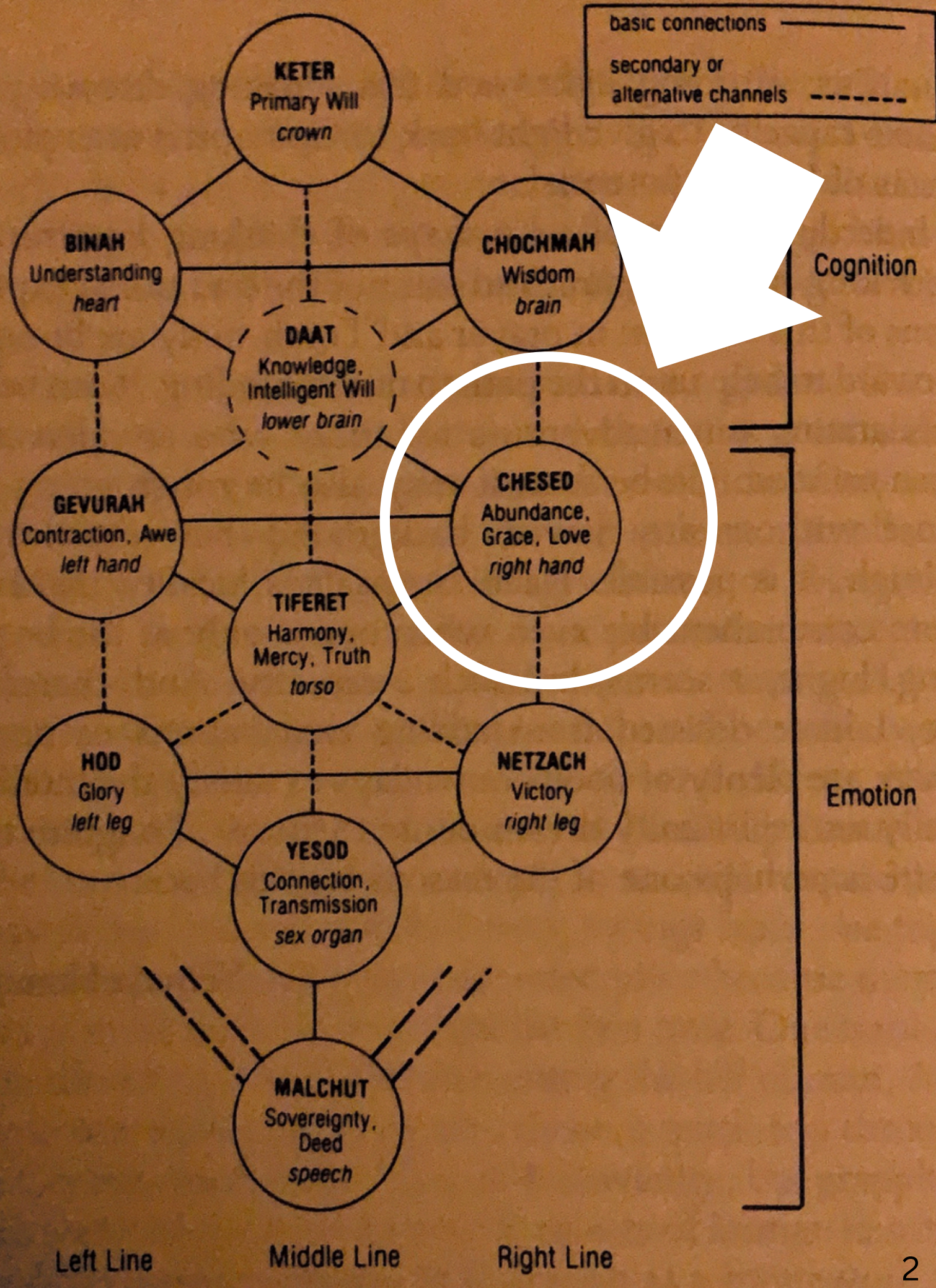


# Chesed





THE SEFIROT: THEIR STRUCTURE AND HUMAN CORRESPONDENCES





# Chesed: Loving-Kidness

"The world was built with love (chesed)"

כִּי־אַמְרָתִי עוֹלָם חֶסֶד יִבְנֶה שָׁמַיִם | תִּכְנֶן אֶמּוֹנֶתְךָ בָּהֶם:

(Psalms 89:3)

## Qualities of Chesed:

- Meaning: Kindness, benevolence, unbound love
- Color: White or Silver with blueish tinge
- Source: South
- Direction: Right
- Body Part: Right Arm
- System: Skeletal
- Day of Creation: 1
- Shepard/ess: Avraham and Sarah
- Movement: Expansion
- Element: Water
- Meditation: "Love like Water"
- Mantra: I am Divine Love
- Water Rituals: Mikvah, Hand-Washing
- 7 Species of Israel: Wheat
- Ritual: Deeds of kindness, Challah Baking



**"Love is the  
transcendence of  
Soul Over Body"  
-The Rebbe**





# *Right Axis of the Sefirot Column*

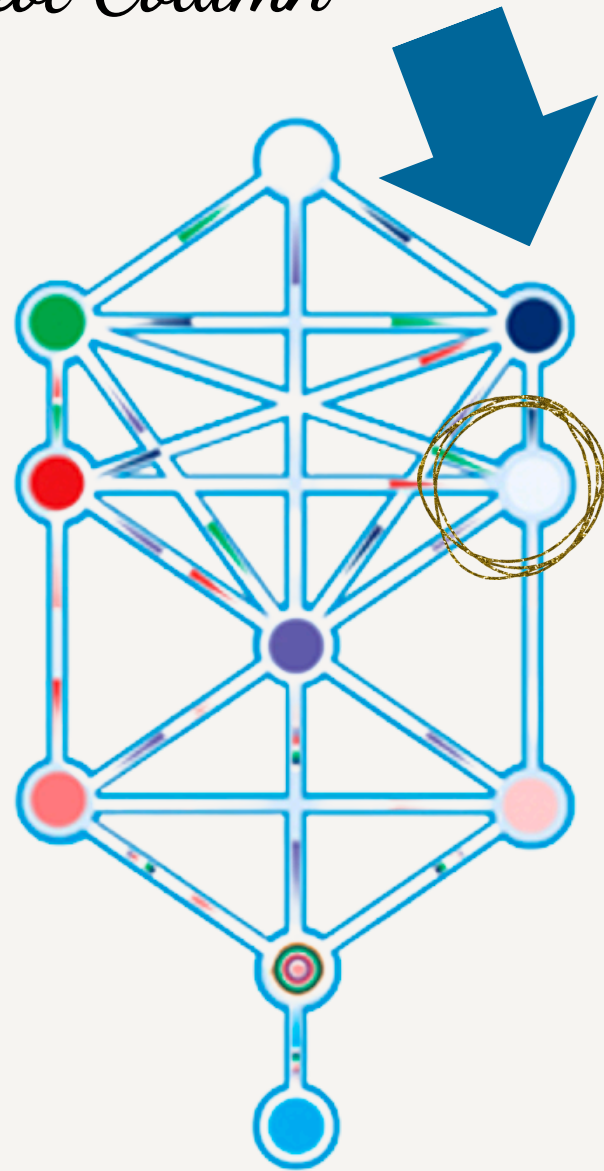
## **The Right Axis:** Flowing with the Natural Tide

A person who lives naturally, “flowing along” with things as they are in despair of the possibility to change his ways is located on the right axis of the sefirotic chart. This is the axis of natural flow and expansion. The movement of the right axis is the natural drift of water, gliding effortlessly from above to below. The right axis is one of love. When a person is motivated by love, his actions are natural and flowing.

## **The Upper Right Axis: Chesed**

The person in the higher triplet on the right axis corresponds to the emotive power of chesed. On the surface, it does not seem that a person who serves God with the cold despair of ever ascending to greater spiritual heights fits into the definition of chesed—which expresses giving and love. Chassidut explains that with all the will to give and expand typified by the emotive power of chesed, it is flowing but weak. The giving of chesed alone (without the addition of gevurah, “might”) is giving that has become second nature, void of the strength of purpose to overcome obstacles and to give even more.

-Rabbi Ginsburgh





# *Let Love by Alden Solovy*

*Let love wash over your face,  
Caress your eyes,  
Brush your lips.  
Let love pulse through your heart,  
Warm your lungs,  
Fill your chest.  
Let love strengthen your bones,  
Ignite your nerves,  
Awaken your flesh.  
For love is in the air and in the wind,  
The current and the waters,  
The flow of gifts from G-d's creation,  
Divine bounty and grace,  
Calling out to you dear sisters and brothers:  
'Awake you slumberers!  
Awake you who walk warily into the day and dejected into the night.  
Have you forgotten  
My gifts and treasures?  
Have you forsaken the beauty around you?  
Have you surrendered your joy and passion?'  
This, then, is G-d's command:  
Let love wash over you,  
Pulse through you,  
Pour strength into you.  
Let love carry you into luminous days  
And radiant nights.  
Sing and dance,  
Laugh and play,  
Lifting your life with passion and hope.  
Let love be your messenger and your message.  
Blessed are You, G-d of love.*



# Embodying the Sefirot: Color





# Chesed: White

Different Kabbalists throughout history have used the practice of visualizing the colors of the Sefirot to reveal and enhance specific energies within them. Chesed is located on the right column of the Sefirotic Tree and is associated with the color white.

The Pardes Rimonim of the Ramak teaches, *"Things that are white represent peace and harmony. This includes the nature of older individuals with white hair, who are generally more compassionate and open than fiery, youthful ones. It is not the nature of an older person to go out to battle. Therefore, when one wishes to invoke peace, kindness, and compassion, the color white is used to symbolize these qualities. For this reason, when seeking to draw down Chesed from its source of kindness, one should visualize the name of the Sefirah in the corresponding color. If you desire pure kindness, meditate on a pure white. If you want kindness with strength and power, imagine white with a slight off-white hue. When in need of Chesed and compassion, one should clothe oneself in white. This is evidenced by the Kohanim (Priests), who are rooted in Chesed. Their garments are also white, symbolizing peace."*





# *Element: Water*

Each Sefirah is connected to one of the elements: Chesed is represented by life-giving water, which flows in all directions without distinction. It nourishes and sustains life. The early Chassidim would spill water in front of them while praying to arouse Divine Chesed. Rabbi David Sterne elaborates, "Water possesses the trait of clinging to an object and 'bathing' it; through proper meditation, we cling to G-dliness and bask in it."

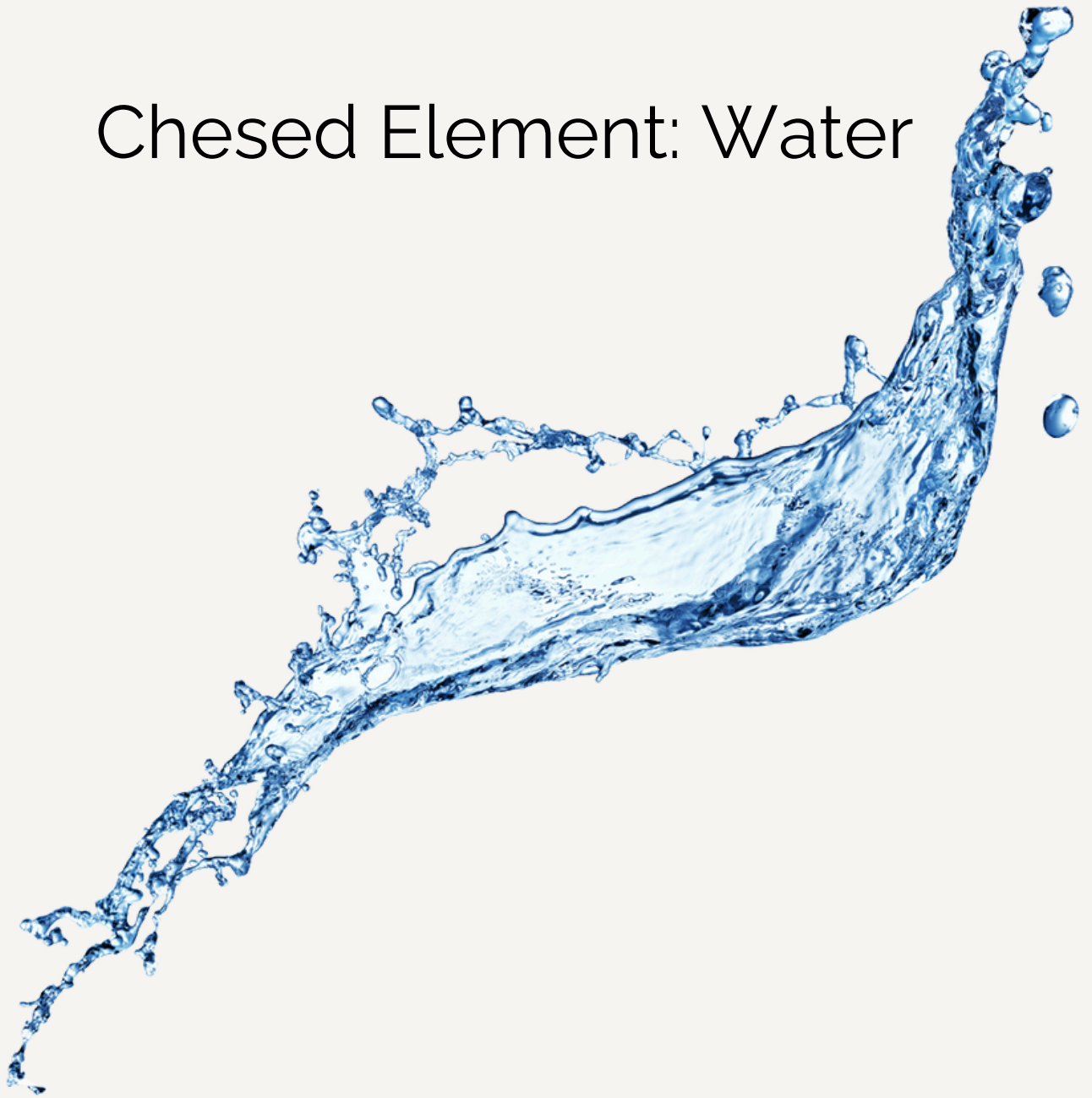
Chesed = 72 =  $2 \times 6$  squared.

6 squared represents the perfected state of the six emotions of the heart, which correspond to the six days of Creation. The  $2 \times 6$  squared represents the perfect love and harmony within Creation. As it is written, "As one's face is reflected in water, so is the heart of man to man" (Proverbs 27:19). - Rabbi Ginsburgh





# Chesed Element: Water



The elements are not meant to be taken literally, but rather as constituent units of primary, primordial matter. All creations have a mixture of the elements, but one element is usually more dominant. For example, a mountain is predominantly earth, whereas rivers are predominantly water. Some rocks contain more fire within them, and can therefore be rubbed together more easily to create fire.



# Element: Water

Water is the wellspring of life. Although wind is the first element referenced in the Torah, it is water that evokes our primordial origins in the womb. Both the Earth's surface and the human body are composed of approximately 70 percent water — a profound reason for our attraction to bodies of water. A 2022 study by Richard Coss and Craig Keller found that simply gazing at bodies of water lowered people's heart rate and blood pressure, and increased feelings of calm and relaxation.

In Jewish thought, the fluidity of water holds deep symbolic and spiritual significance. Water represents concepts such as *chesed* (loving-kindness), forgiveness, wisdom, and Torah.

The sacred teachings of Torah quench our spiritual thirst, just as water does for physical thirst. Water is also known for its mysterious depths, representing concealed wisdom and the hidden reaches of spiritual understanding.

Stories of water in the Torah depict both nourishment and potential danger. There are tales connected to the positive aspects of water, such as Miriam's well that accompanied the Jewish people on their desert journey, providing them with life-sustaining waters.

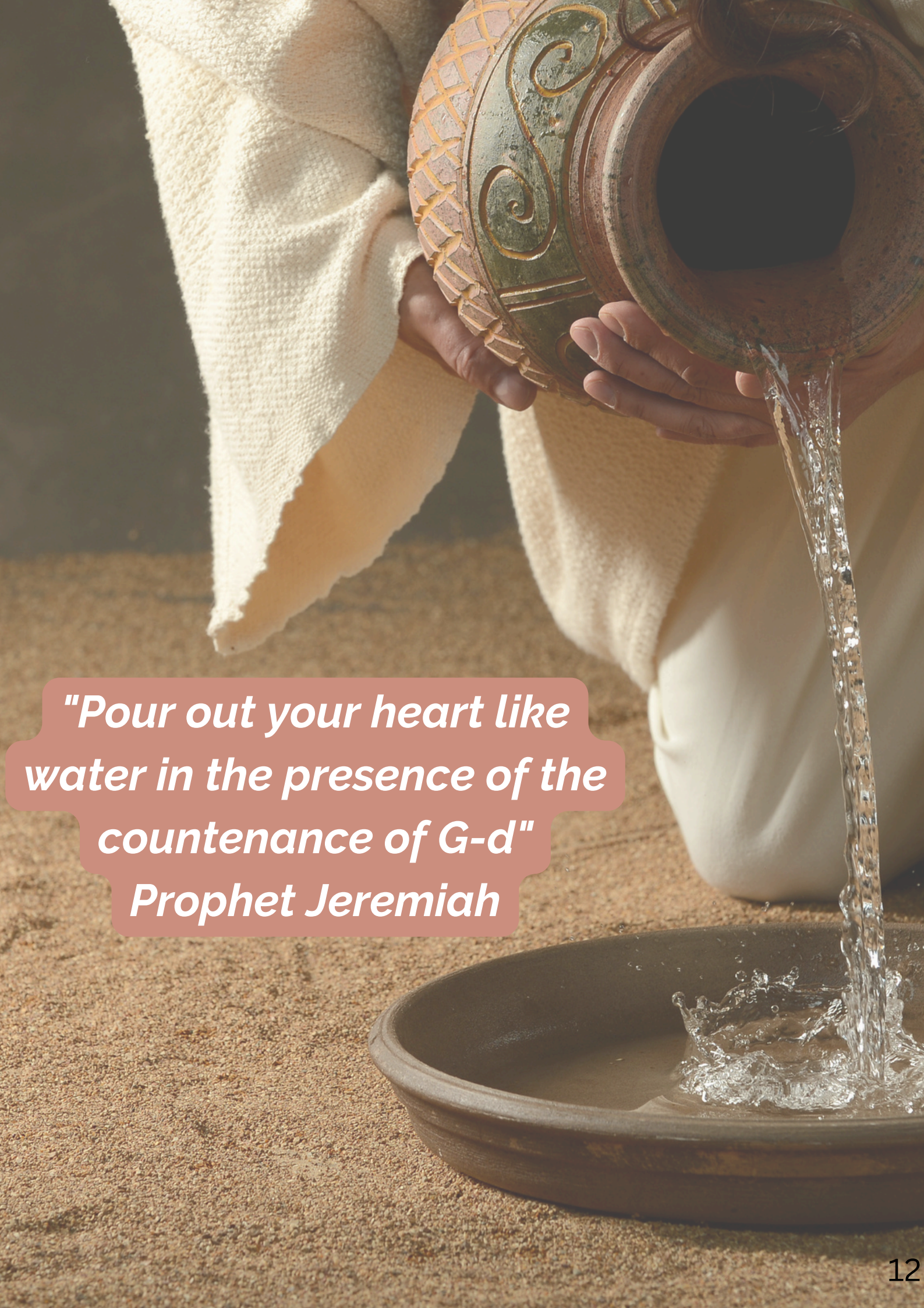
There are also tales of perilous waters known as "Mayim Rabim" (Mighty Waters). These include the Great Flood (*mabul*) that brought widespread destruction, as well as Jonah's treacherous sea voyage ending in the belly of a water-dwelling creature, and the splitting of the Sea of Reeds that led to the Egyptians' demise.

The dual nature of water embodies both life-giving nourishment, as well as potential peril.

Likewise, in our own lives the element of water can be nurturing and supportive, or can become out of balance

**If you connect with the water element of Chesed,** you may especially enjoy:  
contemplating deep wisdom, spending time in solitude, immersing in water,  
generously offering your gifts and talents to others, meditating for inner-peace



A person wearing a white, textured robe is kneeling on a sandy surface. They are holding a large, dark brown clay jug with intricate gold-colored scrollwork and a woven band around its neck. Water is being poured from the jug's spout into a shallow, dark brown clay dish on the sand. The water is captured mid-pour, creating a dynamic splash in the dish. The scene is lit with warm, golden light, suggesting a sunrise or sunset setting.

*"Pour out your heart like  
water in the presence of the  
countenance of G-d"  
Prophet Jeremiah*



### 3

## Pouring Out the Heart<sup>1</sup>

The service of the heart in prayer is, figuratively, pouring out one's heart to God. In the words of the prophet Jeremiah: "Pour out your heart like water in the presence of the countenance of GOD."<sup>2</sup>

The idiom of pouring out one's heart like water alludes to the pouring of water on the altar of the Holy Temple on the festival of *Sukot*,<sup>3</sup> "the time of our happiness."<sup>4</sup> When God separated the lower waters from the higher waters on the second day of creation, we are told that the lower waters cried, "We, too, want to be close to God [as are the higher waters]."<sup>5</sup> While not alleviating the frustration of the lower waters entirely, God did promise them that they would come close to Him on *Sukot* with the pouring of the water on the altar. Thus, in the performance of this commandment, the bitterness of the lower waters became converted into joy.

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1. See p. 6.

2. Lamentations 2:19.

3. *Sukot* is the one time of the year when we physically build a Divine Space around us, in the form of the *sukah*.

4. Liturgy, festival *Amidah*.

5. *Tikunei Zohar* 80a.



This is precisely in accord with the nature of the spiritual service of the heart (in prayer). We are taught that the ideal state of spiritual equilibrium in the heart is one of "crying on one side [the left side] of the heart and being joyful on the other side [the right side] of the heart."<sup>6</sup> Experiencing our existential distance from God, we cry; experiencing coming close to Him, we are filled with joy. When we pour out our heart to God in prayer, we experience simultaneously the lower waters' bitterness as they cry out to God and how their crying is converted into joy as they are offered to God on the spiritual altar of our heart.

The sum of the numerical values of the two words for "crying" (בכיה, 37) and "joy" (חדוה, 23) in the above saying is 60, the product of the two letters that form the word "heart" (לב; ל = 30, ב = 2, 30 times 2 = 60). Thus, as stated, the presence of the two emotions of crying and joy in the heart, in perfect balance, is indicative of a rectified Jewish heart.

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6. *Zohar* 2:255a.



# WATER RITUALS:

Water is associated with Chesed (Zohar 2,159b)

- ***Mikvah***
- ***Netilat Yadayim (Ritual washing of the hands)***
- ***Enhance your cups of water, drink extra water***





# Water: The Root of Creation

Before light was created, there was already water: "The earth was astonishingly empty, and darkness was on the face of the deep, and the spirit of G-d was hovering over the face of the water. And G-d said, 'Let there be light'" (Bereishit 1:1-3). The first specific and distinguished creation was *ohr/light*, yet according to the text, before light, there was already water.

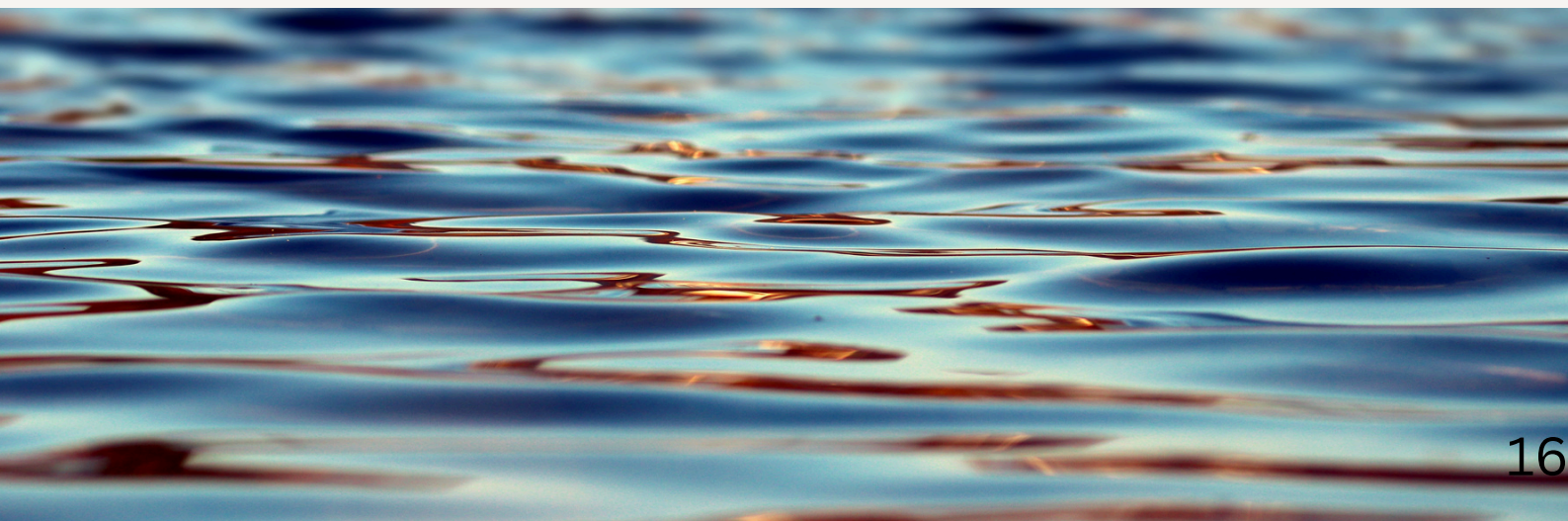
Before the separations of light and dark, and the creation of various creatures, there was water. In Jewish thought, water is considered the epitome of total unity and singularity, with a unifying impact on everything it touches. Perhaps this is why water helps us feel whole: it unifies all of our fragmented parts. It brings all of us home. Water is where we came from — both in the Creation story and in our biological development in the womb. For the first 40 days, an embryo is called *Mayim b'Alma*, simply water (Yevamos 96b). Returning to water may viscerally remind us of our primordial selves, the months we spent surrounded by waters.

Water is rooted within the realm of the *Ma'amar Echad/Oneness* (this is derived from the root word, Bereishit). Water is the realm of total unity and singularity, and therefore has a unifying effect on whatever it touches. Immersing fully into water, such as in the mikvah ritual that will be explored later, is a rejuvenating wellness practice of going back to a safe and nurturing place, like being in the womb. The oneness of the water makes us feel secure, as though we're being hugged and comforted in a Divine embrace. Immersion is a way to connect with the very essence of life, entering into a peaceful and renewing space.

Rav Pinson teaches:

"On a deeper level, the *Ma'amar Echad* is not only the 'first utterance,' rather, it is the *Nekudah/point* of oneness that exists within all the other utterances. Water is the foundation of life and the inner quality upon which everything stands, as alluded to in the verse, 'The land and the fullness thereof are *Hashem's*, the world and those who dwell therein, for He founded it upon seas' (Tehilim 24:1-2). Within the world of the nine utterances of duality, there is a *Nekudah of Yichud/unity* deep within, like a drop or molecule of water, holding it together as a cohesive unit, in other words, a unity."

This oneness is also reflected in the Hebrew word for womb, *rechem*, which is related to the word for compassion, *rachamim*. Entering a body of water, we feel the Divine compassion embracing us.





# *Water as Tenuah*

Before receiving the Torah, the Jewish people had to walk through the Sea of Reeds as a "mikvah" purification. This act of immersion symbolized a spiritual cleansing, preparing them to receive the Divine wisdom and commandments.

"All spiritual growth and movement is stimulated by Chesed, just as water, the physical manifestation of Chesed, stimulates the growth of vegetation" (Eitz Chayim, Sha' ar ha Yerach, Sha'ar 35. Likutei Levi Yitzchak, He'aros leZohar, Bereishis, 92). Water is also characterized by Tenuah (movement), as explored previously; it therefore has the power to inspire, arouse, and propel us into a state of greater openness and dynamic fluidity. Water, which is constantly moving, is thus the elemental agent of transition and transformation. If everything in the world was static and solid, like the element of earth, nothing would ever change. Due to the Chesed/kindness of water, people and things that are immersed within it can soften and flow into a new form or pattern.

Rav Pinson explains: "Fire is also defined by Tenuah, movement, as is wind. In fact, the nature of the Three Primary Elements (fire, wind, and water) is movement, whereas the inner/secondary element of earth that is within everything, is stationary" (Netzach Yisrael, 57).

Water's dynamic nature exemplifies the flow of kindness and transformation, creating space for renewal and spiritual growth. It is through this movement that we are able to soften and evolve, much like the Jewish people emerging from the Sea of Reeds, spiritually renewed and prepared for their sacred mission.



# *Water as Torah: Shir HaShirim Rabbah 1:2:8*

Shir HaShirim Rabbah is a midrashic commentary on the Song of Songs, interpreting it as a love analogy between the Divine and humanity. Here, the source points out the similarities between Torah and water. **Which line most stands out to you, and why?**

Words of Torah can be compared to water, wine, oil, honey, and milk. To water: O all who thirst, come for water [Is. 55:1]

Just as water goes from one end of the earth to the other, as it is written, to the one who spread forth the earth above the waters [Psalms 136:6], so does Torah go from one end of the earth to the other, as it is written, the measure is longer than the earth [Job 11:9].

Just as water is forever-living, as it is written, a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters [Song of Songs 4:15], so is Torah is forever-living, as it is written, for they are alive to those that find them [Proverbs 4:22], and also come, buy and eat [Isaiah 55:1].

Just as water comes from the heavens, so too does Torah come from the heavens.  
Just as the water has many voices, so too does Torah have many voices.

Just as water restores the soul, so too does Torah...

Just as water cleanses the body from tumah (ritual impurity), so too does Torah cleanse impurity.

Just as water originates in tiny drops and accumulates into mighty streams and rivers, so the Torah is acquired word by word today, verse by verse tomorrow; Just as water covers the shamefulness (erva) of the sea, so too does Torah cover the shamefulness of Israel, as it is written, love covers up all faults [Proverbs 10:12].

Just as water descends drop by drop to form rivers, so too does a person learn Torah two halakhot each day until it is a flowing stream.

Just as water is not pleasing to a person who is not thirsty, so too Torah not appreciated unless a person [has struggled with it enough to be] tired from it.

Just as water leaves high places alone and runs in low places, so too Torah leaves alone someone with a haughty attitude and clings to someone with a modest self-image.

Just as water is not kept in silver or gold vessels, but the simplest [clay] vessels, so Torah is sustained by one who makes him/herself like a clay vessel. Just as a scholar is not embarrassed to ask a student, "pass me some water, embarrassed to learn from a student a chapter, a verse, a word, or even a letter. a scholar is not

Just as one who does not know how to float in water will eventually drown, so too will one who cannot float on and point out (l'horot) words of Torah eventually drown.



# *Water- Visualization*

Visualizing yourself by a body of water can be a powerful and grounding experience. As you settle into the visualization, imagine yourself standing or sitting next to a river, lake, pond, or waterfall—whichever body of water resonates with you most. As you begin to connect with this vision, take a few deep breaths and allow the environment around you to fully form in your mind's eye.

How does the water-element affect your body, your mind? Feel the water's touch—does it bring relaxation, a sense of lightness, or a soothing stillness to your body and mind?

Listen to the sounds of the water.

Tune into the water's rhythm—whether it's gentle and calming or powerful and invigorating, let it set the tone for your meditation.

Where in your body do you feel the water-sensations? Notice where you feel the water's presence in your body—perhaps in your chest, legs, or neck—and how it affects those areas.

What feelings, thoughts, or sensations does the element of water elicit in you? Reflect on any emotions or thoughts that surface—does the water help you feel at peace, energized, or clear?



# *Waterfall Heart Meditation*

***"May Chesed, generous, abiding love, come through me."***

— Psalm 119:41

Imagine your heart as the source of a river, high up on a mountain or hill, flowing with the life-giving energy of Chesed. Visualize the heart as the reservoir, with water rushing down, filling every corner of your being. Hear the soothing sounds of the flowing water and feel the cooling, refreshing sensation of movement.

Like a waterfall, envision the abundant flow of love cascading down the river from your heart, traveling down the length of your right arm, the pathway of Chesed. The current flows outward through your right palm, extending your gift of love to the world.

Giving does not deplete you. Instead, it feels natural, effortless, and cleansing as the water moves through you. Feel your right palm vibrating with life, nurturing energy, eager to give to your loved ones from a full and abundant heart. When we give from this place, our love is not diminished, but continually replenished.

As a channel of divine, steadfast love, how can you best offer your gifts to the world?



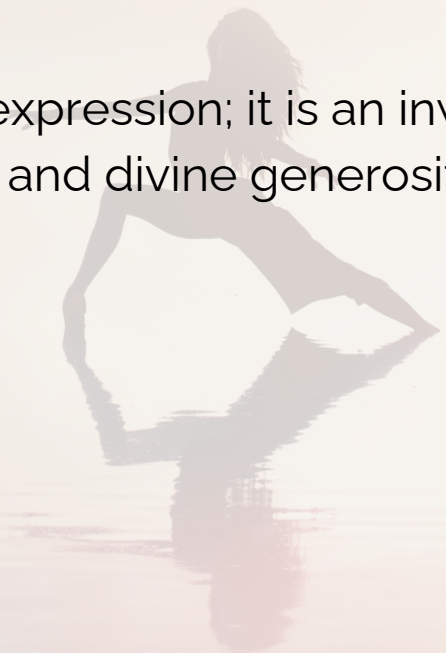
# *Water-Dance*

From your water visualization, invite the energy of water to move through your body with ease and fluidity. Like gentle ocean waves, feel your body swaying in harmony with the natural flow of love and kindness. Release any tension or resistance, surrendering to the effortless movement inspired by the water. Allow your body to follow its rhythm, free from overthinking or control.

As you embrace the fluidity of water, let go of expectations or judgments about how the movements should look. Instead, attune yourself to the pulse of love flowing through you, letting it guide your every motion. Each movement becomes an expression of the generosity and grace that Chesed embodies, flowing freely and naturally.

Turn on your Chesed Playlist and allow the music to deepen your connection to the energy of water. Dance with it—feel it moving through your arms, your torso, your entire being. Let your body become a vessel for the flow of love as you create your own Chesed Water Dance.

This dance is more than an outward expression; it is an inward experience of connection, release, and divine generosity.





# *The Angel of Chesed: Micha-el*

The Angel of Chesed is Micha-el, the embodiment of boundless, unrestrictive Divine Flow. As described in Zohar 3, p. 125a, Positioned to the right, Micha-el channels pure, spiritual energy from the higher realms into the world, offering love, kindness, and generosity without limitation.

Micha-el serves as a conduit of divine compassion, ensuring that the flow of goodness and mercy reaches all who are open to receiving it. This angelic presence encourages us to embody the same qualities of giving and lovingkindness in our own lives.

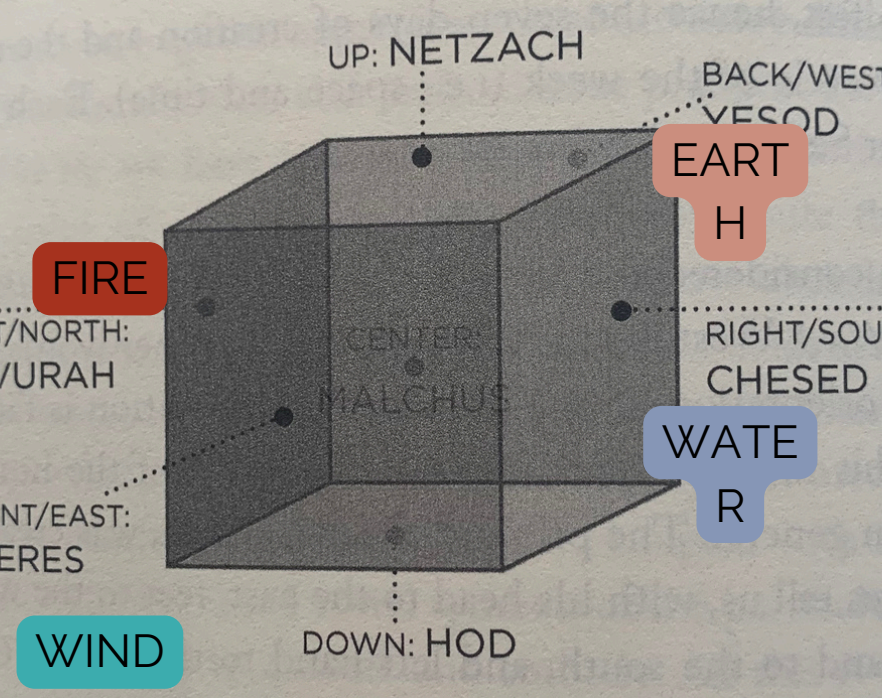
Allow yourself to connect with the energy of Micha-el, inviting the pure, generous flow of Chesed to move through you and inspire your actions.

Before bed, many recite a sacred verse to call upon this angelic protection:

***"To my right is Micha-el, to my left is Gavri-el, in front of me is Uri-el, behind me is Rafa-el, and above me is Shechinah El."***

— Siddur R. Yaakov Emden





# Elements

The Sacred Cube represents the foundational structure of creation, with its four horizontal directions forming the framework through which Divine Flow moves. From the perspective of Chesed, the focus is on the right side, which is connected to the element of water.

Water embodies the essence of Chesed—fluid, nurturing, and boundless. It moves with grace and adaptability, offering its life-giving presence to all who are open to receiving it. Just as Micha-el channels pure, unrestrictive energy from the right, the element of water carries this flow of love, kindness, and divine compassion.

Visualize the Sacred Cube surrounding you, with the right side glowing with the energy of water and Chesed. Feel this gentle, loving flow washing over you, inviting you to embrace the qualities of generosity and compassion in your own being.

*"One could visualize the 4-letter Name of Gd with the particular Sefirotic Vowels in their corresponding color, "written" in the medium of the particular element. For instance, while one is facing east and wearing all white, (the color of Chesed) he can turn his head to the right/south (the direction of Chesed) and visualize Hashem's name with the corresponding vowel symbols written in pure water in crystalline ice, while attempting to "feel" the sensation of moistness"*

Rav Dovber Pinson



# *Sound Healing: Chesed*

According to the Ramak (Rabbi Moshe Cordovero), each Sefirah is associated with a specific sound derived from the Hebrew vowels. The sound of Chesed corresponds to the Segol vowel, which visually resembles three dots arranged in a downward-facing triangle (◊) and produces the “Eh” sound (like “head”)

This vibrational energy of Chesed creates a subtle resonance that echoes throughout creation. Although it is not loud enough for the human ear to detect, its presence forms an undertone of kindness and generosity, subtly permeating all existence.

The Segol is a sound of expression and release. Its visual form is also meaningful: with two dots above and one below, it symbolizes something higher giving to something lower—an act of offering, an extension of oneself. This shape mirrors the flow of Chesed, like a river of compassion streaming from above to below, endlessly giving and nourishing.

As you work with the energy of Chesed, consider chanting the “Eh” sound to attune yourself to its gentle, generous flow. Let this sound be a channel through which you connect with the infinite wellspring of divine kindness.





# *Embody the Sefirah of Chesed*

To fully connect with the energy of Chesed, immerse yourself in its qualities through visualization, meditation, and action.

## **Color Visualization:**

- The color of Chesed is white, symbolizing purity, kindness, and divine love.
- Wear white or visualize yourself entering a vast, radiant white space. If you are praying for more Chesed in your life, imagine stepping into this luminous realm of kindness and compassion.

## **Name Meditation:**

- Meditate on the name of the Sefirah, Chesed (Ches-Samech-Dalet), written out in glowing white letters.
- Alternatively, visualize the Tetragrammaton (Y-H-V-H) shining in brilliant white light.

## **Directional Focus:**

- Gesture, tilt your head, or highlight in your mind's eye the right side of the Sacred Cube, the direction of Chesed.

## **Elemental Connection:**

- Connect with the element of Water, the essence of Chesed—flowing, nurturing, and endlessly giving. Visualize water's gentle, purifying presence moving through you.

## **Acts of Kindness:**

- Engage in deeds of Chesed. Allow external acts of kindness to awaken the inner flow of divine love within you.

## **Light Visualization:**

- Envision an expansive, pure white light surrounding and filling you. Let it cleanse, nurture, and inspire you to embody the qualities of Chesed.

Continued-->



# Embody the Sefirah of Chesed

## Contemplation:

- Reflect on how G-d enlivens your flesh and soul, revealing your inherent “love like water.” Feel this love flow through you effortlessly.

## Invoking Sarah's Chesed Energy:

- Energetically invite the Matriarch Sarah and her Chesed energy into your space, allowing her loving presence to guide and inspire you.

## Mantra Practice:

- Repeat the mantra: “I am Divine Love.”
  - Inhale: “I am.”
  - Exhale: “Divine Love.”
- Add “Olam Chesed Yibane” to deepen your connection: Olam Chesed Yibane (עולם חסד יבנה) means “*The world is built with Chesed.*”
  - Inhale: “Olam” (the world).
  - Exhale: “Chesed Yibane” (is built with Chesed).



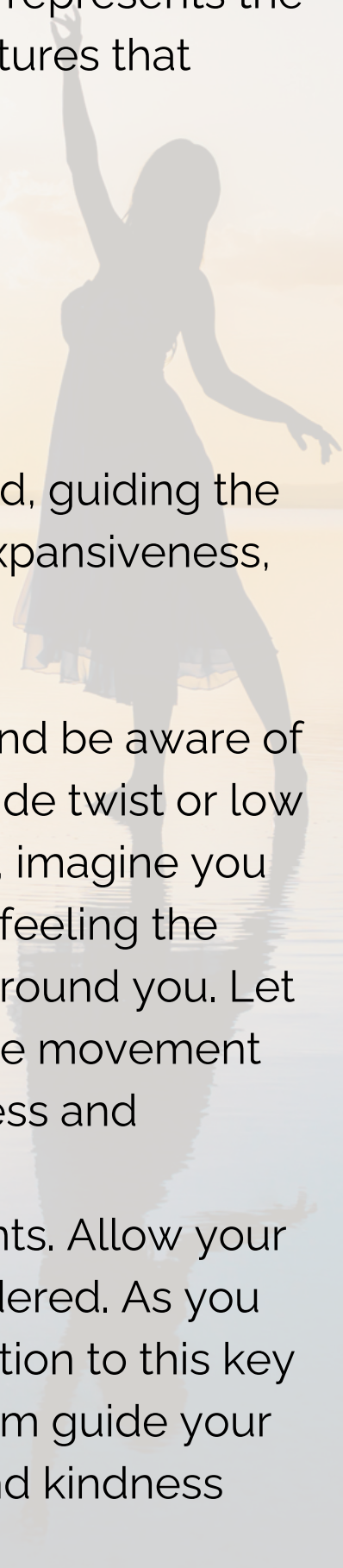
# *Chesed Movement Applications*

- Chesed movement is expansive, free, and open, focusing on the flow of energy rather than strict alignment or rigid posture. While Gevurah emphasizes strength and discipline, Chesed celebrates the flexibility and creativity of the body.
- In Chesed movement, feel the energetic body expanding beyond the physical limitations of your form. Allow yourself to move with ease and openness, embodying the expansive nature of Chesed.
- Practice loving-acceptance towards yourself in each movement, breathing loving kindness throughout your body. Let the flow of divine love guide you as you move with freedom and grace.



# *Chesed Yoga & Dance Applications*

- Focus your attention on the right arm, which represents the direction of Chesed. Spend extra time in postures that emphasize the right arm, such as:
  - Half Moon with a lifted right arm
  - Right arm side plank
  - Right arm extension
  - Eagle Pose (with right arm lifted higher)
- These poses help activate the flow of Chesed, guiding the body to embody the qualities of kindness, expansiveness, and generosity.
- As you flow into these poses, turn towards and be aware of the divine space to your right. In poses like side twist or low lunge twist, when you turn towards the right, imagine you are aligning with the Divine Flow of Chesed, feeling the energy of love and compassion expanding around you. Let your awareness of this divine space guide the movement and help you embody the qualities of kindness and generosity.
- **Dance freely** with fluid, water-like movements. Allow your body to move like water, smooth and unhindered. As you dance, highlight the right arm, drawing attention to this key area associated with Chesed. Let the right arm guide your movements and flow as you express love and kindness through dance.





## *Chesed Activity :*

Gather up all your **white art supplies**—paper, paint, markers, or any medium that resonates with you. Once everything is set, close your eyes and take a few deep breaths. **Connect with the feeling of love within you.** Allow yourself to fully embody the expansive, nurturing energy of **Chesed**.

As you begin to create, **use the color white as an extension of your love and kindness.** Let the white become a canvas for your expression, a visual manifestation of the divine flow of Chesed. Allow your hand to move freely, without overthinking. Notice what motions arise naturally, what textures and lines emerge, and how the colors, even the white, begin to unfold.

Invite the process of fluid, creative flow—just as water flows effortlessly, let your creativity emerge without restrictions. Let love pour through your hand, guiding each movement. When you finish, gaze tenderly at the art you have created. Witness what has emerged, and honor the journey of the process itself. Feel the connection to the divine energy of Chesed that has flowed through you.

You can continue to layer this image over time, adding new layers, textures, and even colors. Just like Chesed, your art is ever-expanding, continually offering more to the world. You may find yourself returning to this piece after a day, a week, or even years, always bringing more love and creativity into it.





# 7 SPECIES OF ISRAEL



# *The Seven Species: Wheat and Barley*

The Seven Species consist of two grains—wheat and barley—and five fruits, each symbolizing a distinct aspect of life and spiritual growth. Wheat and barley specifically represent the two sides of our soul: the Animal Soul and the G-dly Soul.

The Animal Soul is our natural, self-oriented self—driven by instincts and desires that focus on earthly experiences. The G-dly Soul, in contrast, is directed towards transcendence, connecting us to the divine and higher purposes.

In biblical times, wheat was used to nourish humans, while barley was allocated to feed animals. This distinction is reflected in their spiritual symbolism:

- **Wheat** represents the nourishment of our G-dly Soul, fostering our connection to divinity and spiritual growth.
- **Barley**, on the other hand, nourishes the Animal Soul, helping to refine and elevate our more earthly instincts.

Both souls—our Animal Soul and G-dly Soul—require nourishment to live in harmony. By including both wheat and barley in the Seven Species of Israel, we are reminded that both aspects of our being must be fed and refined. This refining process involves infusing ourselves with spiritual zest and flavor, guiding both our physical and spiritual growth.



A close-up photograph of several golden wheat stalks, showing the awns and the grain, set against a soft, out-of-focus background.

# Wheat: Chesed

Wheat corresponds to Chesed because it is a symbol of expansiveness, growth, and sustenance. Like the tall, wide-reaching stalks that stretch toward the sky, wheat is expansive and nourishing, both physically and energetically. It grows outward, offering life and sustaining the world. Wheat reflects Chesed's foundational energy, nourishing not only the body but also the spirit.

When baking bread, you witness the expansive nature of wheat, as it rises and grows—much like how Chesed expands through the body and soul. Similarly, in digestion, wheat nurtures and sustains, offering its energy to the body.

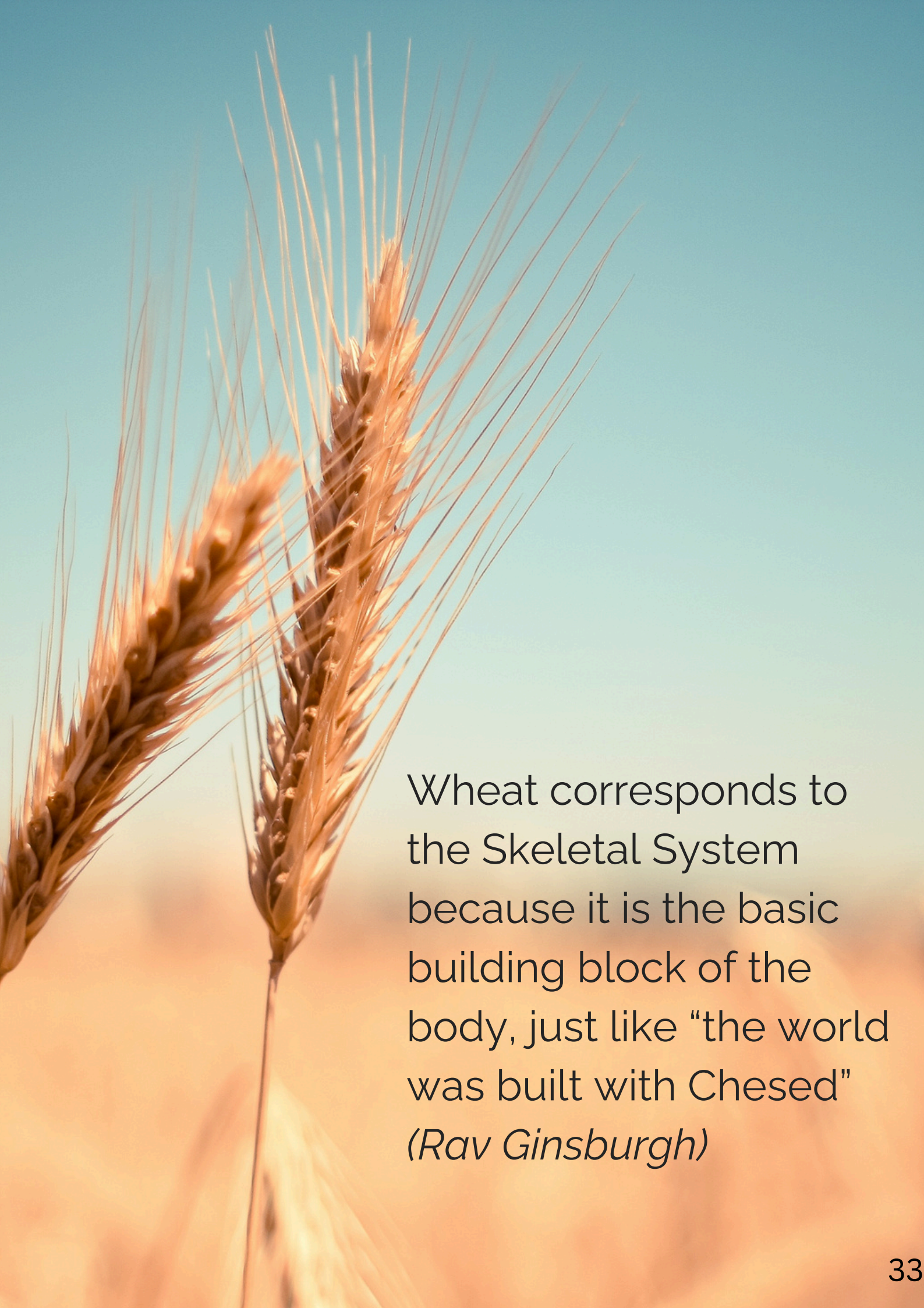
Wheat is considered the most essential of the Seven Species, representing the foundation of the world itself, grounded in the energy of Chesed. It's the ultimate food of nourishment, sustaining life and reinforcing the nurturing flow of love and kindness.

As Abraham said to the angels, *"I will fetch a morsel of bread, and nourish your hearts"* (Genesis 18:5), we see bread as a vehicle for sustaining not just the body, but also the heart and soul. King David also affirms, *"bread sustains the heart of man"* (Psalms 104:15).

A healthy form of wheat supports digestion, strengthens the skeletal body, and enhances circulation—all actions that align with the expansive, life-giving force of Chesed. Wheat also increases mother's milk, which is the ultimate symbol of nurturing and loving care.

The Rambam (Maimonides) teaches that we should consume unrefined sourdough bread daily, the healthiest form of bread made from unhulled, unrefined, and fully ripened wheat kernels. There is even an opinion in the Gemara that the Tree of Knowledge was a wheat tree (Rabbi Yehudah, Babylonian Talmud, Berachot 40a). Although this tree was the cause of the Downfall of man, it is said that redemption will specifically come through this tree—symbolizing the ultimate return to Chesed.



A close-up photograph of several wheat stalks, showing the golden-brown grain and long, thin awns. The stalks are positioned on the left side of the frame, extending towards the right. The background is a clear, light blue sky, which transitions into a soft, warm orange glow at the bottom, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The lighting is soft and directional, highlighting the texture of the wheat.

Wheat corresponds to  
the Skeletal System  
because it is the basic  
building block of the  
body, just like “the world  
was built with Chesed”  
*(Rav Ginsburgh)*



# *Blessing the Bread:*

When we bless the bread, our Sages teach us to place all 10 fingers on the bread. This act symbolizes the interconnectedness of the 10 Sefirot, the 10 Commandments, and the 10 mitzvot related to the production of bread. Each finger represents a unique aspect of creation and divine energy.

Some of the blessings and mitzvot associated with bread include:

- Ma'aser (tithing)
- Pe'ah (leaving the corners of the field for the poor)
- Leket (gleaning)
- Challah (the offering of a portion of dough)
- etc...

These mitzvot are not only physical acts but also spiritual practices that elevate the process of bread-making into a divine endeavor, aligning it with the flow of the 10 Sefirot. For a deeper understanding, see Mishnah Berurah 167:24, where this connection is explored.





Chesed Challah,  
infusing love & Prayers  
through our hands.



# *Chesed Ritual: Challah Baking*



"When we nurture, we need to do so from the deepest part of ourselves; trying to fit into a "cookie-cutter" mold of nurturing will only frustrate and be harmful to both ourselves and our loved ones, cheating them of our full nurturing potential.

To nurture is to be aware of our most true self and to give from that place. All of our actions and behaviors are derivatives of the emotional energy and intention that drive those actions. And they are usually received the same way they have been directed. Ever heard the expressions, "feeling the love on the plate" or, conversely, "eating humble pie? We can sense in a deep way when the food that has been prepared for us has been done so lovingly and with intention, just as well as we can tell when there is anger or resentment in the food that is placed before us. When we feed our loved ones, the food they receive is absorbed and transferred into actual energy. The love and intention we put into our food preparation informs the energy that will be created from that food! We make challah from a place of commitment to nourish ourselves and our families in a way that goes beyond mere physical feeding and watering."

-From the Book of Challah, "The Rising Life"



# *Chesed Ritual: Challah Baking*



During your baking process, you can meditate on the inner properties of each ingredient, beginning with the first—water—as it relates to Chesed.

## **Water**

"In the beginning, there was only water. All life emerged from water, water flows from Eden into the world, water breaks and we emerge.

Water, as a primordial element and a life-giving force that continually flows from higher ground to lower places, represents the very essence of life - that part of us that is eternally linked to the Source of all life, namely, our soul. As we begin the creation of the dough with the pouring of water, we remember that the essence of who we are, and the essential core of those we love, is a precious fragment of the Divine. We, and all of humanity and creation, in fact, are a direct reflection of G-dliness and, as such, we are pure light and goodness at our core. This reminds us of our own inherent worthiness and the innate beauty of those we care for. We begin nurturing with the realization of all of creation's innate holiness and value."





## *Chesed Ritual: Challah Baking*



"The act of taking challah is, in and of itself, a great mitzvah. It is a declaration of trust in the sustenance of Hashem and the belief that all we have and all that we are is, in actuality, a direct manifestation of Divine. By extension, the entire process of baking challah becomes an experience of connectivity to G-d and to all of humanity.

Bread is the very essence of sustenance. By baking bread, we are offering life and health to those we love. By putting our devotion and mindfulness into the dough, we are offering spiritual and emotional sustenance, as well. We remember to remain connected and present during the process, appreciating the fact that by bringing all of ourselves into this moment, we are giving the very best of who we are to the ones who need it the most." Rising Life



# Day 1: Chesed and the Creation of Light

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי אֹרֶךְ וַיְהִי־אֹרֶךְ      Genesis 1:5

God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.

Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan explains that Chesed is connected to Day 1 of creation, the day when Light was created. What is the property of light? It is unbounded and unrestrictive. Light is the source of warmth, and in Chassidic teachings, this experience of warmth is described as "love like fire."

In Genesis 1:5, the first day is called "the day of one" (yom echad). The consciousness of this day is one of unity—the awareness that all of creation is unified and one. On this day, the love and unity of the Creator embraces all of creation.

The gematria of "one" (echad) equals 13, which is the same as the word love (ahava). Interestingly, Ahava is also an acronym for "Or HaKodesh BaruchHu," meaning "the light of the Holy One, Blessed Be He."

It is said of this day: "Day[s] God commands His lovingkindness" (Psalms 42:9). The unique form of the word "day[s]" (yomam) implies, as the Zohar explains, "a day that accompanies all days." From this, we learn that the first day, the day of lovingkindness, radiates its light to all the other days of creation, infusing them with the energy of Chesed.

—Rabbi Ginsburgh



***"In the beginning,  
an infinite, uncompounded light  
filled all of Creation."  
Zohar***



# Day 1

In Kabbalistic teachings, gematria is the method of interpreting Hebrew words based on their numerical values. Every letter in the Hebrew alphabet corresponds to a number, and the sum of the letters in a word reveals deeper spiritual meanings. The gematria of the word "one" (echad) equals 13, which also corresponds to the numerical value of the word "love" (ahava).

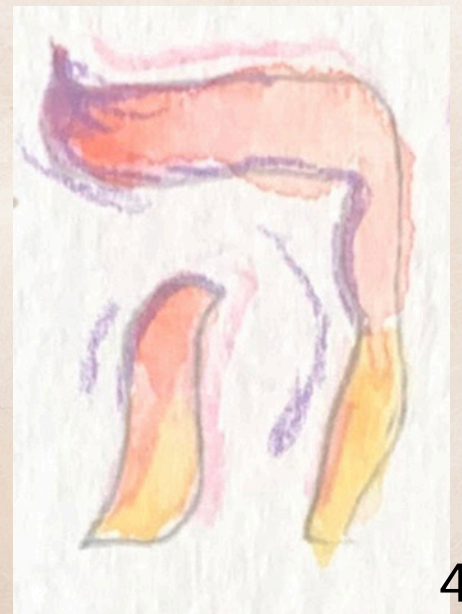
Additionally, Ahava is an acronym for "Or HaKodesh Baruch Hu"—meaning "the light of the Holy One, Blessed Be He". Chesed is the channel through which this divine light and love flow into the world.

אור הקדוש ברוך הוא



## *The Patriarch and Matriarch of Chesed:* *Abraham and Sarah*

- The Patriarch and Matriarch associated with Chesed are Abraham and Sarah. Their tent was open on all sides, extending welcoming hospitality to all. They are known as the "people of lovingkindness."
- Abraham and Sarah were the first parents of the Jewish people. Abraham taught the men, and Sarah taught the women about the kindness and unity of the universal G-d.
- G-d changed their names from Sarai and Avram to Sarah and Avraham—each name was gifted with a Heh to bring about a miracle for them to conceive. The Hebrew letter Heh, with a small window at the top, allows Divine energy to flow inward (unlike the Chet, which is closed off to Above). Adding a letter, or even a whole name, infuses life-giving spiritual power. This is why it is customary to add a healing name to someone who is sick, such as "Rafael" (cure) or "Chaim" (life). With this name change, a miracle occurred, and Sarah became pregnant.





# Body of Sarah

כָּל־אִשָּׁר תֹּאמַר אֵלַיךְ שָׂרָה שְׁמַע בְּקוֹלָהּ

In Genesis 21:12, G-d tells Abraham, "Whatever Sarah says, listen to her voice." According to the Zohar (1:122b), Abraham represents the Soul, and Sarah represents the Body. G-d is saying: Listen to the wisdom of the Body! The body is designed with the utmost love and naturally resonates with love.

*"The essence of the body originates from a deeper level of G-dliness than even the spiritual soul. Since the body has descended further from its exalted origin, it is currently on a lower level. In the era of Moshiach, the essence of the body—which is actually from a higher level of G-dliness— will be revealed. Then... the soul will derive spiritual nourishment from the body."*

—Chana Weisberg



# *Sarah's Milk*

*"milk and honey are under your tongue"*

Song of Songs 4:11

After Sarah miraculously gave birth to a son, rumors spread that Sarah wasn't the real mother. G-d dispelled these myths by causing every other mother's milk to dry up—only Sarah was able to nurse her infant. Other mothers pleaded with Sarah to nurse their children, and the miracle of Sarah and Abraham's child began to spread far and wide.

**In Kabbalah, milk represents Chesed.** It is the utmost expression of giving love—pouring from a mother to her child. Milk is white, the color of Chesed, smooth, and only swells within a woman to give forth life





## Mon: Angel Food

***"I will rain down bread for you from the sky..."(Exodus 16:4-14).***

Manna was the "bread from heaven" that fell each day to feed our ancestors in the desert. Our sages refer to it as "angel food" and teach, "Just as an infant finds many flavors in bread, so also did Klal Yisrael find many tastes in the Manna" (Yuma 75a). Science has revealed that a mother's milk contains traces of tastes from her diet. Likewise, the Manna held many flavors within it.

Manna exemplified complete nourishment, sourced directly from our Creator. It produced no waste or excess; the body was able to fully absorb it as perfect nutrition. The word for "Manna" shares the same Hebrew letters as "Emunah" (Faith). Just like the Manna, our sustenance comes straight from our infinite Source. We receive exactly what we need from Above—no more, no less.





# Manna Mindset:

## Practice:

Choose a 'manna mindset' such as:

- "I have everything that I need"
- "I am enough"
- "What I have is enough"
- "This moment is enough"

Say it aloud, repeating the mantra. Listen to the words and allow yourself to receive their truth.

## Reflect:

Think back to a time when you felt something was lacking, only to later realize that you had everything you needed all along.



# Sarah's Tent

A Midrash (Sacred Ancient Story) teaches that during Sarah's life, three miracles occurred in her home, transforming it into a spiritual sanctuary. These miracles correspond to the three main mitzvot (divine commandments) for Jewish women today, represented by the acronym CHANA.

- A protective cloud hovered over her tent's entrance.
- Her dough was blessed.
- Her candles burned from one Shabbat to the next.
- 

The Beis HaMikdash (The Temple) was modeled after Sarah's home, demonstrating that the Jewish home is superior to the Temple! Just like the cloud that hovered over her tent, God's greatness was always present in the Temple. As her dough satiated all her guests, the Temple's bread remained fresh and warm all week long. Just as her candles burned, the flame of the Temple's menorah remained continuously bright until the next lighting.

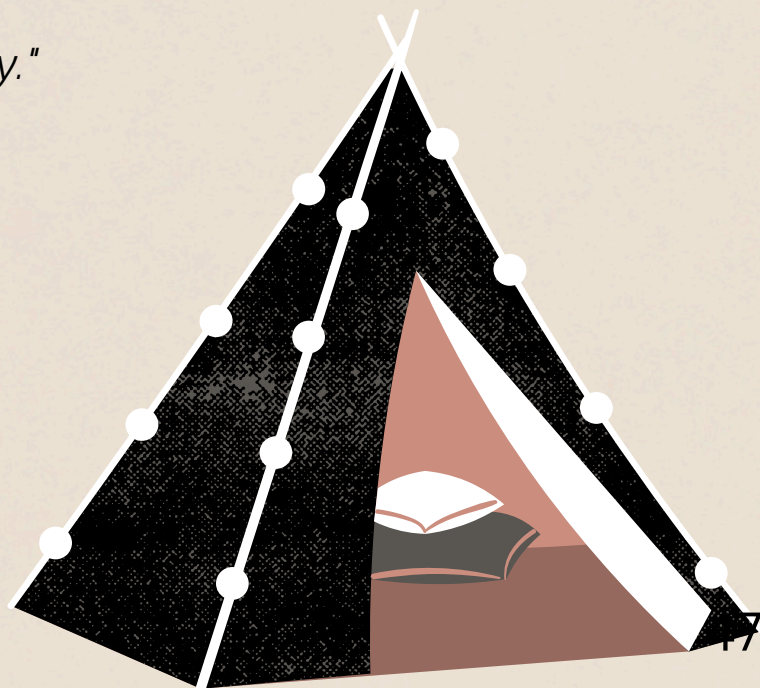
Avraham composed the song "Eishet Chayil" for Sarah's eulogy. Today, we sing this each Friday night to honor the women of the home and the Shechinah (the feminine presence of God).

כֶּפֶה פָּרָשָׁה לְעָנִי וַיִּדְּיָהּ שְׁלָחָה לְאַבְיוֹן

*"She gives generously to the poor;*

*Her hands are stretched out to the needy."*

(Proverbs 31:20 / Eishet Chayil)





# *Garments :*

## *Tikkunei Zohar 17a:3*

You also arranged "garments". It is from these "garments" that the souls of human beings originate.. They are called a "body" relative to the "clothes" that cover over them. These are arranged as follows: chesed (or loving-kindness) is the right arm, gevura (restraint) is the left arm, and tiferet (harmony) is the torso. Netzach (dominance) and hod (empathy) are the two legs, and yesod (foundation or channel) is the body's extremity, the sign of the Holy Covenant. Malchut (kingship) is the mouth. It is therefore called the "Oral Torah".

וְאֵלֶּיךָ עָשָׂר סְפִירָה אֵינֶנּוּ אֲזֵלִין כְּסֻדְרָן, חֵד אֶרֶץ, וְחֵד קֶצֶר, וְחֵד  
בִּינּוּנִי, וְאַנְתָּה הוּא דְאֶנְהִיג לֹון, וְלִית מָאן דְאֶנְהִיג לָךְ, לָא לְעִילָא וְלָא  
לְתַתָּא וְלָא מְכָל סְטָרָא, לְבוּשִׁין תְּקִינָת לֹון, דְמִנִּייהו פְּרָחִין נִשְׁמָתִין  
לְבָנֵי נֶשָׂא, וְכִמָּה גּוֹפִין תְּקִינָת לֹון, דְאֶתְקָרִיאוּ גּוֹפָא לְגַבֵּי לְבוּשִׁין  
דְמִכְסִּין עֲלֵיהוֹן, וְאֶתְקָרִיאוּ בְתִקּוּנָא דָא, חֶסֶד דְרוּעָא יְמִינָא,  
גְבוּרָה דְרוּעָא שְׂמָאלָא, תְּפָאֶרֶת גּוֹפָא, נֶצַח וְהוּד תִּרְיִן שׁוֹקִין, וְיִסּוּד  
סִימָא דְגּוֹפָא אוֹת בְּרִית קֹדֶשׁ, מַלְכוּת פֶּה תוֹרָה שְׁבַעַל פֶּה קָרִינָן  
לֵיה.



# *Chesed as the Right Arm*

In Tikkunei Zohar 17a:3, the Right Arm is associated with Chesed, known as "Yad haGedolah" (The Great Hand). Chesed, the Sefirah of lovingkindness, is symbolized by the right arm, which extends outward to offer love, protection, and blessing.

The Ba'al Shem Tov used to place his right hand over the heart of a child and bless them to become a "warm Jew," invoking the loving energy of Chesed through this physical act.

In the Priestly Blessing, the act of raising the arms is seen as a way to bring down G-d's blessing to the world. The Kohanim (High Priests) would bless the nation of Israel daily, extending their arms upward to draw down divine presence: "Aaron raised his hand and blessed his people" (Leviticus 9:22). The right hand here symbolizes the act of drawing down blessings and divine energy into the world.

There are also many Halachot (Jewish laws) that require the use of the right hand first, such as when washing hands, putting on shoes, and blessing fruit. This emphasizes the significance of the right hand as the channel through which divine blessings are conveyed.





# *Chesed as the Right Arm*

Sefer Charedim (The Book of the Pious), written by Rabbi Eliezer Azkiri (1600), divides the mitzvot (divine commandments) according to the structure of the body. It explains which mitzvah corresponds to which organ, limb, or vessel of the body. In Sefer Charedim, ways to utilize your Chesed Right Arm include:

- Lighting candles for Shabbat and holidays, lighting the Menorah
- Washing one's hands upon rising and before eating
- Holding the Lulav and Etrog on Sukkot
- Placing the Mezuzah on the door
- Returning lost objects to their rightful owners
- Paying workers on time
- Giving charity
- Assisting others when necessary, helping to save another life





# *Resemble Your Creator: Chesed*

According to Tomer Devorah (Palm Tree of Devorah), a Kabbalistic work written by Rabbi Moshe Cordovero (1522-1570), we must each strive to emulate the characteristics of G-d, as manifested in the Ten Sefirot. Rabbi Cordovero explains, "It is proper for one to resemble the Creator, for then one becomes worthy of the G-dly image. If one were to resemble a spiritual image in his body alone, while lacking the development of the related spiritual characteristics, he would be falsifying the exalted form he possesses... to what avail is the physical 'G-dly image' of man if in deeds he does not resemble his Creator?"

Ways he guides us to cultivate Chesed (Lovingkindness) include:

- Taking care of and providing for your children
- Visiting the sick and tending to their needs
- Performing the mitzvah of burying the dead and comforting the bereaved
- Giving charity
- Being hospitable to guests
- Making peace between people



"The world stands  
upon three things:  
Torah,  
Divine service,  
and Acts of  
Loving Kindness"  
Pirkei Avot 1:3



# *To Love the Divine*

Teachings by the Rebbe Rashab on the essence of Jewish Meditation.

The seven emotional Sefirot (divine attributes) each correspond to one of the continuous ethical commandments. The commandment specifically associated with Chesed (loving-kindness) is, "You shall love the Divine with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might" (Deuteronomy 6:5). This is one of the six continuous commandments, as love is the force that motivates us to fulfill all of the other 248 positive commandments.

The question is, how can we be commanded to love someone? Normally, commandments are action- or mind-based, not directed at emotions. Since the mind influences the emotions, this commandment calls us to reflect on the unity and greatness of the Divine. When we meditate on the unity of the Source of all, our love naturally arises, like water flowing effortlessly. If we come to the realization that the Divine is the ultimate source of all, how can we not deeply love?

There are two general types of love towards the Divine:

- Love like Water (Chesed sheb'Chesed - Love within Loving-Kindness)
- Love like Fire (Gevurah sheb'Chesed - Strength within Loving-Kindness)

Chesed is the love like water. This love, in our world, is similar to the bond between siblings or between parents and children. In the Song of Songs, the Divine expresses love for us by calling the people "achoti" ("my sister"). This kind of love is always present—it's not necessarily passionate, nor is it marked by burning desires. Instead, it is a calm, ever-present type of love. It is a familial type of love that was passed down to us from Abraham. Love like water quietly influences our thoughts and actions, often without conscious effort.



# *Loving Like Fire & Water*

Teachings by the Rebbe Rashab on the essence of Jewish Meditation.

*"Deep under the surface of the earth are aquifers that we never see, and deep in the Jewish psyche are currents of love of Gd that are part of the collective Jewish consciousness. We don't feel them, but they influence us. The deep waters of the inner earth might never emerge to the surface, not even become wells, but because they are there, the earth is fruitful and moist. We may not be aware of our love for the Creator, but it colors and influences our approach to life nonetheless. And if we dig and look for it, it comes to the surface."*

*Rabbi David Sterne*



# Loving Like Water

We can bring our inherent, unconscious love for the Divine into conscious awareness by meditating on the fact that the Divine enlivens us. As it is written in Nechemiah 9:6, "And You enliven them all..." This meditation helps activate our natural love by recognizing that the Divine is the source of all creation and sustains everything. When we awaken to the truth that the Divine permeates the entire world with Divine energy, we begin to notice the sacredness in all things.

By focusing on individual creations or objects, and meditating on how the Divine energy animates them, we start to perceive the Divine force vibrating within each one. In Job 19:26, it says, "From my flesh, I will see G-d." This indicates that we can even feel the Divine energy within our own bodies, deep within our flesh.

We can deepen this appreciation by acknowledging that the Divine not only enlivens our individual souls, but sustains the entire universe. The Rebbe Rashab taught, *"By meditating properly with intellectual understanding, while concentrating deeply, we can feel and perceive within ourselves how the world receives its life from the Divine light."*



# Highest Love

*"In all worldly delights, there is an element of the Highest Love. Through a person's natural desire for such delights, it becomes easy for him to love G-d. If this were not true, it would be very difficult even to begin to love G-d. But when a person can arouse this love through material delights, it becomes easy to love G-d. Understand this: A person's love for material pleasures is a fallen love, but it is derived from the highest Love. When he desires some worldly delight, he should realize that G-d is helping him, and making it easier for him to Love G-d. God knows that without this, such love for G-d could not be aroused. When one does not realize this, however, his worldly enjoyment causes this attribute of love to fall all the more. Sometimes a person is aroused by an evil love. He desires to sin, but cannot act upon his evil thought because of some obstacle. This is also a result of G-d's help.*

*God sees that this person does not have enough wisdom to raise this fallen love up to its Root and grasp onto the love of G-d. Rather, he wants to use it for evil. What G-d does (to the extent that we can express it) is to constrict His Glory still further, and bring about the obstacle.*

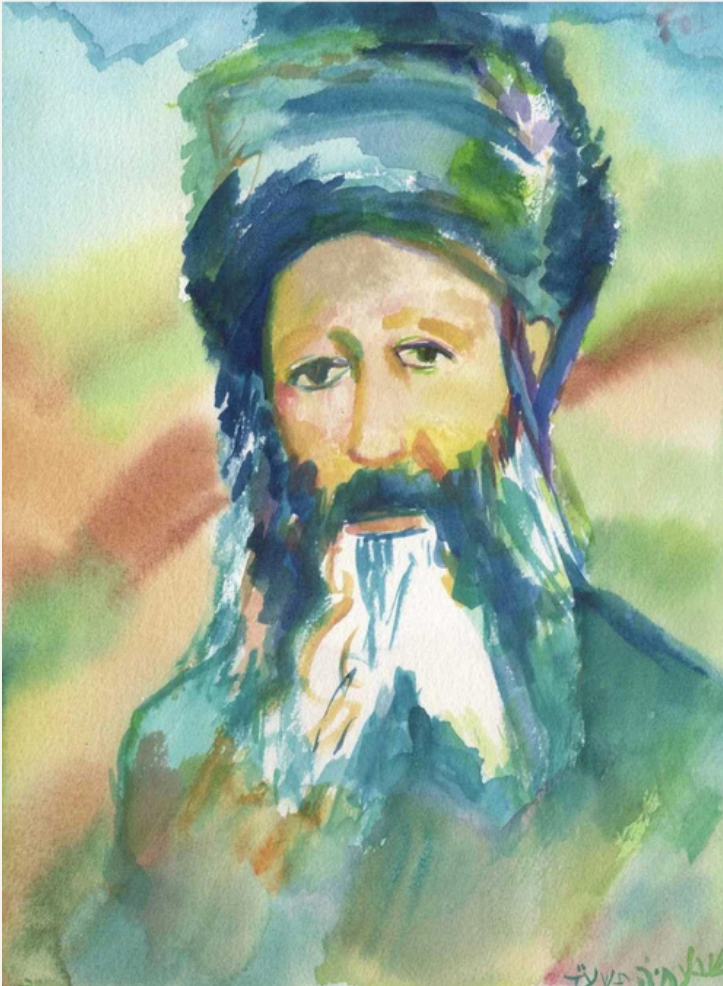
*-Rabbi Nachum of Tchernoble*



# *The Moral Principles: On Love*

By Rav Kook (Abraham Isaac Kook)

1. The heart must be filled with love for all.
2. The Love of all creation comes first, then comes the love for all mankind, and then follows the love for the Jewish people, in which all loves are included, since it is the destiny of the Jews to serve toward the perfection of all things. All these loves are to be expressed in practical action, by pursuing the welfare of those we are bidden to love, and to seek their advancement. But the highest of all loves is the love of G-d, which is love in its fullest maturing. This love is not intended for any derivative ends; when it fills the human heart, this itself spells man's greatest happiness.



Painting by Sheva Chaya Art

"Those who  
love Him will  
shine as the  
sun at its  
rising"

(Judg 5.31, Shabbat  
66b)



# *Return with Love*

"Don't waste a good sin.

'All that G-d does is good, even the wicked person on the day of his wickedness.'-Proverbs 16:4

Why did G-d who hates evil create a world where evil can take charge of a human being? Only so that this human being would be driven yet higher than could ever be reached without sin.

Return out of fear, and the sin has not accomplished its goal. It is a wasted sin.

Return out of Love, and the night has found its day. It has driven you higher."

-Tzvi Freeman



# *Chesed Contemplation :*

1. When do you feel the most expansive and full of love?
2. In what areas of your life can you increase acts of loving-kindness?
3. How do you best give to others?
4. After giving, do you feel depleted? Why might that be?
5. How are you expressing love towards yourself?
6. In what ways do you express your love for the Divine?
7. Where do you sense an imbalance in Chesed within yourself? Do you notice an "excess" of Chesed in some areas?
8. Where might you be experiencing blockages in your expression of Chesed?



# Chesed Review:

As an overview, Chesed's correspondences are:

- Meaning: Kindness, benevolence, unbound love
- Color: White or Silver with blueish tinge
- Source: South
- Direction: Right
- Body Part: Right Arm
- System: Skeletal
- Day of Creation: 1
- Shepard/ess: Avraham and Sarah
- Movement: Expansion
- Element: Water
- Meditation: "Love like Water"
- Mantra: I am Divine Love
- Water Rituals: Mikvah, Hand-Washing 7 Species of Israel:
- Wheat Ritual: Deeds of kindness, Challah Baking

**Questions?**

**Schedule a 1:1 session  
with Jenna**

**[jennazadaka@gmail.com](mailto:jennazadaka@gmail.com)**





# Chesed Extended Readings

- Love Like Fire & Water : A Guide to jewish meditation by R' David Sterne
- Rising Life by Rochie Pinson
- Secrets of the Mikvah by Rav Pinson
- "Kabbalah of Water: Hidden Worlds " (Video) by Rabbi Simon Jacobson
- Dips of Divine (Authored by Jenna!)
- "Want to Love Your Body? Try Swimming Naked" New York Times
- "What Are the Health Benefits of Viewing Water?" UC Davis
- "What is Blue Mind Theory?" MI Blues Perspective
- "Blue Mind - Humans Deep Connection With Water" Blue Minding