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TORAS LEVI YITZCHOK · AN ELUCIDATED SERIES · № 1

לקוטי לוי יצחק

הערות למסכת סוטה — דף ג׳ ע״ב

The Sesame and the House

Why promiscuity and anger in a home are "like a worm to sesame" — and what a house is actually made of

חַכְמוֹת נָשִׁים בָּנְתָה בֵיתָהּ

MISHLEI 14:1

ABOUT THIS SERIES

A Month in the Torah of Rav Levik

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson (5638–5704 / 1878–1944) — Rav of Yekaterinoslav, master of Kabbalah, father of the Rebbe — left us a body of writing unlike anything else in the literature of Chassidus. Much of it was written in Soviet exile in Kazakhstan, in the margins of the few seforim he had with him, with ink that Rebbetzin Chana of a page impose a discipline: there is no room to explain. Every line is compressed to its load-bearing minimum.

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That compression is why so few people learn these he'oros, and it is exactly why they reward learning. Rav Levik does not write essays; he writes *proofs*. A Gemara says something odd; he isolates what is odd about it; he retrieves two or three structures from the Arizal's system; and then he closes the argument with a gematria that comes out exact — במכוון, "precisely," his favorite word of triumph. When you slow the proof down to walking speed, it opens. That is what this series does.

Each installment takes one he'ara from *Likkutei Levi Yitzchak* and renders it the way it deserves: the full Hebrew as printed, a faithful translation, and layered elucidation — background structures, diagrams, gematria worked letter by letter — so that the compact original becomes readable on its own terms. We will learn one piece at a time through the weeks approaching *Chof Av*, Rav Levik's yahrzeit.

HOW TO READ RAV LEVIK — FIVE HABITS OF HIS STYLE

1. **Nothing in a Gemara is incidental.** The speaker's name, the object chosen for a comparison, which cases are paired — all of it is data. Here he will ask why *this* Amora, why *sesame*, why *these two* flaws.
2. **Gematria is a lock, not a flourish.** He uses a number the way an engineer uses a checksum: if the count is exact, the identification is confirmed. Watch for במכוון.
3. **He cites by coordinates.** Etz Chayim, Pri Etz Chayim, the Zohar, the Arizal's Likkutei Torah and Taamei HaMitzvos — gate and chapter, no summary. We unpack each reference where it appears.
4. **Roshei teivos everywhere.** The original is written in dense abbreviation. A full key appears in the glossary at the back; the translation silently expands them.
5. **The payoff is always the Gemara.** The Kabbalah is never for its own sake; the proof lands back on the plain words of the daf, which now read differently.

THIS INSTALLMENT

Source: *Likkutei Levi Yitzchak — He'oros to the Shas*, Maseches Sotah, pp. 48–49 (מח–מט), first he'ara: Sotah 3b. (Page numbering in this sefer runs as a single continuous sequence — מח, מט, נ, נא... — with "תורת לוי יצחק" and "הערות סוטה למסכתות" simply alternating as standard book-title/section-title running headers on facing pages; this is not two separate pagination tracks, and a header change alone does not mark a he'ara boundary.) Transcribed from photographs of the printed Kehot edition and cross-checked against the HebrewBooks 31637 scan. The next he'ara (Sotah 31a) begins later on page מט and is previewed at the end of this booklet; it now continues as installment № 2.

Two Sayings of Rav Chisda

Maseches Sotah opens with the laws of the *sotah* — the wife suspected of unfaithfulness — and its early pages collect the Sages' teachings on jealousy, sin, and the inner life of a marriage. On daf 3b, Rav Chisda teaches a pair of matched aphorisms:

> **אָמַר רַב חִסְדָּא: זְנוּתָא בְּבֵיתָא — כִּי קַרְיָא לְשׁוּמְשְׁמֵי. וְאָמַר רַב חִסְדָּא: תּוּקְפָּא בְּבֵיתָא — כִּי קַרְיָא לְשׁוּמְשְׁמֵי. אִידֵי וְאִידֵי בְּאִיתְּתָא, אֲבָל בְּגַבְרָא לֵית לָן בַּהּ.**
>
> **Rav Chisda said:** Promiscuity in a house is like a worm to sesame. **And Rav Chisda said:** Anger in a house is like a worm to sesame. Both of these were said of the woman; but with regard to the man, we have no [such statement].

Rashi (whom Rav Levik sends us to consult — ועיין בפרש"י שם) is brief: קריא — a worm that eats sesame seeds; *"so too promiscuity destroys the house"* (כך הזנות מחרבת את הבית). Rashi draws the comparison to the house himself, in the same breath as naming the worm — a one-line identification, not an extended image.

What is bothering Rav Levik

Read plainly, the Gemara is strange in at least four ways, and Rav Levik will name them explicitly partway through the he'ara:

א **Why the woman specifically?** The Gemara itself flags the asymmetry — אידי ואידי באיתתא אבל בגברא לית לן בה. A man's promiscuity and a man's anger are certainly also destructive. Why is the *house* ruined specifically through her?

ב **Why these two flaws?** Of all the failings that can enter a home, why does Rav Chisda pair *zenus* (promiscuity) with *tukfa* (anger) — and give them the identical mashal?

ג **Why sesame?** A worm ruins wheat, figs, and flax too. Why is the house compared to a store of *sesame seeds*, of all things?

ד **Why Rav Chisda?** In Rav Levik's method the identity of the ba'al hamaimra is never accidental. Rav Chisda's name is built on *chesed*. Why is he the one to say this law — twice?

THE ROAD AHEAD — THE WHOLE HE'ARA IN ONE GLANCE

1. **The woman is the house.** Not the keeper of the house — the house itself. (Chazal's own sources.)
2. **Sesame is a double "shem."** שומשום = שם twice — and "shem" names the two supernal wives, Leah and Rachel: Binah and Malchus.
3. **The feminine line is the line of gevuros** — concentrated, fiery energies. In holiness these fires are *sweetened* in kindness; at their root in Kesser they are sweetened absolutely, where they carry names of pure chesed: ורב חסד and נצר חסד.
4. **The lock:** שומשום = 692 = ורב חסד (280) + נצר חסד (412). And 280 = לאה ורחל; 412 = בית. The word "sesame" spells out: *the two wives and the house, in their fully sweetened state.*
5. **The answer:** a home stands on sweetened fire. Promiscuity and anger are the same fire unsweetened — the worm that hollows the sesame from within. And it is Rav *Chisda*, the man of chesed, who owns the teaching.

THE HE'ARA · PASSAGE 1

The Woman Is the House

BEFORE WE READ

Rav Levik's first move answers question **א**. He does not say the woman *runs* the house, or *influences* the house. He says something structural: in the language of Torah, the woman *is* the house. Once that is established, "promiscuity *in the house*" and "anger *in the house*" are by definition statements about her — not about the man, who dwells in the house but does not constitute it.

ועיין בפרש"י שם. מה שהוא באיתתא דוקא ולא בגברא, הוא כי אשה גופא נמשלה לבית ואהל, כמארז"ל ע"פ שובו לכם לאהליכם, שאהל קאי על האשה, ומשל משלו חכמים באשה חדר פרוזדור ועלי'.

And see Rashi there. That which [the Gemara says this] specifically of the woman and not of the man — this is because the woman herself is compared to a house and a tent, as our Sages said on the verse *"Return to your tents"* — that "tent" refers to the wife; and [as in the Mishnah,] *"the Sages made a comparison regarding the woman: the chamber, the corridor, and the upper story."*

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Two proof-texts, each doing distinct work. **(1)** After Mattan Torah, Hashem tells Moshe to send the people back: שׁוּבוּ לָכֶם לְאָהֳלֵיכֶם (Devarim 5:27) — and Chazal read "your tents" as "your wives," to whom marital life was now again permitted. The verse works only if *tent* is a name for the wife herself. **(2)** The Mishnah (Niddah 2:5) describes the woman's own body in pure architecture: chamber, corridor, upper story. Torah describes a woman as a built structure — a *beis kibbul*, a receiving vessel that holds, shelters, and gestates. In the Kabbalah this is the definition of the feminine sefirah, Malchus, which is itself called בית. So the Gemara's word בביתא, "in the house," already points at her: a defect "in the house" is a defect in the house's own substance.

THE HE'ARA · PASSAGE 2

One Verse, Both Directions

ואם האיתתא היא צנועה ואינה כעסנית, שזהו בחי' אשה דקדושה, אז הבית הוא בשלימות, כמ"ש צופיָ הליכות ביתה, וכתיב חכמות נשים בנתה ביתה, שהיא בונה ביתה. משא"כ כשהיא זונה או כעסנית, אז נחרב הבית, כמ"ש ואולת בידה תהרסנה, שמהרסת את הבית.

And if the woman is modest and is not prone to anger — which is the aspect of the *woman of holiness* — then the house stands in wholeness, as it is written, *"She watches over the goings of her house,"* and it is written, *"The wisdom of women builds her house"* — she builds her house. **But when she is a zonah or a woman of anger,** the house is destroyed, as it is written, *"and folly tears it down with her own hands"* — she tears down the house.

ELUCIDATION

Note the engineering precision. The verse he splits is a single verse — Mishlei 14:1: חַכְמוֹת נָשִׁים בָּנְתָה בֵיתָהּ וְאִוֶּלֶת בְּיָדֶיהָ תֶּהֱרָסֶנּוּ. Building and demolition are two settings of *one* variable, in one woman, in one verse. And notice which two traits define the "woman of holiness": צנועה (modest — the opposite of zenus) ואינה כעסנית (not angry — the opposite of tukfa). Rav Levik has quietly aligned his terms with the Gemara's two cases. Whatever single variable distinguishes

the builder from the destroyer must be the thing that zenus and anger both corrupt. Finding that variable is the rest of the he'ara.

THE HE'ARA · PASSAGE 3

The Questions, Named

אמנם מה שהוא ע"י זנות וכעס דוקא, וגם מהו הדמיון כי קריא לשומשמי, ובעל המימרא הוא רב חסדא דוקא.

However — that it is through *promiscuity* and *anger* specifically; and also, what is the comparison, *"like a worm to sesame"*; and [why] the author of the teaching is *Rav Chisda* specifically?

ELUCIDATION

The word-as-house explanation covered the who; it has not touched the what, the how, or the why-him. In classic Rav Levik fashion the three remaining questions are compressed into a single sentence fragment — no question mark, no "it is difficult." He simply lists the unexplained coordinates of the Gemara and then begins building. Everything that follows, down to the measured dimensions of a physical house, exists to answer this one line.

Sesame: A Double “Shem” — Leah and Rachel

BEFORE WE READ

Now the key. Look at the word שׁוּמְשׁוּם: it is one syllable said twice — שֵׁם־שֵׁם, the word שֵׁם (“name”) doubled. In the Arizal's system there are exactly two supernal *nukvin* — two feminine structures — and the Torah calls each of them שם: “the **name** of the elder was Leah, and the **name** of the younger was Rachel.” A doubled *shem* is therefore a precise signature: Leah and Rachel together. Background on who Leah and Rachel are in this system follows the passage.

הנה שומשום הוא ב”פ שם, והוא ב’ בחי’ נוקבין לאה ורחל, שכ”א מהם נקראת שם, כמ”ש שם הגדולה לאה ושם הקטנה רחל, והיינו בינה ומל’ בכלל, כי לאה היא מבחי’ בינה, מל’ דתבונה, והיינו מ”ש בשמואל ב’ סי’ ו’ ארון האלקים אשר נקרא שם שם הוי’ כו’, כתיב ב”פ שם סמוכים זה לזה, רומז על בינה ומל’ לאה ורחל.

Now, *shumshum* **[sesame] is twice “shem.”** And these are the two aspects of the *nukvin*, Leah and Rachel, each of whom is called *shem*, as it is written: *“The name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel”* — and this means Binah and Malchus in general, for Leah is from the aspect of Binah, [being] Malchus of Tevunah. And this is what is written in Shmuel II, chapter 6: *“the Ark of G-d, upon which is called the Name, the Name of Havayah [of Hosts]”* — “shem” is written twice, adjacent one to the other, hinting at Binah and Malchus, Leah and Rachel.

BACKGROUND · THE TWO NUKVIN — WHO ARE “LEAH” AND “RACHEL”?

In the Arizal's map of the sefiros, the feminine — the *nukva*, the receiving and expressing dimension — is not one structure but two, named for Yaakov's two wives:

ל **Leah — the concealed world.** Rooted in **Binah** (technically, as Rav Levik notes, *Malchus of Tevunah* — the “expression layer” of the understanding itself). Leah is the world of *thought*: interior, hidden, fertile — the inner life of the home. She is שם הגדולה, the elder.

ר **Rachel — the revealed world.** This is **Malchus** proper: the world of *speech* and manifestation, the face the home shows — שם הקטנה, the younger. A whole home has both: an inner life and an outer one, a thought-house and a speech-house.

Rav Levik's proof-text is exquisite: in Shmuel II 6:2 the word שם appears twice *in immediate succession* — over the Aron, the place where the Divine dwells in Israel's midst, the ultimate “house.” Two shems, side by side, over the house: Leah and Rachel, Binah and Malchus.

(והמחברם יחד הוא יוסף, שכתוב בו עד תאות גבעות עולם, שמחבר התרין עלמין, כמ”ש בזוה”ק פ’ וארא דכ”ב ע”א, היינו מה שיוסף הוא בן פר”ת, גי’ ב”פ ש”ם, שמחבר הב”פ שם).

(And the one who joins them together is Yosef, of whom it is written *“unto the desire of the everlasting hills”* — that he joins the two worlds, as stated in the holy Zohar, Parshas Va'era, 22a. This is [the meaning of] Yosef being called *ben poras*: פר”ת equals twice ש”ם — for he joins the two shems.)

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A parenthesis, but a load-bearing one: it is the checksum that certifies the “double shem” reading. Yaakov blesses Yosef (Bereishis 49:22, 26): …בֵּן פֹּרָת יוֹסֵף… עַד תַּאֲוַת גִּבְעֹת עוֹלָם. The Zohar (as Rav Levik cites it, Va'era 22a) reads the “everlasting hills” as the two supernal mothers/wives — and Yosef, the tzaddik who is *yesod*, is precisely the one who connects the concealed world to the revealed one. Now the arithmetic: פרת = 80+200+400 = **680** = 2 × 340 = 2 × שם. The connector of the two shems carries “two shems” as his own title. If

shem-shem were a coincidence of spelling, this second, independent doubling would not exist.

DIAGRAM I · THE DOUBLE SHEM

שׁוּמְשׁוּם shum · shum *sesame — a doubled "shem"* = שֵׁם 340 *Leah · Binah* *the concealed house — thought* + שֵׁם 340 *Rachel · Malchus* *the revealed house — speech*

▼

בֶּן פְּרָת יוֹסֵף 340 × 2 = 680 = פר"ת *Yosef — "desire of the everlasting hills" — joins the two shems (Zohar, Va'era 22a, as cited)*

THE HE'ARA · PASSAGE 5

The Feminine Line Is the Line of Fire

BEFORE WE READ

We now know *who* the house is: Leah and Rachel, Binah and Malchus. Rav Levik's next step establishes *what they are made of*. In the language of Kabbalah every sefirah leans either toward *chassadim* — expansive, giving, water-like energies — or toward *gevuros* — concentrated, bounding, fire-like energies. The entire feminine line, he shows, is gevuros. This is the variable we were looking for at the end of Passage 2.

והנה הנוקבין הם בינה ומל' כנ"ל, והם ג"כ בחי' גבורה והוד, כי גבורה שייך לבינה כמ"ש אני בינה לי גבורה, ומל' שייך להוד כמא' איהי בהוד, שכל אלו — בינה גבורה הוד מלכות — הם בחי' גבורות, ועיין בטעמי מצות להרח"ו ז"ל זיע"א פ' תשא במצות שמן המשחה ע"ש.

Now, the nukvin are Binah and Malchus, as above; and they are likewise the aspects of Gevurah and Hod. For Gevurah belongs to Binah, as it is written, *"I am Binah; Gevurah is mine"*; and Malchus belongs to Hod, as in the dictum *"she is in Hod."* All of these — Binah, Gevurah, Hod, Malchus — are aspects of *gevuros*. And see Taamei HaMitzvos of Rav Chaim Vital, of blessed memory, Parshas Tisa, on the mitzvah of the anointing oil, see there.

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The proof-texts: Mishlei 8:14 puts Gevurah in Binah's own mouth — אֲנִי בִינָה לִי גְבוּרָה; and the kabbalistic dictum איהו בנצח איהי בהוד — "He is in Netzach, She is in Hod" — locates the feminine (Malchus) in Hod. So the left column of the sefirah-tree plus its two feminine termini form one continuous descent: **Binah → Gevurah → Hod → Malchus**, the gevurah-line. The two nukvin sit at its top (Leah/Binah) and its bottom (Rachel/Malchus). The house, in other words, is built of *fire*: intensity, boundary, concentration, judgment.

BACKGROUND · GEVUROS ARE NOT THE VILLAIN

It would be a mistake to hear "the feminine is gevuros" as a criticism. Gevurah is the power that concentrates, defines, protects, and holds — nothing is *held* without it, and a house is precisely a holding structure. Fire cooks, warms, and illuminates; the same fire, unmanaged, burns the house down. The entire question of the home therefore becomes a question about the *state* of its fire. Kabbalah's word for fire in its right state is מיתוק — *sweetening*: gevuros immersed in chassadim, severity dissolved in kindness, like a flame set inside a lamp. That is the subject of the next passage. (A background resonance, not in our text: 280 — a number about to matter — is itself the classic gevurah-number in the Arizal's vocabulary, the פ"ר dinim associated with the five "final letters." Keep it in mind for Diagram III.)

THE HE'ARA · PASSAGE 6

Sweetening — and Total Sweetening

אך בסטרא דקדושה, דהיינו בנוקבין דקדושה, הגבורות הם ממותקות בחסדים, ועדמ"ש אלקים ברב חסדך, שם אלקים הוא בחי' גבורות, והוא ברב חסדך, שנמתק בחסדים. וברב חסדך היינו בכתר, ששם הוא בחי' ורב חסד נצר חסד, שם הגבורות ממותקות לגמרי ובתכלית.

But on the side of holiness — that is, in the *nukvin of holiness* — **the gevuros are sweetened in chassadim,** along the lines of the verse *"Elokim, in the abundance of Your chesed [answer me]"*: the Name *Elokim* is the aspect of gevuros, and it is "in the abundance of Your chesed" — sweetened in chassadim. And "in the abundance of Your chesed" refers to Kesser, for there are the aspects of ורב חסד ["abounding in chesed"] and נצר חסד ["preserver of chesed"] — **there the gevuros are sweetened completely and absolutely.**

ELUCIDATION

Tehillim 69:14 is read as a formula: אלקים — the Divine Name of din, of gevurah — placed *inside* ברב חסדך. Fire inside kindness: that is a nukva of holiness. But Rav Levik immediately raises the resolution. Sweetening has degrees. In the sefiros as we ordinarily meet them, gevuros are sweetened the way a fire is screened. At their ultimate root — in **Kesser**, the crown that transcends the whole structure, described in the Idra as the Thirteen Tikkunim, the thirteen "adornments of the beard" of Arich Anpin corresponding to the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy — the sweetening is total. And the proof is in the *names*: two of those thirteen tikkunim are called ורב חסד and נצר חסד. Watch what he does with them next.

והיינו מה שבתיקון הששי ורב חסד הוא גבורה מקיף והוד פנימי דח"ס, ובתיקון הח' נצר חסד הוא בינה מקיף ומל' פנימי דח"ס. והרי גבורה והוד בינה ומל' הם בחי' גבורות ודינים, והם נקראים ורב חסד נצר חסד — הוא מפני כי שם הם ממותקות לגמרי ובתכלית.

And this is [the meaning of the fact] that in the sixth tikkun, ורב חסד, is the encompassing Gevurah and the inner Hod of Chochmah Stimaah; and in the eighth tikkun, נצר חסד, is the encompassing Binah and the inner Malchus of Chochmah Stimaah. Thus Gevurah and Hod, Binah and Malchus, are aspects of gevuros and dinim — and they are called ורב חסד and נצר חסד because **there** they are sweetened completely and absolutely.

ELUCIDATION

This is the technical heart, so slowly: in the anatomy of Kesser, each tikkun contains an encompassing (*makif*) and an inner (*pnimi*) dimension of *Chochmah Stimaah*, the "hidden wisdom" of Arich Anpin. Tikkun 6 houses **Gevurah** (makif) and **Hod** (pnimi); tikkun 8 houses **Binah** (makif) and **Malchus** (pnimi). Look at the inventory: Gevurah, Hod, Binah, Malchus — *exactly the four sefiros of the feminine gevurah-line from Passage 5.* The entire substance of the two nukvin exists inside Kesser, distributed across precisely these two tikkunim. And what are those tikkunim named? Not "severity," not "judgment" — ורב חסד and נצר חסד, two names of pure kindness. At the root, the house's fire doesn't merely coexist with chesed; it *answers to chesed's name*. That is what "sweetened completely and absolutely" means.

DIAGRAM II · THE GEVURAH-LINE, AND WHERE IT LIVES IN KESSER

בינה Binah — Leah → גבורה Gevurah → הוד Hod → מלכות Malchus — Rachel

the feminine line — four sefiros of gevuros · "I am Binah, Gevurah is mine" · "She is in Hod"

▼ at their root in Kesser — the Thirteen Tikkunim ▼

תיקון ו' — וְרַב חֶסֶד Tikkun 6 · "abounding in chesed" *Gevurah (makif) · Hod (pnimi) of Chochmah Stimaah*

תיקון ח' — נֹצֵר חֶסֶד Tikkun 8 · "preserver of chesed" *Binah (makif) · Malchus (pnimi) of Chochmah Stimaah*

the same four fires — now wearing names of pure chesed: sweetened completely and absolutely

The Lock: 692

BEFORE WE READ

Everything is now on the table: the two nukvin (shem + shem), their substance (gevuros), and their sweetened root (tikkunim 6 and 8). Rav Levik closes the circuit with arithmetic. If sesame really means "the home's feminine fires in their fully sweetened state," then the word שומשום should *count out* to the two sweetened tikkunim. It does — exactly. And then each addend resolves again, into the wives and the house themselves.

והיינו שומשו"ם, שהוא גי' ור"ב חס"ד נצ"ר חס"ד במכוון. והנה ור"ב חס"ד גי' לאה ורח"ל, נצ"ר חס"ד גי' בי"ת במכוון. (וכמ"ש גם צפור מצאה בית, בחי' ג"ם צפ"ר הוא בבי"ת, דהיינו בתיקון הח' נצ"ר חס"ד שהוא מספר בי"ת, ועיין בע"ח שער הזווגים סופ"ב ותבין).

And this is שומשו"ם, whose gematria is ור"ב חס"ד נצ"ר חס"ד — precisely. And behold: ור"ב חס"ד is the gematria of לאה ורח"ל, and נצ"ר חס"ד is the gematria of בי"ת — precisely. (And as it is written, *"Even the bird has found a house"* — the aspect of "even the bird" is in בי"ת, that is, in the eighth tikkun, נצר חסד, whose number is בית; and see Etz Chayim, Shaar HaZivugim, end of ch. 2, and you will understand.)

ELUCIDATION

Work it letter by letter in Diagram III below; the counts are exact, which is Rav Levik's whole point — במכוון twice in one breath. Feel what the arithmetic is saying. The word for sesame contains, in one number, the complete theory: **692 = 280 + 412**, the two chesed-named tikkunim; and 280 *is* לאה ורחל — the two wives — while 412 *is* בית — the house. Sesame = the wives + the house, at the level where their fire is utterly sweet. The parenthetical verse (Tehillim 84:4) seals the second identity: the *tzipor*, the bird — a classic figure of the nukva, the soul seeking its nest — "finds a house" in נצר חסד, the tikkun whose very number is *bayis*. Even King David's songbird nests in the eighth tikkun.

DIAGRAM III · THE GEMATRIA LOCK — EVERY COUNT EXACT

שׁוּמְשׁוּם 692 = מ 40 ו 6 ש 300 — *sesame* 300 ש 40 מ 6 ו 300 =

וְרַב חֶסֶד 280 = ד 4 ס 60 ח 8 · ב 2 ר 200 ו 6 — *tikkun 6* +

נִצַּר חֶסֶד 412 = ד 4 ס 60 ח 8 · ר 200 צ 90 נ 50 — *tikkun 8*

▼ and each addend resolves again ▼

לֵאָה וְרָחֵל 280 = 244 ורחל + 36 לאה — *the two wives — the two shems*

בַּיִת 412 = ת 400 י 10 ב 2 — *the house — "even the bird has found a house"*

one word of the Gemara = the wives + the house, in their fully sweetened state

Now the Gemara answers itself

Hold the lock and reread Rav Chisda. A store of sesame is a store of *shumshum* — sweetened fire: the home's feminine gevuros held entirely inside chesed, wives-and-house as one continuous number. What is the worm? The *un-sweetening*. And un-sweetened gevurah has exactly two native failure modes, which are Rav Chisda's two cases:

א **זנותא — fire of desire without its chesed.** Zenus is not the presence of passion but passion torn out of covenant — heat with the kindness removed, the intimate fire no longer bounded to its home. The opposite of the צנועה.

ב **תוקפא — fire of judgment without its chesed.** Anger is gevurah reverting to raw din: severity that stops being protective boundary and becomes attack. The opposite of אינה כעסנית.

Like the worm in the sesame, neither one smashes the house; each hollows the sweetening out of it from within, until *shumshum* — the whole 692 — collapses. And the asymmetry of the Gemara now reads structurally, with no slight to either spouse: the house's substance *is* the feminine gevurah-line, so it is specifically there that the state of the fire decides everything; the man dwells in the house, but he is not what it is made of. (This paragraph is elucidation — Rav Levik states the components and lets the reader close the circuit; the closure above is the plain sense of his construction.)

AND RAV CHISDA — QUESTION ד

Rav Levik flags the ba'al hamaimra among his questions and, in the text we have, never returns to him explicitly — because by the end no return is needed. The entire mechanism is *sweetening in chesed*; the one who teaches which worm destroys the sesame is the Amora whose name is built of chesed: **רב חסדא**. The man of chesed is precisely the one authorized to say where chesed has drained out. ELUCIDATOR'S INFERENCE — labeled as such, but it is difficult to read the he'ara and believe Rav Levik did not intend it.

The House, Measured

BEFORE WE READ

A breathtaking coda. If a *bayis* is really built of tikkun 6 and tikkun 8, then the proportions of a physical Jewish house — as fixed by the Mishnah in the laws of sales — should encode those two tikkunim. Rav Levik opens the Mishnah in Bava Basra and reads the floor plan.

וכדוגמת מ"ש במס' ב"ב בפ' המוכר את הבית, איתא סתם בית ארכו ח' אמות ורחבו ו' אמות. הרוחב ו' הוא תיקון הו', ורב חסד — זהו רוחב, בחי' במרחב י־ה, ועיין בע"ח שער א"א פי"א ובפע"ח שער הסליחות פ"ה ובשער השופר פ"א. ואורך ח' הוא תיקון הח' נצר חסד, והוא באורך, כי המזל נצר חסד נמשך באורך מלמעלה למטה, והוא ארוך יותר מכל שארי התיקונים כידוע.

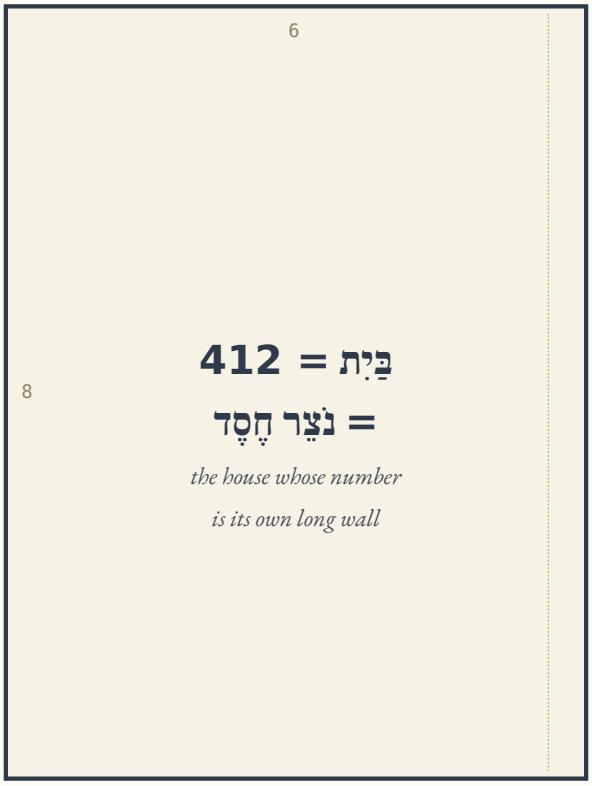
And as in what is stated in Maseches Bava Basra, in the chapter "One who sells the house": a standard house — its length is eight amos and its width six amos. The width of six is the sixth tikkun, ורב חסד: this is *width*, the aspect of *"[He answered me] with the expanse of G-d"* — and see Etz Chayim, Shaar Arich Anpin ch. 11, and Pri Etz Chayim, Shaar HaSelichos ch. 5 and Shaar HaShofar ch. 1. And the length of eight is the eighth tikkun, נצר חסד — and it is *length*, for the *mazal* "notzer chesed" extends lengthwise, from above to below, and it is longer than all the other tikkunim, as is known.

ELUCIDATION

The Mishnah (Bava Basra 98b) fixes the dimensions of houses for one who contracts to build: a standard small house is **six by eight amos**. Rav Levik reads the two numbers as the two tikkunim by their *geometry*. Tikkun **6** = ורב חסד = the house's **width**, because "rov chesed" is expanse — בַּמֶּרְחָב יָ־הּ (Tehillim 118:5), the broad place. Tikkun **8** = נצר חסד = the house's **length**, because in the anatomy of the Idra the eighth tikkun is the *mazal* — the strand that descends lower than all the others, the long axis of the whole configuration, the channel through which sustenance flows down. A Jewish house is 6 wide by 8 long because it is *v'rav chesed* wide by *notzer chesed* long: a floor plan of sweetened gevuros.

DIAGRAM IV · THE FLOOR PLAN OF A STANDARD HOUSE — MISHNAH, BAVA BASRA

width — 6 amos · וְרַב חֶסֶד · tikkun 6 · expanse — בַּמֶּרְחָב יָ־הּ



length — 8 amos, running downward · נֹצֵר חֶסֶד · tikkun 8 · the *mazal*, drawn מלמעלה למטה — longer than all the tikkunim

THE HE'ARA · PASSAGE 9

Resolution: "They Built the House of Israel"

היינו: כשהאשה היא בבחי' אשה דקדושה, בבחי' לאה ורחל, אז היא בונה ומקיימת את הבית, וכמ"ש כרחל וכלאה אשר בנו שתיהם את בית ישראל — הרי שהן בנו את הבית.

That is: when the woman is in the aspect of the woman of holiness — in the aspect of Leah and Rachel — then she builds and sustains the house. As it is written, *"like Rachel and like Leah, who together built the House of Israel"* — behold, it is they who built the house.

ELUCIDATION

The closing proof-text is the blessing the elders of Beis Lechem give at the gate (Rus 4:11) — spoken, fittingly, at the founding of the royal house from which Moshiach descends. The Tanach's own idiom confirms the whole construction: it does not say Rachel and Leah *filled* or *kept* the house of Israel; it says they **built** it — בנו, the builder's verb of חכמות נשים בנתה ביתה from Passage 2. The circle closes on the verse where it opened.

THE WHOLE HE'ARA AT ONCE

The Gemara, Decoded

Rav Chisda's aphorism, read with Rav Levik's key, is not a proverb about domestic virtue. It is a precise statement of what a home *is* — a structure of feminine fire held in kindness — and of the only two ways such a structure fails.

THE GEMARA'S WORD	WHAT IT IS
בֵּיתָא	The woman herself — the two nukvin, Leah (Binah: the inner, thought-house) and Rachel (Malchus: the revealed, speech-house). "House" is not her domain; it is her definition.
שׁוּמְשְׁמֵי	Shem × 2 = Leah + Rachel; and by count, 692 = ורב חסד (280 = לאה ורחל) + נצר חסד (412 = בית): the wives and the house at the root where their gevuros are sweetened absolutely — even in the floor plan, 6 wide by 8 long.
קַרְיָא	The un-sweetening: gevurah draining out of chesed and reverting to raw fire. Like the worm, it destroys from within, invisibly, totally.
זְנוּתָא	Failure mode one: the fire of desire without its chesed — passion torn from covenant.
תּוּקְפָּא	Failure mode two: the fire of judgment without its chesed — boundary become attack.
בְּאִיתְתָא	Structural, not moral: the house's substance is the feminine gevurah-line (Binah–Gevurah–Hod–Malchus), so the state of *her* fire is the state of the house. The man dwells in it; he is not what it is made of.
רַב חִסְדָּא	The man of *chesed* — the sweetening agent itself — is the one who teaches where the sweetness has been eaten away. INFERENCE

IN ONE PARAGRAPH

A home is not walls; a home is a woman, and a woman is built — in the Torah's own anatomy of the feminine — out of the universe's concentrating fire: Binah, Gevurah, Hod, Malchus. That fire, held inside kindness, is what warmth is; at its root in Kesser it is so utterly sweetened that its very names are names of chesed — *v'rav chesed*, *notzer chesed* — and its dimensions are the dimensions of every Jewish house. The word for sesame counts all of this out exactly: 692, the wives and the house as one sweetened whole. Promiscuity and anger are that same fire with the kindness eaten out of it — and so, of all things in the world, they alone are "the worm in the sesame": not an attack on the house but the hollowing of the house's own substance, from within.

FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE

The Avodah of Sweetened Fire

What does a person take home from this he'ara — literally, home?

First: fire is not the enemy. The he'ara never asks anyone to extinguish anything. The home of holiness is not a home without intensity — it is built of gevuros top to bottom, and Tanach's greatest praise of a wife is a builder's verb. Passion and firmness are the house's raw material. The entire question of a marriage is the question the Arizal asks of the cosmos: is the fire inside the chesed, or has it slipped out?

Second: the worm is small. Rashi's קריא does not knock down walls. Un-sweetened gevurah rarely arrives as catastrophe; it arrives as a tone of voice, a hard word held onto, warmth withdrawn — kindness quietly draining out of intensity. The mashal's

warning is about scale: in a structure made of fire, a small loss of sweetness compounds invisibly. The avodah is correspondingly small and constant — the daily re-immersing of one's heat in kindness: אלקים, ברב חסדך.

Third: honor the builder. Rav Levik's structural reading gives the Gemara's asymmetry its true weight — not as a burden placed on the woman but as a testimony about her: she is not *in* the house, she *is* the house; the elders of Beis Lechem could give a royal line no greater blessing than to compare its wife to the two who "built the House of Israel." A husband who has learned this daf knows exactly what he is protecting when he refuses to let anger into his voice — he is protecting the sweetening of the very structure he lives inside.

And a thought toward Chof Av: Rav Levik wrote these lines as a man whose own house had been taken from him — writing in exile, in the margins, in his Rebbetzin's handmade ink. It is hard to miss that the woman who ground herbs into ink so that this Torah could exist was herself the living proof of the he'ara written in it: a home is wherever her sweetened fire is. כרחל וכלאה אשר בנו שתיהם את בית ישראל.

NEXT IN THE SEFER · PREVIEW — CONTINUATION NEEDED

Sotah 31a: Two Students, Two Dreams

At the bottom of the same printed page, the next he'ara begins — on the famous exchange at the end of the first perek:

דל"א ע"א. הנהו תרי תלמידי דהוו יתבי קמי' דרבא, חד א"ל אקריון בחלמאי מה רב טובך אשר צפנת ליראיך, וחד א"ל אקריון בחלמאי וישמחו כל חוסי בך לעולם ירננו ויעלצו בך אוהבי שמך. אמר להו: תרווייכו רבנן צדיקי גמורי אתון — מר מאהבה ומר מיראה.

Two students were sitting before Rava. One said to him: In my dream they read me the verse, *"How abundant is Your good which You have hidden away for those who fear You"* (Tehillim 31:20). The other said: In my dream they read me, *"And all who take refuge in You will rejoice, forever singing... and those who love Your Name will exult in You"* (Tehillim 5:12). He said to them: You are both completely righteous sages — one from love, and one from fear.

Rav Levik's opening moves are visible in the photograph:

Rava is from the aspect of Naamah the Ammonis, as stated in Likkutei Torah of the Arizal, Parshas Lech Lecha, on *"...and his possessions — the son of Avram's brother"* (Bereishis 14:12), see there. If so, he is from the aspect of **Binah**, for Naamah the Ammonis is from Binah, as in the same work, Parshas Vayera, in the discourse on the daughters of Lot — that Ammon is from Binah, see there. **רב"א = 203**: the milui of אהי' of Yudin (140) with ס"ג (63); or אהי' of Yudin (161) with מ"ב (42); or the achorayim of ס"ג — UNVERIFIED — with the milui of ס"ג (37); all of which is in Binah...

WHERE IT IS HEADING — The photograph's lower lines, partially cut off, show the argument's spine: Rava = Binah; the two students are the *chassadim and gevuros of Binah* (a further count: ע"ב 72 + ק"ל 130, with the kollel = 203); love and fear, the two dreams, are those two currents; and the students as *talmidei chachamim* are Netzach and Hod, the למודי הוי' into which Binah extends. Three spellings of one number, all landing in Binah — vintage Rav Levik, with one of the three (the achorayim spelling) still unverified, above. The continuation runs through page מט onto נ and נא, and is now developed in full as installment № 2.

רבא הוא מבחי' נעמה העמונית, כמ"ש בל"ת להאריז"ל פ' לך לך ע"פ רכושו בן אחי אברם, ע"ש. א"כ הוא מבחי' בינה, כי נעמה העמונית היא מבחי' בינה, כמ"ש בל"ת הנ"ל פ' וירא בדרוש דבנות לוט, שעמון הוא מבחי' בינה, ע"ש. רב"א גי' מלוי אהי' דיודי"ן ק"מ עם ס"ג, או אהי' דיודי"ן קס"א עם מ"ב, או אחוריים דס"ג קע"ו* עם מלוי ס"ג ל"ז, שכ"ז הוא בבינה...

[continuation cut off in the photograph]

Glossary

Roshei teivos in this he'ara

בחי'	bechinah — aspect, mode	**כמ"ש / מ"ש**	as it is written / what is written
כמארז"ל	as our Sages, of blessed memory, said	**ע"פ**	on the verse
ב"פ	twice (two times)	**גי'**	gematria — numerical value
מל'	Malchus	**נוקבין**	nukvin — the feminine structures (Aramaic)
ח"ס	Chochmah Stimaah — the "hidden wisdom" of Arich Anpin	**כמא'**	as in the dictum
זוה"ק	the holy Zohar	**ל"ת**	Likkutei Torah (here: of the Arizal)
ע"ח / פע"ח	Etz Chayim / Pri Etz Chayim	**סופ"ב**	end of chapter 2
עדמ"ש	along the lines of what is written	**ע"ש**	see there
כנ"ל	as above	**משא"כ**	which is not the case when…
להרח"ו ז"ל	of R. Chaim Vital, of blessed memory	**זיע"א**	may his merit protect us
א"א	Arich Anpin	**במכוון**	precisely, exactly (the count is exact)
מ"ב, ס"ג, ע"ב, קס"א	the Divine-Name expansions: 42, 63, 72, 161	**מלוי / אחוריים**	milui — the "filling" letters of a Name / achorayim — its cumulative "back" spelling

Concepts

נוקבא	**Nukva** — the feminine dimension of a world or partzuf: the structure that receives, holds, gestates, and expresses. Malchus is *the* nukva; "house" is one of its standing names.
לאה / רחל	**Leah and Rachel** — the two supernal nukvin: Leah from Binah (Malchus of Tevunah) — the concealed world, thought; Rachel — Malchus proper, the revealed world, speech.
גבורות / חסדים	**Gevuros / chassadim** — the two currents in all the sefiros: concentrating, bounding fire vs. expansive, giving water. Neither is "good" or "bad"; the question is their relation.
מיתוק	**Mituk (sweetening)** — the immersion of gevuros within chassadim, so that intensity serves kindness. The central mechanism of this he'ara: full sweetening exists in Kesser; its loss is "the worm."
י"ג תיקוני דיקנא	**The Thirteen Tikkunim** — the thirteen "adornments of the beard" of Arich Anpin (Kesser) in the Idra, corresponding to the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy. Our he'ara uses tikkun 6, ורב חסד, and tikkun 8, נצר חסד.
מזל	**The mazal** — the eighth tikkun, נוצר חסד, the strand that extends lowest of all: the standing channel of flow from Kesser downward. Hence "length," drawn from above to below.
מקיף / פנימי	**Makif / pnimi** — encompassing vs. inner: two modes in which a light relates to its vessel; each tikkun in our text carries one sefirah as makif and one as pnimi of Chochmah Stimaah.

READER'S APPARATUS

Citation Index & Transcription Note

Statuses: VERIFIED confirmed canonical text · AS CITED reference given by Rav Levik in the he'ara, reproduced as printed and not independently checked against the cited edition · UNVERIFIED locator supplied by the elucidator, standard but not checked against the text in hand.

סוטה ג, ב	Rav Chisda's two sayings — the Gemara under discussion	VERIFIED
רש"י סוטה ג, ב (ד"ה קריא)	"קריא — תולעת של שומשמין האוכלתן, כך הזנות מחרבת את הבית" — checked directly against primary-text transcriptions (Vilna edition), not reconstructed from memory	VERIFIED
דברים ה, כז	"Return to your tents" — tents as wives (Chazal's reading)	VERIFIED
נדה ב, ה	"Chamber, corridor, upper story" — the Mishnah's architecture of the woman	VERIFIED
משלי לא, כז	"She watches the goings of her house"	VERIFIED
משלי יד, א	"The wisdom of women builds her house; folly tears it down with her hands"	VERIFIED
בראשית כט, טז	"The name of the elder was Leah, the name of the younger Rachel"	VERIFIED
שמואל ב' ו, ב	"...the Ark of G-d upon which is called shem, shem..." — the doubled shem	VERIFIED
בראשית מט, כב-כו	"Ben poras Yosef... unto the desire of the everlasting hills"	VERIFIED
זהר ח"ב, וארא כב, א	Yosef joining the two worlds — as cited by Rav Levik	AS CITED
משלי ח, יד	"I am Binah, Gevurah is mine"	VERIFIED
איהי בהוד	The dictum locating the feminine in Hod (Tikkunei Zohar literature); cited by Rav Levik as כמא' without locator — presented likewise	AS CITED
טעמי מצות, תשא	R. Chaim Vital on the anointing oil — as cited	AS CITED
תהלים סט, יד	"Elokim, in the abundance of Your chesed"	VERIFIED
תהלים פד, ד	"Even the bird has found a house"	VERIFIED
ע"ח שער הזווגים ספ"ב	Etz Chayim on the bird / bayis — as cited	AS CITED
בבא בתרא צח, ב	Dimensions of a standard house (six by eight amos). Rav Levik cites the chapter by name; the daf reference is the elucidator's, per standard editions	UNVERIFIED
תהלים קיח, ה	"He answered me with the expanse of G-d" — merchav Kah	VERIFIED
ע"ח שער א"א פי"א; פע"ח סליחות פי"ה, שופר פי"א	On tikkunim 6 and 8 — as cited	AS CITED
רות ד, יא	"Like Rachel and like Leah, who together built the House of Israel"	VERIFIED
סוטה לא, א	The two students before Rava (preview section)	VERIFIED
	The two dream-verses of Sotah 31a	VERIFIED

תהלים לא, כ · ה, יב		
ל"ת להאריז"ל, לך לך · וירא	Rava / Naamah the Ammonis / Ammon from Binah — as cited	AS CITED

Transcription note

The Hebrew text was transcribed from the reader's photographs of the printed page (*Likkutei Levi Yitzchak — He'oros LeShas*, Sotah, pp. מח–מט) and cross-checked against the HebrewBooks 31637 scan. (Page numbering here runs as one continuous sequence, not two tracks; an earlier draft mistakenly cited only מט before this was corrected to the full מח–מט range.) Abbreviations are reproduced as printed. Three letters that photograph ambiguously were resolved by context and arithmetic, and are noted for the reader's own checking against the sefer: **(1)** the house's width, read ו׳ אמות (six) — required by the identification with tikkun 6 and by the Mishnah's dimensions; **(2)** in the Rava gematria (in the preview section), the achorayim of ס״ג is transcribed as printed — קע״ו — but this is flagged UNVERIFIED: the printed reading does not close the arithmetic (213=ק״ע+ל״ו, not 203) the way the parallel milui computations do, and the correct standard value for this specific Kabbalistic term (achorayim of Shem Sag) needs a Kabbalistic reference table to confirm rather than being inferred backward from the desired total; **(3)** minor connectives (e.g., a vav that photographs like a zayin in ורב חסד) normalized. Every gematria in this booklet was independently checked by script where the underlying letter values are unambiguous; item (2) above is the one exception, flagged rather than resolved. All gematria identifications, sefirah-mappings, and cross-references within the he'ara are Rav Levik's own; passages marked ELUCIDATION or ELUCIDATOR'S INFERENCE are the editor's scaffolding and should be judged accordingly.

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Sacred text — please do not discard.