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ואברהם זקן בא בימים

Blessed With Everything

ד"ה ואברהם זקן · שבת פרשת חיי שרה, מבה"ח כסלו ה'תשל"ז

Maamar of the Lubavitcher Rebbe · Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sarah, Mevarchim Kislev 5737

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The map of the maamar

One verse, two subjects, and three questions. Five ideas carry the answer.

1. **The question** — א
2. **Work and gift** — ב, ד
3. **The Crown** — ג
4. **The Akeidah** — ה
5. **Down to the thorns** — ו, ז

The question (§א)

The Torah says Hashem blessed Avraham "with everything" and does not say with what. How do the Zohar ("the source of all blessings") and Rashi ("a son") fit together? And why is this great blessing only an introduction to Yitzchak's marriage?

→

The answer (§ז–ו)

"Everything" is the hidden Essence. It flows like a river through Yitzchak's strength, and through his marriage with Rivkah it reaches the lowest place, "a rose among the thorns." Our part: effort beyond the usual, and bringing the wellsprings outside.

The hinge moves

1. **Work and gift.** Ten tests match ten sefiros; "everything" is above the count. The tests make a vessel; they do not cause the blessing (§ב).
2. **Who is the subject.** "Avraham was old" is credited to Avraham; "Hashem blessed" is credited to Hashem (§ג–ב).
3. **Two sides of the Crown.** "Old" and "full of days" are Arich, roots of Torah and mitzvos. "Everything" is Atik (§ג).
4. **Chosen and unchosen.** Holding back reaches high, but a test, which nobody chooses, reaches highest (§ד).
5. **Counted and not counted.** The Akeidah is the tenth test and also beyond the ten, like "Anochi" (§ה).
6. **The introduction is the goal.** The blessing was given so it could travel down to the thorns (§ו).

How to read the pages. Hebrew on the right, English on the left, phrase by phrase. **Bold** is the Rebbe's words, translated. *Lighter italic* is our explanation, woven in. The numbers on the Hebrew are the Rebbe's footnotes; the important ones are explained in the deep dives, and all are listed at the back.

Words you need

Ten words that carry this maamar. Each is explained again the first time it appears.

בכל	**bakol**	"with everything." The blessing in Bereishis 24:1 that names no content. In the maamar: the hidden Essence.
העלם העצמי	**he'elem ha'atzmi**	the hidden Essence. Hashem Himself, "hidden" because no single revelation can show Him.
נסיון	**nisayon**	a test. Avraham had ten. A test is service a person does not choose.
ספירות	**sefiros**	the ten qualities through which Hashem's light reaches the world, such as wisdom, kindness and strength.
כתר	**keser**	the Crown, above the ten sefiros. It has an outer side (Arich) and an inner side (Atik).
אתעדל"ת / אתעדל"ע	**isarusa dilsata / dil'eila**	awakening from below (our effort) / awakening from above (Hashem's initiative).
אריך / עתיק	**Arich / Atik**	the outer Crown, root of the sefiros / the inner Crown, completely separate. Arich is also called "Atik Yomin."
השתלשלות	**hishtalshelus**	the chain of worlds coming down level by level.
עקידה	**Akeidah**	the binding of Yitzchak, Avraham's tenth test.
הפצת המעינות	**hafatzas hama'ayanos**	spreading the wellsprings of chassidus outward, to people who are outside.

Section א The question

A blessing with no name

The big idea

The Torah says Hashem blessed Avraham "with everything" (bakol), and does not say with what.

The Rebbe Rashab hears that silence as the point. "Everything" is the hidden Essence of Hashem, the source of every blessing, and so it cannot be named by any one of them.

Two old readings sit on the one word. The Zohar: the place all blessings come from. Rashi: Yitzchak, because bakol has the same number as ben, "son."

And a third question hangs over the verse: why does the greatest blessing in the parsha sound like an introduction to finding Yitzchak a wife?

Before you learn

- **The pasuk.** Bereishis 24:1: "And Avraham was old, he came into days, and Hashem blessed Avraham with everything." The next verses tell how Avraham sent his servant Eliezer to find a wife for Yitzchak.
- **The week.** The Rebbe said this maamar on Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sarah 5737, the Shabbos on which the month of Kislev was blessed.
- **Three teachers.** The Rebbe Rashab (the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe) explained this pasuk in 5666. The Tzemach Tzedek (the third) explained it in Ohr HaTorah. The Rebbe builds on both.
- **Gematria.** Every Hebrew letter has a number. Bakol is bet (2), kaf (20) and lamed (30): 52. Ben is bet (2) and nun (50): also 52. Rashi uses this to say "everything" means a son.

ראשי תיבות new in this section

וה'	והשם (הוי')	and Hashem
אדמו"ר	אדוננו מורנו ורבנו	our master, teacher and Rebbe
מהורש"ב	מורנו הרב שלום דובער	the Rebbe Rashab
נ"ע	נשמתו עדן	his soul is in Eden
ד"ה	דיבור המתחיל	the maamar beginning
תרס"ו	תרס"ו	the year 5666 (1905–06)
עה"פ	על הפסוק	on the verse
רש"י	רבי שלמה יצחקי	Rashi
וגו'	וגומר	and so on (the verse continues)
גו'	וגומר	and so on (the verse continues)
דוה'	של "וה'"	of "and Hashem"
שהוי'	שהשם (הוי')	that Hashem

	English	לשון המאמר
1	**"And Avraham was old, he came into days, and Hashem blessed Avraham with everything,"** *Bereishis 24:1.* **And the Rebbe Rashab is exacting in his maamar that begins with these words** *(said in 5666)*: **the verse says "with everything" and does not say what He blessed him with.** *Usually a blessing names its content. This one does not.*	ואברהם זקן בא בימים וה' ברך את אברהם בכל[1], ומדייק אדמו"ר (מהורש"ב) נ"ע במאמרו ד"ה זה (דשנת תרס"ו[2]) מה שאומר בכל סתם ואינו מפרש במה ברכו.

2	**And the main point of the explanation is that "everything" is the hidden Essence,** *Hashem Himself, which no single revelation can show,* **from which all revelations come.** *It is the source of every light because it is none of them.*	ונקודת הביאור[3], דכל הוא בחינת העלם העצמי, שמשם נמשכים כל הגילויים.
3	**As the Zohar says on the verse "and Hashem blessed Avraham with everything": Avraham was blessed from the place from which all blessings come.**	כדאיתא בזהר[4] עה"פ וה' ברך את אברהם בכל, דאברהם אתברך מאתר דכל ברכאן נפקי מתמן.
4	**So it says "with everything" without details, because it is a level without limits, above all details.** *Naming one detail would already be a limit.*	ולכן אומר בכל סתם ואינו מפרט פרטים, לפי שהוא בחינת בלי גבול שלמעלה מפרטים.
5	**And we need to understand how the Zohar's explanation, that "everything" is the place all blessings come from, connects with Rashi's explanation on the verse, that "everything" means Yitzchak (bakol has the same number as ben, "son").** *Not which reading is right, but how both belong to one meaning. That is question one.*	וצריך להבין הקשר והשייכות דפירוש הזהר שבכל הוא אתר דכל ברכאן נפקי מתמן עם פירוש רש"י עה"פ[5] שבכל קאי על יצחק (בכל בגימטריא בן).
6	**Also, from the order of the verses it seems that this verse ("And Avraham was old") is the introduction to "And Avraham said to his servant... and take a wife for my son, for Yitzchak."**	וגם, דמהמשך הכתובים משמע שפסוק זה (ואברהם זקן וגו') הוא הקדמה לויאמר אברהם אל עבדו גו' ולקחת אשה לבני ליצחק[6],
7	**So we need to understand what connection there is between "Hashem blessed Avraham with everything," being blessed from the source of all blessings, and his sending his servant to find a wife for his son.** *That is question two.*	וצריך להבין מהי השייכות דוה' ברך את אברהם בכל, שנתברך מאתר דכל ברכאן נפקי מתמן, לזה ששלח את עבדו לקחת אשה לבנו[7].
8	**We also need to understand how great the marriage of Yitzchak and Rivkah is, that it is higher even than "everything" (the source of all blessings),**	גם צריך להבין גודל העילוי דנשואי יצחק ורבקה שהוא נעלה יותר גם מבחינת בכל (אתר דכל ברכאן נפקי מתמן),
9	**to the point that "Hashem blessed Avraham with everything" is only an introduction to the marriage of Yitzchak and Rivkah.** *That is question three. The whole maamar answers these three.*	ועד דזה שהוי' ברך את אברהם בכל הוא רק הקדמה לנשואי יצחק ורבקה.

Deep dive

The hidden Essence

The maamar calls "everything" he'elem ha'atzmi, "the hidden Essence." That can sound like something behind a curtain that you could pull back. It is not. It means Hashem Himself, who is "hidden" only in this sense: every revelation shows something in particular, and Hashem's Essence is not something in particular. A blessing of wealth is wealth. A blessing of children is children. The Essence is not any one of those, which is exactly why every one of them can come from it. That is what the Zohar means by "the place all blessings come from." So when the Torah says "with everything" and stops, the silence is not missing information. It is the most exact way to say it. Naming one blessing would make it smaller. Keep this in mind for the rest of the maamar. Everything it builds, the ten tests, the two sides of the Crown, the Akeidah, the river, explains how something that big can still come to rest on a person and flow into the world.

Review

1. What is unusual about how the verse describes Avraham's blessing?
2. What does the Zohar say "everything" is? What does Rashi say?
3. Why does a level "without limits" have to be described without details?
4. What are the three questions the maamar asks?

Talking points

- Can you think of a blessing that would be smaller if you named it?
- Why might the greatest gift in a story be described as an introduction?

Take it with you. Some blessings are too big to name. The silence of the verse is the message.

Section ב Work and gift

Ten tests, then the blessing

The big idea

The Midrash says Hashem tests a person before He raises him. Avraham passed ten tests, and only then was he blessed "with everything."

The Tzemach Tzedek says the ten tests match the ten sefiros. "Everything" is above the ten, outside the count, where a person's own effort cannot reach.

So the tests did not earn the blessing. They made Avraham a complete vessel, and the blessing came from above into the vessel that was ready.

Before you learn

- **Ten tests.** Pirkei Avos 5:3: Avraham was tested ten times and stood firm in all of them. The tenth was the Akeidah, binding Yitzchak on the altar.
- **Ten sefiros.** Chassidus describes Hashem's light reaching the world through ten sefiros, ten measured qualities like wisdom, kindness and strength. Above them is Keser, the Crown.
- **Up and down.** Two Aramaic phrases you will meet all through: isarusa dilsata, "awakening from below" (our effort), and isarusa dil'eila, "awakening from above" (Hashem's initiative).

ראשי תיבות new in this section

הקב"ה	הקדוש ברוך הוא	the Holy One, blessed be He
וכו'	וכולי	and so on
ואח"כ	ואחר כך	and afterwards
הצ"צ	הצמח צדק	the Tzemach Tzedek
משא"כ	מה שאין כן	whereas
ע"ס	עשר ספירות	ten sefiros
אתעדל"ת	אתערותא דלתתא	awakening from below
שהי'	שהיה	that he was
הי'	היה	was
כ"א	כי אם	but rather
ע"י	על ידי	through
אתעדל"ע	אתערותא דלעילא	awakening from above

	English	לשון המאמר
1	**This will be understood by first bringing what the Midrash says: Hashem does not raise a person to greatness until He checks and tests him.**	ויובן זה בהקדים מה דאיתא במדרש[8] אין הקב"ה מעלה את האדם לשררה עד שבודק ובוחן אותו וכו'
2	**And so you find with our father Avraham: Hashem tested him with ten tests, and he stood firm, and afterwards He blessed him, as it says "and Hashem blessed Avraham with everything."** *The order matters: first the tests, then the blessing.*	וכן אתה מוצא באבינו אברהם נסהו הקב"ה עשר נסיונות ועמד בהן ואח"כ ברכו שנאמר וה' ברך את אברהם בכל.

3	**And the Tzemach Tzedek explains that the ten tests match the ten sefiros, whereas "everything" is the inner side of the Crown, which is not counted among the ten sefiros.** *A ladder of ten rungs, and something above the ladder.*	ומבאר הצ"צ[9], דעשר נסיונות הם כנגד עשר ספירות, משא"כ כל הוא פנימיות הכתר שאינו[10] בחשבון ע"ס.
4	**For at this level, awakening from below** *(our effort)* **does not reach.**	דבבחינה זו, אין אתערותא דלתתא מגעת לשם.
5	**And after Avraham stood firm in ten tests that match the ten sefiros, where effort from below does apply, then He blessed him "with everything," the inner Crown.**	ולאחרי שעמד אברהם בעשר נסיונות כנגד ע"ס שבהן שייך אתעדל"ת, אזי ברכו בכל, פנימיות הכתר.
6	**And one can say that this is also why the verse is worded as it is: "And Avraham was old, he came into days, and Hashem blessed Avraham with everything."**	ויש לומר, דזהו גם דיוק לשון הכתוב ואברהם זקן בא בימים וה' ברך את אברהם בכל,
7	**His being old and full of days, even though that too is a blessing from Hashem, the verse credits to Avraham ("And Avraham was old").** *Avraham is the subject of the sentence.*	דזה שהי' זקן בא בימים, עם היות שזהו ברכת הקב"ה, מייחס הכתוב לאברהם (ואברהם זקן בא בימים)
8	**But about "everything" it does not say that Avraham had everything, only that Hashem blessed him with everything. The explanation can be:** *here Hashem is the subject.*	משא"כ בנוגע כל אינו אומר שאברהם הי' לו כל כ"א שהוי' ברכו בכל, דיש לומר הביאור בזה[11],
9	**being blessed with age and days is an awakening from above that is drawn down by awakening from below, by Avraham's own service.** *He reached it, so the verse names him.*	דזה שנתברך בזקנה ובימים הוא אתערותא דלעילא שמתעוררת ונמשכת ע"י אתעדל"ת[12], עבודתו של אברהם
10	**But being blessed "with everything" is an awakening from above that comes from on high, which effort from below does not reach.**	משא"כ זה שנתברך בכל הוא אתעדל"ע הבאה מלמעלה שאין אתעדל"ת מגעת לשם
11	**[And the reason this blessing came specifically after the ten tests is that there has to be a complete place,** *a vessel that is whole and ready.] The work does not cause the blessing. It makes a place where the blessing can stay.*	[וזה שברכה זו באה דוקא לאחרי שעמד בעשר נסיונות הוא לפי שצריך להיות אתר[13] שלים[14]]
12	**And so the verse says about it, "and Hashem blessed."**	ולכן כתיב בה וה' ברך גו'.

Deep dive

A vessel does not cause the light

Chassidus usually teaches that our effort draws Hashem's response, measure for measure: you do your part and Hashem answers it. This maamar is about the exception: a gift from above that no effort reaches at all. So why did Avraham need the ten tests first? The answer is in two words, asar shalim, "a complete place." Think of a guest who will only stay in a home that is fully ready. Your cleaning does not create the guest. But without it, the guest does not stay. The relationship is not cause and result. It is readiness and arrival. The verse shows this in its grammar. "Avraham was old" has Avraham as the subject: that is what his service reached. "Hashem blessed Avraham" has Hashem as the subject: that is what came from above once the vessel was whole. Later (Section ד) the Rebbe adds one more point: even a vessel that does not cause the light has to match it in some way. That is why different kinds of service receive different kinds of "everything."

Review

1. What does the Midrash say Hashem does before raising a person to greatness?
2. What do the ten tests correspond to? Where is "everything"?
3. How does the wording of the verse show the difference between "old" and "everything"?
4. If the tests did not cause the blessing, why were they needed?

Talking points

- Have you ever prepared for something you could not make happen? What was the preparation for?
- "What I reached" and "what I was given": can you tell them apart in your own life?

Take it with you. Your effort does not cause the deepest gifts. It makes you a place where they can stay.

Section ג The Crown

Old, full of days, and the Crown

The big idea

"Old" and "full of days" are also high levels: the Midrash calls them Hashem's own garment.

The Rebbe places them exactly. They belong to Arich, the outer side of the Crown. "Old" is the root of Torah; "full of days" is the root of mitzvos. Avraham reached both through his Torah and mitzvos.

"Everything" is Atik, the inner side of the Crown. No service reaches it. That is why the verse says "Avraham was old" but "Hashem blessed Avraham."

Before you learn

- **Where we are.** Section ב said "everything" is the inner Crown. Now the Rebbe has to place "old" and "full of days," which the Midrash also calls very high.
- **Daniel's vision.** Daniel 7:9: "The Ancient of Days sat; His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like clean wool." Chassidus uses this picture for the Crown.
- **Two faces.** The Crown has two levels with Aramaic names: Arich Anpin ("the long face"), the outer side, and Atik Yomin ("the Ancient of Days"), the inner side.

ראשי תיבות new in this section

נק'	נקרא	is called
והצ"צ	והצמח צדק	and the Tzemach Tzedek
דהקב"ה	של הקדוש ברוך הוא	of the Holy One, blessed be He
לבושי'	לבושיה	His garment
י"ג	שלש עשרה	thirteen
ג"כ	גם כן	also
ז"ת	זיין תחתונות	the seven lower (sefiros)
ג"ר	גימל ראשונות	the three upper (sefiros)
וכנ"ל	וכנזכר לעיל	as mentioned above
וע"י	ועל ידי	and through
שע"י	שעל ידי	that through
ה'	השם (הוי')	Hashem
כנ"ל	כנזכר לעיל	as mentioned above

	English	לשון המאמר
1	**Even though "old, full of days" is also the level of Atik Yomin,** *the "Ancient of Days,"* **as the Midrash says that Hashem told Avraham, "Come and wear My garment," as it says "And Avraham was old, he came into days,"**	והגם שגם זקן בא בימים הוא בחינת עתיק יומין, כדאיתא במדרש[15] שאמר הקב"ה לאברהם בא ולבוש לבושי שנאמר ואברהם זקן בא בימים,
2	**and the commentary Matnos Kehunah explains that "full of days" is Hashem's garment because Hashem is called Atik Yomin,** *the "Ancient of Days" in Daniel's vision.*	ופירש במתנות כהונה דזה שבא בימים הוא לבושו של הקב"ה הוא כי הקב"ה נק'[16] עתיק יומין

3	**[And the Tzemach Tzedek adds that "old," zakein, meaning the beard, is also Hashem's garment, because of the Ancient of Days it says "His garment was white as snow," which is the level of the thirteen parts of the beard]** *(the thirteen attributes of mercy, pictured as the strands of a beard through which blessing flows).*	[והצ"צ[17] מוסיף שגם זקן (דיקנא[18]) הוא לבושו דהקב"ה, כי בעתיק יומין כתיב[16] לבושי' כתלג חיוור[19] שהוא[20] בחינת י"ג תיקוני דיקנא]
4	**one can say that the meaning here is not Atik itself, but Arich,** *the outer side of the Crown,* **which is also called Atik Yomin.**	יש לומר, שהכוונה בזה היא (לא לעתיק ממש, אלא[21]) לאריך שנקרא ג"כ בשם עתיק יומין[22]
5	**[And one can say that Arich is called Atik Yomin because the seven lower parts of Atik are wrapped inside it.]** *One name for two things: Atik itself, and Arich, which carries part of Atik inside it.*	[ויש לומר דזה שאריך נקרא בשם עתיק יומין הוא לפי שבו מלובשים ז"ת דעתיק[23]]
6	**But "everything" is Atik itself.**	משא"כ כל הוא עתיק עצמו.
7	**And even more: within Atik, it is the three upper parts of Atik that are not wrapped in Arich, and up to the innermost Atik and higher, as said in Section א, that "everything" is the hidden Essence.**	ויתירה מזו, שבעתיק גופא הוא בחינת ג"ר דעתיק שאינם מלובשים באריך[24], ועד לבחינת פנימיות עתיק ולמעלה יותר, וכנ"ל (סעיף א) מהמאמר שכל הוא בחינת העלם העצמי.
8	**And this is why the verse credits "old, full of days" to Avraham ("And Avraham was old"), but about "everything" it says that Hashem blessed Avraham with everything,**	וזהו שהענין דזקן בא בימים מייחס הכתוב לאברהם (ואברהם זקן בא בימים) משא"כ בנוגע כל אומר שהוי' ברך את אברהם בכל,
9	**because Avraham's level of "old, full of days," which is in the outer side of the Crown, he drew down through his own service.**	כי זה שהי' לאברהם בחינת זקן בא בימים, שהוא בחיצוניות הכתר, המשיך זה ע"י עבודתו.
10	**And one can say this also connects the explanation that "old, full of days" is Hashem's garment with the explanation that "old" means one who gained wisdom (Torah) and "full of days" means the garments of the mitzvos,**	ויש לומר, דזוהי גם השייכות דהפירוש שזקן בא בימים הוא לבושו דהקב"ה עם הפירוש[25] שזקן הוא זה שקנה חכמה[26] (תורה) ובא בימים הוא לבושי המצוות[27],
11	**because Avraham drew down Hashem's garment through his Torah and his mitzvos.** *The garment comes from above, but he brought it down from below.*	כי זה שהי' לאברהם לבושו של הקב"ה, המשיך זה ע"י התורה והמצוות שלו.
12	**And this can be explained in more detail: "old" and "full of days" are two levels.** *Not two words saying the same thing.*	ויש לבאר זה בפרטיות יותר, דזקן ובא בימים הם שתי מדריגות.
13	**"Old," the thirteen parts of the beard, is in the hidden mind of Arich (mocha stima'ah), and "full of days" is Arich itself, the skull of Arich (gulgalta).**	זקן שהוא י"ג תיקוני דיקנא, הוא במוחא סתימאה דאריך, ובא בימים הוא אריך עצמו [דזה שאריך נקרא בשם עתיק יומין[28] הוא בעיקר בעצמיות אריך], גלגלתא דאריך.

14	**And this is how these two things above (old and full of days, Hashem's garment) connect to two things in a person's service: the hidden mind of Arich is inner,**	וזוהי השייכות דשני ענינים אלו (זקן ובא בימים) שלמעלה (לבושו של הקב"ה) עם שני ענינים אלו בעבודת האדם, כי מוחא סתימאה דאריך הוא פנימי,
15	**the root of Torah; and the skull of Arich surrounds, the root of mitzvos.** *Torah goes inside you, into your mind. Mitzvos wrap around you from outside.*	השרש דתורה[29], וגלגלתא דאריך הוא מקיף, השרש דמצוות[29].
16	**And through Avraham's Torah learning, "old," one who gained wisdom, he drew down the beard and hidden mind of Arich ("old"); and through being "full of days," the garments of mitzvos, he drew down the skull of Arich ("full of days").**	וע"י עסק התורה דאברהם, זקן שקנה חכמה, המשיך בחינת הדיקנא ומוחא סתימאה דאריך (זקן), וע"י שהי' בא בימים, לבושי המצוות, המשיך בחינת גלגלתא[30] דאריך (בא בימים).
17	**But "everything," which is Atik, effort from below does not reach, and so it says "and Hashem blessed Avraham with everything," an awakening from above that comes from on high.**	משא"כ כל שהוא בחינת עתיק, אין אתעדל"ת מגעת לשם, ולכן כתיב וה' ברך את אברהם בכל, אתערותא דלעילא הבאה מלמעלה.
18	**Except that this awakening from above rests and is revealed only after the service is complete (including the awakening from above that comes through effort), and so**	אלא שאתערותא דלעילא זו[31] שורה ומתגלה דוקא לאחרי שלימות העבודה (והאתערותא דלעילא שע"י האתערותא דלתתא), לכן,
19	**Hashem's blessing Avraham "with everything" came specifically after he stood firm in ten tests, as said at the beginning of Section ב.** *The circle closes: the tests are not the cause, they complete the vessel.*	מה שברך ה' את אברהם בכל הי' זה דוקא לאחרי שעמד בעשר נסיונות, כנ"ל (סעיף ב בתחלתו).

Deep dive

Two faces of the Crown

Kabbalah describes the Crown, the level above the ten sefiros, as having two "faces." Atik Yomin, the Ancient of Days, is the inner side. It faces upward, toward Hashem, and stands apart from the whole order of worlds. Arich Anpin, the long face, is the outer side. It faces downward and is the root of all the sefiros, so it is counted as the first of them. The Midrash calls "old, full of days" the garment of Atik Yomin, but the Rebbe wants to say Avraham reached it by his own service. The answer: Arich is also called Atik Yomin, because part of Atik is wrapped inside it. Inside Arich the maamar uses two images from Daniel's vision. The skull (gulgalta) surrounds, like mitzvos that wrap around you; that is "full of days." The hidden mind with the beard is inner, like Torah that goes into your understanding; that is "old." Avraham's Torah and mitzvos reached both. "Everything" is Atik itself, beyond them.

Review

1. Why might someone think "old, full of days" is as high as "everything"?
2. Why is Arich also called Atik Yomin?
3. Which part of Arich is "old," and which is "full of days"? What do they match in our service?
4. When is the blessing "with everything" revealed?

Talking points

- Torah goes inside you; mitzvos wrap around you. Which do you feel more?
- Why would a verse bother to say who the subject is?

Take it with you. Torah and mitzvos reach very high. What is higher still comes as a gift, once the work is whole.

Section ד Work and gift

Two kinds of "everything"

The big idea

Even "everything" has levels.

Keeping the "do not" mitzvos reaches a high level of Atik, but one that still has some connection to the ordered world, because a person still chooses to hold back.

The ten tests reach higher, to the hidden Essence itself. A test is service nobody chooses, and only service beyond choice touches what is beyond everything.

Before you learn

- **Two kinds of mitzvos.** There are 248 "do" mitzvos (mitzvos aseh) and 365 "do not" mitzvos (mitzvos lo sa'aseh). The Tzemach Tzedek ties "came into days" to the first and "everything" to the second.
- **Hishtalshelus.** The chain of worlds coming down level by level from Hashem's light to our world. Some levels have a connection to that chain; the hidden Essence has none.
- **A test.** The Gemara (Sanhedrin 107a) says a person should never bring himself into a test. Every morning we ask Hashem, "do not bring us into a test."

ראשי תיבות new in this section

דהצ"צ	של הצמח צדק	of the Tzemach Tzedek
מל"ת	מצוות לא תעשה	"do not" mitzvos
שוהוי'	ש"והי"	that "and Hashem"
מ"ע	מצוות עשה	"do" mitzvos
ולאח"ז	ולאחרי זה	and after this
וי"ל	ויש לומר	and one can say
שתלוי'	שתלויה	that depends
בעשי'	בעשיה	in doing
תלוי'	תלויה	depends
ע"י	על ידי זה	through this

	English	לשון המאמר
1	**Now, even within "everything" (Atik), which is above "full of days" (Arich), there are several levels.**	והנה גם בבחינת כל (עתיק) שלמעלה מבא בימים (אריך) יש כמה מדריגות.
2	**As we see from the Tzemach Tzedek's maamar on this verse: first he says that Avraham reached "everything" by keeping the "do not" mitzvos, and he says this "everything" is the inner Atik**	וכמובן מהמבואר בהמאמר (ד"ה ואברהם זקן) דהצ"צ[32], שבתחלה אומר, שאברהם זכה לבחינת כל ע"י קיום מל"ת וגם בבחינה זו דכל אומר שהוא פנימיות עתיק
3	**[as he explains there: "Hashem blessed Avraham with everything" comes after "he came into days," because "days" are the "do" mitzvos, and through keeping them Avraham reached Arich** *(248 "do" mitzvos, like days that are filled).*	[כמבואר שם, דזה שוהוי' ברך את אברהם בכל הוא לאחרי שנאמר בא בימים, כי ימים הם מ"ע, וע"י העבודה דבא בימים קיום מ"ע זכה לבחינת אריך (בחינת בא בימים דלמעלה)

4	**whereas "everything," which he reached by keeping the "do not" mitzvos, is the inner Atik, above Arich.]**	משא"כ זה שזכה לבחינת כל שזכה לזה ע"י קיום מל"ת הוא פנימיות עתיק שלמעלה מאריך[33]]
5	**And afterwards he says that Avraham reached it through the ten tests (as the Midrash said in Section ב). So one can say that the "everything" he reached through the tests is higher than the "everything" he reached through the "do not" mitzvos.**	ולאח"ז אומר שאברהם זכה לזה ע"י העשרה נסיונות (כנ"ל סעיף ב מהמדרש), דיש לומר, שבחינת כל שזכה ע"י הנסיונות הוא נעלה יותר מבחינת כל שזכה ע"י קיום מל"ת.
6	**The explanation: the Atik ("everything") reached by keeping the "do not" mitzvos still has a connection to the chain of worlds, and so**	וי"ל הביאור בזה, דבחינת עתיק (כל) שזכה ע"י קיום מל"ת, יש לו שייכות להשתלשלות, ולכן,
7	**the service that reaches it is service that depends on a person's will (service step by step, in order). But even so, since Atik is above the chain of worlds,**	עבודת האדם שעל ידה זוכה לזה היא עבודה שתלוי' ברצונו (היינו עבודה שבסדר והדרגה), אלא שבזה גופא, מכיון שעתיק הוא למעלה מהשתלשלות,
8	**the service is not by doing but by "sitting and not doing," holding back.** *Holding back draws down nothing in particular. It just does not block what is above all particulars.*	לכן העבודה היא לא בעשי' אלא בשב ואל תעשה, שלילה[34].
9	**But the Atik ("everything") reached through the tests is completely separate and apart, as said in Section א: it is the hidden Essence.**	משא"כ בחינת עתיק (כל) שזכה ע"י הנסיונות, הוא נעתק ונבדל לגמרי, וכנ"ל (סעיף א) מהמאמר שהוא העלם העצמי.
10	**So when a person's service depends on his will, it has nothing in common with this Atik that is completely separate.** *Even holding back is something a person chooses.*	ולכן, כשעבודת האדם היא תלוי' ברצונו, אין לה שום דמיון[35] לבחינה זו דעתיק שנעתק ומובדל לגמרי.
11	**Only service through tests, which does not depend on a person's will [a person may not put himself into a test, and we even ask, "do not bring us into a test"], only that brings the revelation of this level.** *Service nobody chose is the only kind that touches what is above all choosing.*	ורק ע"י העבודה דנסיונות שאינה תלוי' ברצון האדם [שהרי אסור לאדם להעמיד עצמו בנסיון, ולא עוד אלא שנצטווינו לבקש אל תביאנו לידי נסיון[36]], עי"ז דוקא זוכים לגילוי בחינה זו.

Deep dive

Why holding back reaches higher than doing

A "do" mitzvah brings a specific light into a specific action: tefillin on the arm, matzah on Pesach. It works inside the ordered world, step by step. A "do not" mitzvah is kept by not acting. It brings down nothing in particular; it simply does not block what is above all particulars. That is why the Tzemach Tzedek links the "do not" mitzvos to a higher level of Atik. But the Rebbe notices that even holding back is a decision a person makes. It still depends on his will, so it still has some connection to the world of choices. A test is different in kind. The Gemara says never to bring yourself into a test, and every morning we pray "do not bring us into a test." A test is service that was never chosen. That is why only a test has anything in common with the hidden Essence, which is beyond all choosing. In Section ז this becomes practical: we do not look for tests, but we can bring their quality into ordinary life.

Review

1. What two ways does the Tzemach Tzedek give for Avraham to reach "everything"?
2. Why is keeping a "do not" mitzvah higher than doing?
3. Why is it still connected to the chain of worlds?
4. Why can only a test reach the hidden Essence?

Talking points

- Is holding back sometimes harder than doing? Give an example.
- What is the difference between a challenge you chose and one you did not?

Take it with you. The challenges you did not choose may be the ones that reach highest.

Section ה The Akeidah

Why the tenth test

The big idea

Why did "everything" come only after the tenth test, the Akeidah?

Because the tenth test had something in it beyond measure, the way "Anochi," the first of the Ten Commandments, is counted as one of ten and also called "the eleventh."

The Akeidah had two sides. It went against Avraham's nature of kindness, and it was about his only son. The first side is the outer Crown; the second is the inner Crown. That second side opened the door to "everything."

Before you learn

- **The Akeidah.** Bereishis 22: Hashem tells Avraham to bring Yitzchak, his only son, as an offering. An angel stops him at the last moment.
- **Kindness.** Avraham's quality is chesed, kindness. He ran to welcome guests. His son Yitzchak's quality is gevurah, strength and fear of Hashem.
- **"Eleven days from Horeb".** Devarim 1:2. The Midrash reads it as a hint: the first commandment, "Anochi," is "the eleventh" even though it is one of ten.

ראשי תיבות new in this section

הע"ס	העשר ספירות	the ten sefiros
מע"ס	מעשר ספירות	than the ten sefiros
וע"ד	ועל דרך	and like
ב'	שתי	two
שעד"ז	שעל דרך זה	that in the same way
מ"מ	מכל מקום	even so
וז"ש	וזהו שכתוב	and this is what is written
וע"פ	ועל פי	and according to
הנ"ל	הנזכר לעיל	the above

	English	לשון המאמר
1	**And one can say that "Hashem blessed Avraham with everything" came specifically after the tenth test because the ten tests match the ten sefiros (as in Section ב),**	ויש לומר, דזה שהוי' ברך את אברהם בכל דוקא לאחרי שעמד בנסיון העשירי הוא, כי עשרה הנסיונות הם כנגד ע"ס (כנ"ל סעיף ב),
2	**and anything is complete when it includes all ten.** *That is the simple reason.*	והשלימות דכל ענין הוא כשהוא כלול מכל הע"ס.
3	**And more deeply: to reach "everything," which is completely separate from the chain of worlds, you need service that is completely beyond measure and limit.**	ובעומק יותר יש לומר, שבכדי לזכות לבחינת כל שנעתק ומובדל לגמרי מהשתלשלות, הוא דוקא ע"י עבודה שלמעלה ממדידה והגבלה לגמרי.

4	**And since the ten tests match the ten sefiros, and even the Ten Utterances with which the world was created (which are lower than the sefiros),**	וכיון שעשר הנסיונות הם כנגד ע"ס (השתלשלות), ועד שהם כנגד עשרה מאמרות[37] (שהם למטה מהספירות עצמם[38]),
5	**standing firm in them is still tied to measure and limit. So there had to be a tenth test, the Akeidah, the special one among all the tests, which is beyond measure and limit.**	הרי זה שעמד בנסיונות אלו קשור עדיין עם מדידה והגבלה, ולכן הי' צריך להיות נסיון העשירי, הוא נסיון העקידה[39], המיוחד דכל הנסיונות, שלמעלה ממדידה והגבלה.
6	**For even though this test is one of the ten, in it there is (also) something above the ten sefiros.** *Counted, and not only counted.*	דהגם שגם נסיון זה הוא בכלל עשר הנסיונות, יש לומר, שבנסיון זה יש (גם) ענין שלמעלה מע"ס.
7	**Like what the Midrash says on the verse "eleven days from Horeb": it refers to "Anochi" (the first of the Ten Commandments), the special one among the ten.**	וע"ד דאיתא במדרש[40] עה"פ[41] אחד עשר יום מחורב שקאי על הדבור אנכי (דבור הראשון דעשרת הדברות), המיוחד שבעשרה.
8	**And chassidus explains that "Anochi" is called "eleven," even though it is one of the Ten Commandments, because "Anochi" is in the Crown.** *"I am Hashem your G-d" is not one rule among others. It is the ground of all of them.*	ומבואר בחסידות[42], דזה שהדבור אנכי נקרא בשם אחד עשר, הגם שהוא ממנין עשרת הדברות, הוא, כי הדבור אנכי הוא בכתר.
9	**And since the Crown has two levels, the outer Crown, which is counted with the ten sefiros, and the inner Crown, which is not counted with them, therefore**	וכיון שבכתר יש ב' מדריגות, חיצוניות הכתר שנמנה במנין הע"ס ופנימיות הכתר שאינו נמנה עמהם[43], לכן,
10	**"Anochi" is one of the Ten Commandments from the side of its outer Crown, but from the side of its inner Crown it is the eleventh, not counted with them: "one, and not in the count."**	זה שהדבור אנכי הוא ממנין עשרת הדברות הוא מצד חיצוניות הכתר שבו, אבל מצד פנימיות הכתר שבו הוא אחד עשר שאינו במנין עשרת הדברות[44], חד ולא בחושבן[45].
11	**And one can say that the Akeidah is the same: it was a greater test than the ones before it (like the Crown, above all the sefiros), and it had two sides.**	ויש לומר, שעד"ז הוא בנסיון העקידה, שהי' נסיון גדול יותר מהנסיונות שלפניו (בדוגמת הכתר שלמעלה מכל הספירות), שיש בזה שני ענינים.
12	**First: though Avraham was by nature a man of kindness (from his root), he still bound Yitzchak his son and took the knife to slaughter his son, the opposite of his nature.** *Kindness itself bound the son.*	זה שהגם שאברהם בטבעו הי' איש החסד (וטבע החסד שלו הי' מצד שרשו), מ"מ עקד את יצחק בנו ולקח את המאכלת לשחוט את בנו, היפך הטבע שלו (שמצד שרשו)[46].
13	**And this is why it says, "Now I know that you fear G-d." Now, specifically, because the tests before the Akeidah did not go against his nature of kindness.**	וז"ש[47] עתה ידעתי כי ירא אלקים אתה, עתה דוקא, כי הנסיונות שלפני נסיון העקידה לא היו היפך הטבע דחסד,
14	**And now, after the Akeidah, "I know that you fear G-d": the quality of fear and strength.**	ועתה (לאחרי הנסיון דעקידה) ידעתי כי ירא אלקים אתה, מדת היראה והגבורה.

15	**Second: all the other tests were about himself, and the Akeidah was about his only son.**	וזה שכל הנסיונות היו בנוגע לעצמו, ונסיון העקידה הי' בנוגע לבנו יחידו.
16	**A person loves his son, and especially an only son, more than himself. "All that a man has he will give for his son."**	דאהבת אדם לבנו, ובפרט לבנו יחידו, היא גדולה יותר מהאהבה לעצמו, וכל אשר לאיש יתן בעד בנו.
17	**So the Akeidah is above the tests that came before it.**	ולכן, נסיון העקידה הוא למעלה מהנסיונות שלפני העקידה.
18	**And one can say: the first side of the Akeidah, going against Avraham's kindness, is also about himself, so it can still be compared to the earlier tests, only higher.**	ויש לומר, דענין הראשון בנסיון העקידה, שזה הי' היפך טבע החסד דאברהם, מכיון שגם ענין זה הוא בנוגע לעצמו, יש לו איזה ערך לנסיונות שלפניו, אלא שהוא נעלה מהם.
19	**[And one can say that the Akeidah could prove the earlier tests were real because there is something in common between them.**	[ויש לומר, דזה שנסיון העקידה הוכיח שגם נסיונות הקודמים יש בהם ממש[48], הוא מפני שיש ערך ביניהם.
20	**Between things that have nothing in common, you cannot prove one from the other.]** *A proof needs a shared measure.*	דבדברים שאין שום ערך ביניהם, אין שייך להביא הוכחה מזה על זה].
21	**Like the outer Crown (Arich): even though it is above the other sefiros, it is still their root and source, and it is counted among them.**	בדוגמת חיצוניות הכתר (אריך), שעם היותו למעלה משאר הספירות, מ"מ הוא שרש ומקור להם, ועד שהוא נמנה במנין הספירות.
22	**And the second side of the Akeidah, that it was about his only son, is something completely new, with nothing like it in the earlier tests.**	וענין השני שבנסיון העקידה, שנסיון זה הי' בנוגע לבנו יחידו, הוא ענין חדש לגמרי שלא הי' דוגמתו בהנסיונות שלפניו.
23	**Like Atik (the inner Crown), which is completely separate.**	ובדוגמת עתיק (פנימיות הכתר) שהוא נעתק ומובדל.
24	**And this is why it says, "By Myself I have sworn": "by Myself," really, the level of Atik. And the reason: "because you did this and did not hold back your son, your only one."**	וז"ש[49] בי נשבעתי גו', בי ממש בחינת עתיק[50], והטעם לזה הוא כי יען גו' ולא חשכת את בנך את יחידך[49].
25	**From all this we understand that only after Avraham stood firm in the Akeidah did Hashem bless Avraham "with everything,"**	וע"פ כל הנ"ל מובן שלאחרי שעמד אברהם בנסיון העקידה, אז דוקא ברך ה' את אברהם בכל,
26	**because binding even his only son is service completely beyond measure and limit, so then specifically Hashem blessed Avraham "with everything": the inner Atik, the hidden Essence.** *Two sides of the Akeidah, two sides of the Crown.*	כי זה שעקד גם את בנו יחידו היא עבודה שלמעלה ממדידה והגבלה לגמרי, ולכן אז דוקא ברך ה' את אברהם בכל, פנימית עתיק, העלם העצמי.

Deep dive

Counted and not counted

The Tikkunei Zohar says of the Crown: "one, and not in the count." The maamar turns this into a tool. Anything that is a "crown" over a set of ten can be seen from two sides. From its outer side it is the first of the ten and belongs to the count. From its inner side it is the source of the ten and stands outside them. "Anochi" is the example. It is the first of the Ten Commandments, and the Midrash also calls it "the eleventh." The Akeidah works the same way. It is the tenth test, so it is counted. But it also had something no other test had. Its first side, acting against his nature, could still be compared to the earlier tests, and so it could prove they were real ("now I know"). Its second side, his only son, could not be compared to anything. A proof needs a shared measure; where there is none, something completely new has entered. That new thing is the inner Crown, and that is why "everything" came only now.

Review

1. What is the simple reason "everything" came after the tenth test? What is the deeper reason?
2. Why is "Anochi" called the eleventh?
3. What are the two sides of the Akeidah?
4. Which side matches the outer Crown, and which the inner? Why?

Talking points

- What makes a test "different in kind" and not just harder?
- Why does a proof need something in common between two things?

Take it with you. Some tests are not just harder. They are new, and they open what nothing else can.

Section ו Down to the thorns

A river that never stops

The big idea

Why was "everything" given to Avraham? Not to stay hidden, but to flow without end: "a river whose waters never stop."

It flows through Yitzchak's strength, which multiplies blessing into many details while each one still feels its source.

And it reaches the bottom through the marriage of Yitzchak and Rivkah, all the way to "a rose among the thorns." The introduction turns out to be the goal.

Before you learn

- **Where we are.** Sections ב to ה explained why "everything" came only after the Akeidah. Now the Rebbe answers the questions of Section א.
- **Two spellings.** Hashem's four-letter name can be spelled out in different ways. One, called Mah (=45), is the giver. Another, called Ban (=52), is the receiver.
- **The rose.** Shir HaShirim 2:2: "Like a rose among the thorns." Rashi on our parsha applies it to Rivkah, who grew up good in a home full of trickery.

ראשי תיבות new in this section

יהי'	יהיה	will be
דא"ח	דברי אלקים חיים	chassidus
תק"ש	תקיעת שופר	blowing the shofar
ע"פ	על פי	according to
הבעש"ט	הבעל שם טוב	the Baal Shem Tov
שלע"ל	שלעתיד לבוא	that in the future
לע"ל	לעתיד לבוא	in the future
מ"ה	מ"ה	Mah, the name of Hashem spelled to 45
ב"ן	ב"ן	Ban, the name of Hashem spelled to 52
בבי"ע	בבריאה יצירה עשיה	in the worlds Beriah, Yetzirah, Asiyah
בעוה"ז	בעולם הזה	in this world

	English	לשון המאמר
1	**Now, the purpose of the hidden Essence being drawn to Avraham is not that it stay as it is, in its own place, but that blessing without limit flow from it.**	והנה הכוונה בהמשכת העלם העצמי שנמשך לאברהם היא, שהעלם זה יהי' לא רק כמו שהוא במקומו, בעצמותו, אלא שיומשך ממנו השפעה בלי גבול.
2	**As the Zohar says: what is "everything"? The place of a river whose waters never stop.** *Not a one-time gift, but a flow.*	וכדאיתא בזהר[51], מאי בכל, אתר דנהרא דלא פסיק מימוי לעלמין.

3	**And this is the connection between the Zohar's explanation, that "everything" is the hidden Essence, and Rashi's, that "everything" means Yitzchak (bakol = ben):** *here comes the answer to question one.*	וזוהי השייכות דפירוש הזהר שבכל הוא העלם העצמי עם פירוש רש"י שבכל קאי על יצחק (בכל בגימטריא בן),
4	**Avraham is the kindness of Atik and Yitzchak is the strength of Atik. That is why about Yitzchak it says, "I multiplied his children and gave him Yitzchak,"**	כי אברהם הוא חסד דעתיק ויצחק גבורה דעתיק[52], וזהו שביצחק כתיב[53] וארבה את זרעו ואתן לו את יצחק,
5	**because a great flow of blessing ("I multiplied his children") comes specifically from strength, a powerful flow, as explained at length in the Siddur, on the meaning of the shofar according to the Baal Shem Tov.** *Kindness gives what fits the receiver. Strength gives with force, more than the receiver's size.*	דריבוי ההשפעה (וארבה את זרעו) הוא מהגבורות דוקא, תגבורת ההשפעה, כמבואר בארוכה בסידור (עם דא"ח) ד"ה להבין ענין תק"ש ע"פ כוונת הבעש"ט[54].
6	**And though "many" means splitting into details, the many that comes from Yitzchak's strength is such that in every detail you can openly feel that its root is the simple Essence, "whose waters never stop."**	והגם שריבוי הוא התחלקות פרטים, הנה הריבוי שנמשך מהגבורות דיצחק, הוא באופן שגם בהפרטים נרגש בגילוי ששרש המשכתם הוא מהפשיטות דהעלם העצמי דלא פסיק מימוי לעלמין.
7	**And because the simplicity can be seen in the details, its inner self is revealed: it is not limited by any limit, and it can come openly even into details.** *The Essence is not even limited to being unlimited.*	וע"י שגם בהפרטים ניכר הפשיטות, עי"ז מתגלה הפנימיות והעצמיות שלו, שאינו מוגדר בשום גדר וביכלתו לבוא (בגילוי) גם בפרטים.
8	**That is why in the future they will say to Yitzchak, "You are our father, for Avraham did not know us," because in the future the inner Atik will be revealed, and it is revealed specifically through Yitzchak's strength.**	וזהו שלע"ל יאמרו ליצחק כי אתה אבינו כי אברהם לא ידענו[55], כי לע"ל יהי' גילוי פנימיות עתיק[56], והגילוי דפנימיות עתיק הוא דוקא ע"י הגבורות דיצחק[57].
9	**And this is why "Hashem blessed Avraham with everything" is the introduction to Yitzchak and Rivkah's marriage: the goal is that the inner Crown be revealed all the way down,** *the answer to question two.*	וזהו שוהוי' ברך את אברהם בכל הוא הקדמה לנשואי יצחק ורבקה, כי תכלית הכוונה הוא שפנימיות הכתר יומשך בגילוי עד למטה מטה,
10	**and this happens through the union of Yitzchak and Rivkah. Both are rooted in the strength of Atik, but Yitzchak is Mah** *(the giver)* **and Rivkah is Ban** *(the receiver)*, **and revelation below comes through Ban.**	וזה נעשה ע"י יחוד יצחק ורבקה, כי יצחק ורבקה, השרש דשניהם הוא בגבורה דעתיק, אלא שיצחק הוא בחינת מ"ה ורבקה היא בחינת ב"ן, והגילוי למטה הוא ע"י שם ב"ן[58].
11	**And this is why "Hashem blessed Avraham with everything" is only an introduction to their marriage: the purpose of this blessing is that "everything" reach even the lower worlds, this lowest world,** *the answer to question three.*	וזהו שוהוי' ברך את אברהם בכל הוא רק הקדמה לנשואי יצחק ורבקה, כי תכלית הכוונה דברכה זו הוא שבחינת כל יומשך גם בבי"ע, בעוה"ז התחתון,

12 **all the way to the place where Rivkah was, "a rose among the thorns," so that the inner Atik be revealed there too.** *The introduction is the goal. The deepest blessing was given so that it could be carried to the lowest place.*

ועד בהמקום שבו היתה רבקה, שושנה בין החוחים[59], שגם שם יומשך הגילוי דפנימיות עתיק.

Deep dive

Why strength carries the blessing down

Avraham is kindness and Yitzchak is strength, and you might expect kindness to be the giver. The maamar says the opposite at this level. Kindness gives what fits the receiver, so the gift takes the receiver's shape. Strength gives with force, more than the receiver's size. For the hidden Essence, that matters. If it came down shaped by each detail, it would lose what makes it the Essence. Yitzchak's strength multiplies the blessing into many details, but in a way that each detail still feels its simple source, like every drop of a river that never stops. That is why the Gemara says that in the future we will call Yitzchak "our father." And it is why the marriage matters. Yitzchak is the giver and Rivkah the receiver, and revelation below comes through the receiver. Rivkah grew up "a rose among the thorns." The blessing was given so that it could reach her place, the lowest place.

Review

1. What is the purpose of the hidden Essence being drawn to Avraham?
2. How does Yitzchak's strength connect the Zohar and Rashi?
3. Why does revelation below come through Rivkah?
4. How does this answer the question of why the blessing is "only an introduction"?

Talking points

- Who is "outside" in your world, and how might something good reach them?
- Why might a gift not be complete until it reaches the lowest place?

Take it with you. A blessing is meant to travel, all the way to the people and places that seem farthest away.

Section ז Down to the thorns

What it asks of us

The big idea

The Torah tells us about Avraham's tests to teach us something.

We do not look for tests. We bring their quality into ordinary life: effort beyond what comes naturally, in learning, in mitzvos, and in sharing the wellsprings of chassidus with people who are outside.

That outward effort brings the revelation of the hidden Essence, "no eye has seen," and Mashiach.

Before you learn

- **Hora'ah.** The word Torah comes from hora'ah, "teaching." Every story in the Torah teaches something for our lives.
- **The Zohar's phrase.** "Those who press upon the word of wisdom": people who push to understand, beyond what comes easily.
- **The Baal Shem Tov's letter.** The Baal Shem Tov asked Mashiach, "When will you come?" Mashiach answered: "When your wellsprings spread outward."

ראשי תיבות new in this section

שבע"פ	שבעל פה	Oral (Torah)
ע"ד	על דרך	in the way of
כו'	וכולי	and so on
מרז"ל	מאמר רבותינו זכרונם לברכה	the saying of our Sages
ועי"ז	ועל ידי זה	and through this

	English	לשון המאמר
1	**Now, the Oral Torah tells us that Avraham reached "everything" by standing firm in ten tests. Like everything in the Torah (the word Torah comes from "teaching"), it teaches that our service should be like (not actually) the service of tests,**	והנה זה שמסופר בתורה שבע"פ שאברהם זכה לבחינת כל ע"י שעמד בעשר נסיונות הוא (ככל הענינים שבתורה מלשון הוראה[60]) הוראה שצריך להיות (דוגמת[61]) העבודה דנסיונות,
2	**meaning, the service needs great effort, effort beyond the usual, like the service of tests.** *Not looking for tests. Bringing their quality into ordinary days.*	היינו, שהעבודה צריכה להיות ביגיעה גדולה, יגיעה שלא ע"ד הרגיל, בדוגמת העבודה דנסיונות.
3	**And this is what the Zohar says there on the verse "No eye has seen... He will do for the one who waits for Him": who is "the one who waits"? "Those who press upon the word of wisdom."**	וזהו דאיתא בזהר שם עה"פ[62] עין לא ראתה גו' יעשה למחכה לו, מאי למחכה לו כו' אינון דדחקין למלה דחוכמתא כו'
4	**[And this Zohar comes right after its explanation of "what is 'everything'," as the maamar brings.]** *The end of the maamar is on the same page of the Zohar as its beginning.*	[וענין זה שבזהר בא בהמשך להפירוש מאי בכל, כמובא בהמאמר]

5	**Through effort in Torah, effort beyond the usual [as explained in the maamar, "pressing upon the word of wisdom" is effort by way of "returning light"],** *understanding you push out from below, not only what you receive.*	שע"י היגיעה בתורה, יגיעה שלא ע"ד הרגיל [וכמבואר בהמאמר דדחקין למלה דחוכמתא הוא יגיעה בדרך אור חוזר]
6	**it follows that keeping the mitzvos should also be with great effort (as our Sages say, "Great is learning that leads to action"), including effort in spreading the wellsprings outward.**	ומזה נמשך שגם קיום המצוות יהי' ביגיעה גדולה (ע"ד מרז"ל[63] גדול לימוד שמביא לידי מעשה), כולל גם היגיעה בהפצת המעינות חוצה,
7	**Besides the effort in learning and understanding the wellsprings (pressing upon the word of wisdom), there must be a special effort to spread them outward, to bring the wellsprings also to people who are outside,**	דנוסף להיגיעה שצריכה להיות בלימוד והבנת המעינות (דחקין למלה דחוכמתא), צריכה להיות יגיעה מיוחדת להפיץ את המעינות חוצה, להביא את המעינות גם לאלו שנמצאים חוצה,
8	**"among the thorns." And through this, "the master will come, this is King Mashiach," and then the hidden Essence will be revealed, "no eye has seen," speedily in our days.** *The rose among the thorns from Section ז is the person outside. That is where the river is meant to arrive.*	"בין החוחים", ועי"ז יהי' אתי מר דא מלכא משיחא[64], שאז יהי' גילוי העלם העצמי, עין לא ראתה, במהרה בימינו ממש.

Deep dive

Returning light

Chassidus describes two directions of light. Direct light comes down from above and is received, like an idea that becomes clear when someone explains it to you. Returning light rises from below, from the effort of the one receiving, like the understanding you squeeze out of a hard text by not letting go. The maamar reads "those who press upon the word of wisdom" as Torah learned the second way. That is why the lesson of the tests lands on effort, not on tests themselves. Returning light is the one kind of service in which you go past what your own measure would give, which is what a test does. The Rebbe then lists three places for that effort, in order: learning, keeping mitzvos, and a separate effort to bring the wellsprings to people who are outside. The last line ties back to the first. The hidden Essence that no service reaches is the very thing promised to be revealed, "no eye has seen," when the wellsprings reach outward.

Review

1. What does the story of the tests teach us, if we may not look for tests?
2. What is "returning light"?
3. What three places of effort does the maamar list?
4. How does the end of the maamar connect to its beginning?

Talking points

- What would it look like to learn "beyond the usual" this week?
- Why is sharing a separate effort from learning?

Take it with you. Push past the usual, in learning, in doing, and in sharing. That effort brings the light no eye has seen.

Bringing it together

The Torah says Hashem blessed Avraham "with everything" and does not say with what. The Rebbe Rashab hears the silence as the point: "everything" is the hidden Essence, the source of every blessing, too big to be named by any one of them.

The Midrash says Avraham was tested ten times and then blessed. The ten tests match the ten sefiros; "everything" is above them, where effort cannot reach. So the tests did not earn the blessing. They made Avraham a complete vessel. That is why the verse says "Avraham was old" (what he reached) but "Hashem blessed Avraham" (what was given).

"Old" and "full of days" are high too: Arich, the outer Crown, the roots of Torah and mitzvos. "Everything" is Atik, the inner Crown. Even there are levels. Holding back from sin reaches high, but only a test, which nobody chooses, reaches the hidden Essence. And the tenth test, the Akeidah, was the one with something beyond measure: against Avraham's nature, and about his only son.

Why was "everything" given? To flow like a river that never stops, through Yitzchak's strength, and through his marriage with Rivkah all the way down to "a rose among the thorns." The introduction is the goal. And our part is effort beyond the usual: in learning, in mitzvos, and in bringing the wellsprings to people who are outside. That brings Mashiach.

Three questions for discussion

1. The maamar says the deepest gifts are not caused by our effort, yet the effort is necessary. How can both be true?
2. Why would a test you did not choose reach higher than good things you chose to do?
3. Who are the "roses among the thorns" in your community, and what would it take to reach them?

ראשי תיבות key

Every abbreviation in the maamar, in alphabetical order.

אדמו"ר	אדוננו מורנו ורבנו	our master, teacher and Rebbe
אתעדל"ע	אתערותא דלעילא	awakening from above
אתעדל"ת	אתערותא דלתתא	awakening from below
ב'	שתי	two
בב"ע	בבריאה יצירה עשיה	in the worlds Beriah, Yetzirah, Asiyah
ב"ן	ב"ן	Ban, the name of Hashem spelled to 52
בעוה"ז	בעולם הזה	in this world
בעשי'	בעשיה	in doing
גו'	וגומר	and so on (the verse continues)
ג"כ	גם כן	also
ג"ר	גימל ראשונות	the three upper (sefiros)
דא"ח	דברי אלקים חיים	chassidus
ד"ה	דיבור המתחיל	the maamar beginning
דהצ"צ	של הצמח צדק	of the Tzemach Tzedek
דהקב"ה	של הקדוש ברוך הוא	of the Holy One, blessed be He
דוה'	של "וה'"	of "and Hashem"
ה'	השם (הוי')	Hashem
הבעש"ט	הבעל שם טוב	the Baal Shem Tov
הי'	היה	was
הנ"ל	הנזכר לעיל	the above
הע"ס	העשר ספירות	the ten sefiros
הצ"צ	הצמח צדק	the Tzemach Tzedek
הקב"ה	הקדוש ברוך הוא	the Holy One, blessed be He
ואח"כ	ואחר כך	and afterwards
וגו'	וגומר	and so on (the verse continues)
וה'	והשם (הוי')	and Hashem
והצ"צ	והצמח צדק	and the Tzemach Tzedek
וז"ש	וזהו שכתוב	and this is what is written
וי"ל	ויש לומר	and one can say
וכו'	וכולי	and so on
וכנ"ל	וכנזכר לעיל	as mentioned above
ולאח"ז	ולאחרי זה	and after this
וע"ד	ועל דרך	and like
וע"י	ועל ידי	and through
וע"י"ז	ועל ידי זה	and through this
וע"פ	ועל פי	and according to
ז"ת	זיין תחתונות	the seven lower (sefiros)
י"ג	שלש עשרה	thirteen
יהי'	יהיה	will be
כ"א	כי אם	but rather
כו'	וכולי	and so on
כנ"ל	כנזכר לעיל	as mentioned above
לבושי'	לבושיה	His garment

לע"ל	לעתיד לבוא	in the future
מ"ה	מ"ה	Mah, the name of Hashem spelled to 45
מהורש"ב	מורנו הרב שלום דובער	the Rebbe Rashab
מל"ת	מצוות לא תעשה	"do not" mitzvos
מ"מ	מכל מקום	even so
מ"ע	מצוות עשה	"do" mitzvos
מע"ס	מעשר ספירות	than the ten sefiros
מרז"ל	מאמר רבותינו זכרונם לברכה	the saying of our Sages
משא"כ	מה שאין כן	whereas
נ"ע	נשמתו עדן	his soul is in Eden
נק'	נקרא	is called
ע"ד	על דרך	in the way of
עה"פ	על הפסוק	on the verse
ע"י	על ידי	through
ע"י"ז	על ידי זה	through this
ע"ס	עשר ספירות	ten sefiros
ע"פ	על פי	according to
רש"י	רבי שלמה יצחקי	Rashi
שבע"פ	שבעל פה	Oral (Torah)
שהוי'	שהשם (הוי')	that Hashem
שהי'	שהיה	that he was
שוהוי'	ש"וה"'	that "and Hashem"
שלע"ל	שלעתיד לבוא	that in the future
שעד"ז	שעל דרך זה	that in the same way
שע"י	שעל ידי	that through
שתלוי'	שתלויה	that depends
תלוי'	תלויה	depends
תק"ש	תקיעת שופר	blowing the shofar
תרס"ו	תרס"ו	the year 5666 (1905–06)

Sources used

The other 40 haaros are bare marei mekomos and were set aside; they are not reproduced here (see the printed Melukat volume). Below: only the footnotes this edition uses, as printed, with how each source was checked.

**	PARTLY VERIFIED	כידוע הראי' לזה מ"שעטנז" (נדה סא, ב) — ראה לקו"ש ח"ג ע' 782. ובכ"מ. Niddah 61b opened (Sefaria): שעטנז = שוע, טווי ונוז together. Open: Likkutei Sichos vol. 3, p. 782.
5	PARTLY VERIFIED	דנוסף לזה שכל הפירושים שבאותו הפסוק שייכים זל"ז** — מכיון שפירוש רש"י על התורה הוא "יינה של תורה" ("היום יום" כט שבט), יש לו שייכות מיוחדת עם הפירוש ע"ד הסוד (זהר). וראה בארוכה לקו"ש ח"ה בתחלתו, ובהערות שם. HaYom Yom 29 Shevat opened (chabadlibrary.org): Rashi on Chumash is יינה של תורה. Open: Likkutei Sichos vol. 5, opening sicha.
7	OPEN	בנצוצי אורות לזהר שם, שוהוי' ברך את אברהם בכל (לפירוש הזהר) הוא טעם על זה שצוה שלא לקחת אשה מבנות הכנעני. ואולי י"ל, דכמו שלפירוש רש"י, וה' ברך גו' בכל הוא טעם גם על השליחות לקחת אשה לבנו ("מאחר שהי' לו בן הי' צריך להשיאו אשה"), עד"ז הוא גם לפי פירוש הזהר (ראה לעיל הערה 5). Open: Nitzotzei Oros on Zohar I 130b; Rashi on Genesis 24:1.
9	VERIFIED	בד"ה זה באוה"ת פרשתנו (כרך ד) תשעט, סע"א. Ohr HaTorah, Bereishis vol. 4, p. תשעט: the ten trials match the ten sefiros; the blessing "בכל" is above arousal from below, from Atik that is not counted among the sefiros. Opened in the Tzemach Tzedek's Sefer HaLikkutim, which reproduces the passage with its Ohr HaTorah locator.
11	VERIFIED	ראה עד"ז ד"ה ואברהם זקן תרע"ג בסופו (המשך תער"ב ח"א ע' קצ). Hemshech 5672, vol. 1, p. קצ (end of 5673 ד"ה ואברהם זקן), opened (chabadlibrary.org): "bayamim" is drawn by his own avodah; then "Hashem blessed Avraham" is the higher flow given from above.
12	VERIFIED	באוה"ת שבהערה 9, שגם "זקן בא בימים" הוא פנימיות הכתר שאין שייך בו אתעדל"ת. ואולי יש לומר, שזהו בכללות, אבל בפרטיות, ענין זה (המשכה מלמעלה שלא ע"י אתעדל"ת) הוא דוקא בבחינת בכל — ראה לקמן סוף ס"ג ובהערה 31 שם. ועפ"ז מובן: (א) לשון הכתוב "ואברהם זקן בא בימים", ולא שהוי' ברכו כמ"ש בנוגע ל"בכל", כבפנים. (ב) זה שבמדרש שבהערה 8 מעתיק רק "וה' ברך את אברהם בכל" (ולא תחלת הכתוב) — כי רק לזה הוצרך להיות קדימת עשר נסיונות (שלימות העבודה, שרק אז נמשכת האתעדל"ע מלמעלה), משא"כ "זקן בא בימים". Ohr HaTorah, Bereishis vol. 4, pp. תשעט and תשפד, opened: the blessing "בכל" follows "ba bayamim" (the mitzvos) and comes from the inwardness of Atik above Arich.
18	VERIFIED	ראה ב"ר פס"ה, ט (ועד"ז בב"מ פז, א) "אברהם תבע זקנה . . כיון שעמד אברהם נתן לו זקנה ואברהם זקן", וביפ"ת שם (הובא באוה"ת שם תשעח, ב. תשעט, ב. ד"ה הנ"ל תרכ"ז בתחלתו — ע' כח) שמקודם הי' הזקנה ניכר מהפנים והגוף, ומאברהם הותחל חתימת זקן (דיקנא). Bereishis Rabbah 65:9 opened (Sefaria). Yefeh Toar's reading (old age showed in face and body, but no beard) opened as quoted by the Tzemach Tzedek in Ohr HaTorah, Kitzurim, p. תשפד.
19	VERIFIED	בחדא"ג מהרש"א לב"מ שם, שגם מקודם הי' חתימת זקן, והחידוש ד"ואברהם זקן" הוא שנעשה הזקנה בליבון שער. ועפ"ז מובן הקשר ד"ואברהם זקן" עם "לבושי כתלג חיוור". Maharsha, Chiddushei Aggados, Bava Metzia 87a, opened (Sefaria, Vilna): old age existed before; the novelty was old age visible in white hair.
21	VERIFIED	וכמפורש באוה"ת שם תשפה, ב בהקיצורים "בא בימים . . א"א הנק' עתיק יומין". Ohr HaTorah, Bereishis vol. 4, Kitzurim, p. תשפה, opened: "בא בימים ע"י המצות ... א"א הנק' עתיק יומין".
27	VERIFIED	ראה זח"א רכד, א. תו"א פרשתנו טז, א ואילך. ובארוכה בד"ה זה ה'תשל"ח (לקמן ע' שז ואילך). וש"נ. בתו"א שם סע"א ואילך, שהלבושים הם תורה ומצוות. וכ"ה בתו"א משפטים עט, סע"ג (הובא באוה"ת שם תשפב, א. ד"ה הנ"ל תרכ"ז פ"ו (סה"מ תרכ"ז ע' לח)) "הימים הם בחינת לבושים והם לבושי התורה והמצוות". אבל בפרטיות, רק המצוות הם לבושים ("ימים"), משא"כ התורה הו"ע "זקן", כמפורש באוה"ת וסה"מ תרכ"ז שבהערה 25. Zohar I 224a (Vayechi), Torah Ohr Chayei Sarah 16a and Torah Ohr Mishpatim (79c), all opened (Sefaria): the days are garments made of Torah and mitzvos.
28	NO EXTERNAL SOURCE	"בא בימים" הוא כמו "עתיק יומין". משא"כ "זקן" שהוא "לבושי כתלג חיוור" (כנ"ל מהצ"צ), אינו נקרא בשם "עתיק יומין" ורק לבושו של "עתיק יומין". The Rebbe's own distinction; no external source.
30		

	PARTLY VERIFIED	בלקו"ת שה"ש כד, ב משמע שאתעדל"ת מגעת רק עד עצם ח"ס, משא"כ בגלגלתא. אבל ראה לקוטי לוי"צ לתנ"ך ומחז"ל ע' קט, שבכללות — אתעדל"ת מגעת גם בגלגלתא דאריך. עיי"ש בארוכה. Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim 24a–b, opened (Sefaria): mitzvos come from the outer Crown (גלגלתא), the outer side of "ח"ס דעתיקא" (ח"ס = chochmah stima'ah). Open: Likkutei Levi Yitzchak l'Tanach u'Maamarei Chazal, p. קט.
31	PARTLY VERIFIED	ראה בארוכה לקו"ת שה"ש שבהערה 14, שבאתעדל"ע שאין אתעדל"ת מגעת לשם — שתי בחינות: אתעדל"ע שלפני האתעדל"ת, ואתעדל"ע שלאחרי שלימות העבודה. ובלקוטי לוי"צ שם ע' קי, שבחינה הראשונה היא בב"ן דעתיק, והשני' במ"ה דעתיק. עיי"ש בארוכה. Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim 24a–b, opened: a higher arousal from above that rests only "when the deeds below are complete". Open: Likkutei Levi Yitzchak, p. קי.
33	PARTLY VERIFIED	וי"ל שהכוונה כאן ב"פנימיות עתיק שלמעלה מאריך" היא לג"ר דעתיק שאינם מתלבשות באריך. ולהעיר מהמשך תרס"ו ע' רסא, דשרש המ"ע הוא באריך ובז"ת דעתיק שמתלבשות באריך, ושרש המל"ת הוא בג"ר דעתיק שאינן מתלבשות באריך. The doctrine (prohibitions rooted higher than positive mitzvos) opened in Hemshech 5666. Open: the exact page cited, p. רסא.
35	NO EXTERNAL SOURCE	והגם שצורך העבודה להמשכת בחינה זו היא (לא שהעבודה מעוררת אותה, ורק) מפני שצ"ל אתר שלים (כנ"ל ס"ב) — השלימות דהמקום (שבו נמשכת האתעדל"ע) צריך להיות לו איזה שייכות וערך להההמשכה. The Rebbe's own reasoning; no external source.
41	VERIFIED	דברים א, ב. Devarim 1:2 and Shemos Rabbah 42:8 opened (Sefaria): "אחד עשר יום מחורב — במיוחד שבעשרה ... אנכי".
44	PARTLY VERIFIED	וראה סה"מ עטר"ת שם שזהו גם ביאור הפלוגתא (ראה סהמ"צ להרמב"ם מ"ע א' ובהשגות הרמב"ן שם) אם אנכי נמנה בתרי"ג מצוות. עיי"ש בארוכה. Rambam, Sefer HaMitzvos, Aseh 1, and Ramban's hasagos there, opened (Sefaria): the dispute whether Anochi is counted. Open: Sefer HaMaamarim 5679, p. תקפז.
45	VERIFIED	תקו"ז בהקדמה ("פתח אליהו") יז, א. Tikkunei Zohar, introduction ("Pasach Eliyahu") 17a, opened (Sefaria): "אנת הוא חד ולא בחושבן".
48	PARTLY VERIFIED	סנהדרין פט, ב. תנחומא וירא כב. פרש"י עה"פ וירא שם. — נתבאר בלקו"ש ח"כ שיחה ג' לפ' וירא (ע' 73 ואילך). Sanhedrin 89b, Tanchuma Vayeira 22 and Rashi on Genesis 22:2, opened (Sefaria). Open: Likkutei Sichos vol. 20, p. 73 ff.
54	OPEN	רמז, א-ב. Open: Siddur im Dach, p. רמז.
55	VERIFIED	ישעי' סג, טז. שבת פט, ב. Shabbos 89b opened (Sefaria): "כי אתה אבינו".
61	NO EXTERNAL SOURCE	אבל לא ממש — שהרי נצטווינו לבקש אל תביאנו לידי נסיון (כנ"ל סוף סעיף ד). The Rebbe's own qualification; no external source.
62	OPEN	ישעי' סד, ג. Open: Isaiah 64:3 (Sefaria was unreachable at check time).
63	OPEN	קידושין מ, ב. ב"ק יז, א. Open: Kiddushin 40b; Bava Kamma 17a (Sefaria was unreachable at check time).
64	OPEN	אגה"ק דהבעש"ט, נדפסה גם בכתר שם טוב בתחלתו. Open: the Baal Shem Tov's letter as printed at the start of Kesser Shem Tov (Kehot).

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