

## SHEMOT BA'ARETZ

### שמות בארץ – פסוקים וגמטריות בתנ"ך

*A person's name is an expression of his or her soul or soul-root. As much as the parents' naming of a child might seem like a well-thought-out, rational process, a hidden element of divine providence is present. This applies in all cases, whether a name just seems to pop out of thin air, or whether it has already been decided upon long before the birth (such as when a child is to carry the name of some relative or sage who once lived). No matter what the circumstances or the considerations involved in the naming, the name itself (and its gematria or numerical equivalent) is like a secret formula concerning a person's life mission waiting to be decoded.*

*A simple decoding is performed by finding those verses in the Tanach in which that name appears, or at least that begin and end with the same letters as that name. Through these verses, we literally "plug" ourselves into our power-socket in the Torah. While either of these methods gives us powerful insight into the dynamics of our lives, fulfilling both conditions is optimal (i.e. finding verses with the same first and final letters, as well as verses in which the name itself appears).*

*In certain cases, numerous verses will be found, and although one may tend to want to choose one's favorites, the sum total of all of them is what gives us this deep insight. Even the seemingly "negative" verses are instructive, for they indicate the various tests that we must face in this lifetime. The point is always to learn as much as we can about ourselves in order to perfect any outstanding flaws.*

*Along with this, it is recommended to meditate on the letters of our name when it is intertwined with Hashem's Name (YHVH), or with the word Neshamah. For instance:*

י י ה צ ו ח ה ק (יצחק יקוק)  
 י נ צ ש ח מ ק ה (יצחק נשמה)  
 א י ב ה ר ו ה ה מ (אברהם יקוק)  
 א נ ב ש ר מ ה ה מ (אברהם נשמה)  
 י נ ה ע ו מ ה י (נעמי יקוק)

*Another, more advanced method, involves calculating the gematria of the name or names, and finding the Divine Name or Names that share the same gematria. Some simple examples of this are:*

יוסף  
 Yoseph (26 x 6 = 156)

יעקב

Yaacov (26 x 7 = 182)

יצחק

Yitzhak (26 x 8 = 208)

אברהם

Avraham (31 x 8 = 248)

Another advanced method of “plugging” ourselves into the Torah involves finding words, phrases or sentences in the Torah that share the simple gematria as our name.

A more complete decoding is performed by combining the gematria of the name with the gematriot of the parents' and grandparents' names. Each different combination reflects a different innate potential. All together, these combinations form a single complex picture of the total mission of a person on this earth. Again, this is only true when they are “plugged” into the Divine Torah (which includes the entire written Torah, Prophets and Sacred Writings, as well as the revealed and esoteric portions of the oral Torah). For example:

1. Name (Yoseph)
2. Name and family name (Yoseph Levi)
3. Name, son/daughter of father (Yoseph ben Yaacov)
4. Name, son/daughter of mother (Yoseph ben Rahel)
5. Name, son/daughter of father and mother (Yoseph ben Yaacov v'Rahel)
6. Name, son/daughter of father, son/daughter of grandfather (Yoseph ben Yaacov ben Yitzhak)
7. Name, son/daughter of father, son/daughter of grandfather, son/daughter of great grandfather (Yoseph ben Yaacov ben Yitzhak ben Avraham)
8. Name, son/daughter of mother, son/daughter of grandfather (Yoseph ben Rahel bat Bethuel)
9. Name and vocation
10. Nicknames
11. Birthdate, etc.

\* \* \*

The following source material about names is provided for further study. In almost every case, I have provided the original Hebrew text, followed by an exact English translation [with brief explanations enclosed in brackets]. Although these are not simple or easy texts to read, they are extremely valuable, and the reward is well worth the effort.

# Shemot Ba'aretz

## Sources

השל"ה

סגולה שלא ישכח שמו ליום הדין, שיאמר בחייו בכל יום בסוף שמונה עשרה קודם יהיו לרצון פסוק אחד מהתנ"ך המתחיל מאות ראשון משמו ומסיים באות אחרון משמו. דהיינו אותו השם שנקרא בו לספר תורה כגון למי שנקרא איציק וקורין אותו לספר תורה יצחק צריך להתחיל הפסוק ב"יוד ולסיים בקוף. וכן כולם. מכל שכן למי ששמו נמצא בפסוק עצמו כגון שלום או דן או ראובן שאין צריך לסיים בסוף שמו (ר' ישעיה הורוויץ ז"ל, מתוך סידור תפילת כל פה).

### Shlah HaKodesh

An aid to not forgetting one's name on the Day of Judgment (i.e. when one passes on from this world): Every day, at the conclusion of the Shemoneh Esreh (Amidah), before the verse "Yihiyu le'ratzon – May it be Your will..." say a verse from the Tanach that begins with the first letter of your name and ends with the final letter of your name. I refer to the name with which one is called to the Sefer Torah. For instance, if one is called Itzik (which begins with the letter Aleph), but is called to the Torah as Yitzhak (which begins with the letter Yod), the verse must begin with a Yod and conclude with a Kof. This rule applies to all nicknames. It is even better if the actual name appears in the verse. In the case of such names as Shalom or Dan or Reuven [which actually appear in the Tanach], it is not necessary that the verse begin and end with the first and final letters of the name (R. Yeshaya Horowitz, cited in Siddur Tefillat Kol Peh).

\*

מיכה ו' ח-ט

הגיד לך אדם מה-טוב ומה-ה' דורש ממך כי אם עשות משפט ואהבת חסד והצנע לכת עם אלהיך. קול ה' לעיר יקרא ותושיה יראה שְׁמֶךָ.

### Micah 6:8-9

"O Man, you have been told what is good and what Hashem demands of you – only to act justly, love kindness, and to walk modestly with your God! This is the call of [the prophet of] Hashem to the city; the advice of the one who perceives Your Name..."

\*

רש"י

"קול ה' לעיר יקרא" – קול נביאי ה' על קרתא מכריזין להם תשובה. "ותושיה יראה שְׁמֶךָ" – ותושיה קורא להם הנביא אשר רואה את שְׁמֶךָ אשר נותן לב להתבונן ולראות דרכיך. ותושיה מוסב על מקרא שלמעלה [הגיד לך אדם מה-טוב]... "ותושיה יראה שְׁמֶךָ" – מכאן שכל מי שאומר בכל יום מקרא המתחיל ומסיים כמו שמתחיל ומסיים שמו, התורה [שהיא נקראת תושיה] מצילו מגיהנם [ביום הדין].

### Rashi on Micah 6:9

"Kol Hashem la'ir yikra – This is the call of Hashem to the city" – the voice of the prophet of Hashem calling them to teshuvah. "Ve'tushiyah yir'eh sh'mecha – the advice of the one who perceives Your Name" – the advice of the prophet who sets his heart to contemplate and perceive Hashem's ways. Here, the word *tushiyah*-advice refers to the advice given in the verse above, "O Man, you have been told what is good..." "Ve'tushiyah yir'eh sh'mecha – the advice of the one who perceives Your Name" – [Although the words "Your Name" refer to Hashem's Name and the way He governs His Universe, still, in addition to this,] we learn

from here that if one says a verse every day that begins and concludes with the first and final letter of his name, the Torah [which is called *tushiyah* because it contains “advice” for living in this-world and in the world-to-come] will rescue him from Gehinam [on the Day of Judgment]. [That is, we can re-read *ve'tushiyah yir'eh sh'mecha* as “advice emerges by beholding (i.e. looking deeply into, contemplating) your own name.”]

\*

תיקוני זוהר חדש

אתמר דמאן דלא ידע בגימטריאות וחשבונות דיליה, עתיד לנחתא לשאול, כמה דאוקמוה במדרש [על הפסוק] “כֹּל אֲשֶׁר תִּמְצָא יָדְךָ לַעֲשׂוֹת בְּכַחַךְ עֲשֵׂה כִּי אֵין מַעֲשֵׂה וְחִשְׁבוֹן וְדַעַת וְחִכְמָה בְּשֵׂאוֹל אֲשֶׁר אֶתָּה הַלֵּךְ שְׁמָה” (קהלת ט' י') (תיקוני זוהר חדש ע' י', מובא בקול התור פרק ג' אות ג'. עיין אור תורה לר' משה צוריאל שליט”א, ע' 76).

### Tikuney Zohar Hadash

We have learned that one who does not know the gematriot and [other] calculations of his name will in the future descend to She'ol, as it has been established in the Midrash on the verse, “Whatever your hand can find to do [i.e. to whatever extent you are able to do God's Will while you are alive], do it with all your power. For there is neither *maaseh*-deed, nor *heshbon*-calculation, nor *daat*-knowledge, nor *hochmah*-wisdom, in She'ol where you are going” (Kohelet 9:10) [She'ol is always understood to refer to “the grave” or “the underworld”; it is essentially a static dimension where a soul is sent to suffer the consequences of its wrong actions. It is interesting that it shares the same root letters as Sha'ul, “Borrowed,” and She'elah, “Question!”] (Tikuney Zohar Hadash, p. 5b (10); see below, Kol HaTor, Chapter 3, Paragraph 3; see also Torah Or by R. Moshe Tzuriel, p. 76).

\*

הגר"א

וחשבונות דיליה. כי כל חשבונות הן תלויים בהאי כח, וכל אחד מישראל יש לו שורש למעלה באותן החשבונות בשמו. וזה [פירוש מאמרם ז"ל] ששואלין את הרשע את שמו ומשיבו “גלוי וידוע לפניו ית' שאיני יודע שמי וכו'”. וזה “כֹּל אֲשֶׁר תִּמְצָא יָדְךָ לַעֲשׂוֹת בְּכַחַךְ עֲשֵׂה” שאמרו בשאול אין שם אותן בני אדם שהיה להם בעוה"ז מעשה (פירוש הגר"א לנ"ל; מובא באור תורה לר' משה צוריאל שליט”א).

### GRA's Commentary on Tikuney Zohar Hadash

“One who does not know the gematriot and [other] calculations of his name will in the future descend to She'ol...” For all calculations depend on this power, and each and every Israelite is connected to his root above through the calculations of his name(s). This is the meaning of the statement of the Sages (Midrash Hibut HaKever) that an angel stands over the grave of a wicked man and asks him his name, to which he responds, “It is revealed and known before the Blessed One that I do not know my name!” ... This is the meaning of “Whatever you are able to do, do it with all your power!” For there, a person cannot expect to be able to do the same thing that he was able to do while living in a body [i.e. each person is expected to live up to all that is alluded to in their name while they are alive; if they did not begin this work during their lifetimes, it may be too late, and they may therefore have to return to take care of unfinished business] (GRA, R. Eliyahu the Gaon of Vilna, on Tikuney Zohar Hadash, p. 5b (10)).

\*

## קול התור

רבינו ידע על כל איש מישראל איה שמו ויעודו לישועת ישראל מרומז בתורתנו הקדושה, ע"פ מעשה וחשבון (קהלת ט' י'), בסוד "שמא גרים" בגימטריאות ונוטריקון. נ"ב רמיזין קדישין (כמספר אליהו) ראה הגר"א על יעודיו הוא... וכל הרמזים כלולים במספרים לפי סוד "המוציא במספר צבאם, לכולם בשם יקרא" (ישעיה מ' כ"ו). היינו שכל נברא מהנבראים יש לו מספר יסודי בפני עצמו, והיעוד של כל אחד מהם לפי שמו ומספרו היסודי נרמז בתורה בסוד מעשה וחשבון, היינו בחושבנא שבאותיות התורה בגימטריאות ונוטריקון. וכמאמרם (ברכות ז' ע"ב), "לכו חזו מפעלות ה' אשר שם שמות בארץ" (תהלים מ"ו ט'). אל תקרי שמות (שממה) אלא שמות (קול התור תחילת פרק ג').

**Kol HaTor**

Our Master knew where the name of every Israelite was encoded in the Torah, as well as his or her destined role in the salvation of Israel, in accord with the concept of "*maaseh*-deed and *heshbon*-calculation" (Kohelet 9:10), and based on the concept *shema g'rim* ("a person's name is causative"), as revealed in gematria and notarikon (acrostics). The GRA, whose name (Eliyahu) equals 52 in gematria, saw 52 holy hints which revealed his own mission... Everything is included in the number system of the Torah, in the mystery of "He brings their starry hosts forth according to their number; He calls all of them by name" (Yeshaya 40:26), namely, that every creature has a basic number that is unique to it, and a corresponding soul-mission, all encoded in its name... as the Sages said on the verse, "Go, behold the great works of Hashem; He has made *shamot* ['desolations'] in the world" (Tehillim 46:9). Do not only read *shamot* ["desolations"], but also *shemot* ["names"] (Berachot 7b) (R. Hillel Rivlin of Shklov, disciple of the GRA, Kol HaTor, beginning of Chapter 3).

\*

## קול התור

על כל איש ישראל לעשות בכל כוחו להשיג את דרגת המספרים העילאים הצפונים בשמו בחשבון גימטריאות המרומזים בתורה על השליחות היחידאית של כל אחד, איש על דגלו באותות לבית אבותיו... והוא המעשה וחשבון שנאמר בקהלת ט' ע"י הכתוב בתקוני זוהר חדש וביאור רבינו שם. ועל כל אחד להשיג את חשבונות וגימטריאות שמו, שאם לאו עלול הוא להנתן לגלגול חדש לתקן מה שהחסיר בזאת בגלגול זה. דמאן דלא ידע בגימטריאות וחשבונות דליה, עתיד לנחתא לשאול. ובביאורי רבינו שם בתקוני זוהר חדש "שישיג בחשבון שלו בכח התלויין ביד", וזה "כל אשר תמצא ידך לעשות בכחך עשה", "כי אין מעשה וחשבון בשאול", היינו שבשאול לא תוכל עוד להשיב את המעשה וחשבון זה. והטעם הוא כי על סוד ידיעה זו ידע כל אחד איך לקיים את שליחותו היחידאית בעולם הזה (קול התור, פרק ג' אות ג').

**Kol HaTor**

Every Israelite must do his utmost to reach the level of the supreme numbers concealed within his name which can be calculated by gematria. Through these [numbers], as they are hinted in the Torah, each person can know his/her unique mission, each man with his insignia on his banner, counted according to his father's house... This, verily, is the "*maaseh*-deed and *heshbon*-calculation" mentioned in Kohelet 9:10. According to the Tikuney Zohar *Hadash* and the GRA's commentary there, each person must attempt to grasp what is concealed in the gematria of his name lest he be forced to undergo a new gilgul to repair what he did not complete in this gilgul. For whoever does not know the gematriot (numerical equivalencies) and *heshbonot* (calculations) concealed in his name may have to descend to She'ol. As our Master [the GRA] wrote there, one should therefore make every effort to grasp whatever is indicated by his gematria, with the might of his hand, as the verse states, "Whatever your hand can find to do [i.e. to whatever extent you are able to do God's Will while you are alive], do it with all your power. For there is neither *maaseh*-deed, nor *heshbon*-calculation, nor

*daat*-knowledge, nor *hochmah*-wisdom, in She'ol where you are going" (Kohelet 9:10), namely, after you pass on from this world, you will be unable to achieve the *maaseh v'heshbon*. This explains why this knowledge is so important, for without it one cannot realize his full potential and fulfill his unique mission in this world... (Kol HaTor, Chapter 3, Paragraph 3).

\*

קול התור

כל איש ישראל יש לו שורש למעלה בשמו לפי שורש נשמתו וזכות אבות. וכנודע שהשם הנקרא לילד בהולדו, לא באיקראי הוא, אלא מה שהושם בפי אביו משמים לפי שורש נשמתו. ולכל אחד לא פחות משבעה מספרים, וכולם מרומזים בתנ"ך או בחז"ל... לדוגמה: יוסף בן יעקב, יוסף בן רחל, יוסף בן יעקב ורחל, יוסף בן יעקב, יוסף בן יצחק, יוסף בן אברהם, יוסף... בצירוף שם משפחתו, יוסף... בצירוף שם מלאכתו, יוסף... כפי שנקרא בפי ההמון (קול התור, פרק ג', אות י').

### Kol HaTor

Every Israelite has a root above in his name, in accord with his soul-root and family merit. For it is known that the name a child is given when it is born is not by accident. Rather, it is placed in his parent's mind from heaven, in accord with the soul-root of the child. In all, no individual has less than seven numbers, all of which can be found in the Tanach or in the Oral Torah... For instance: Yoseph ben Yaacov, Yoseph ben Rahel, Yoseph ben Yaacov v'Rahel, Yoseph ben Yaacov v'Yitzhak, Yoseph ben Yaacov ben Yitzhak ben Avraham, Yoseph... with his family name, Yoseph... with the name of his vocation, Yoseph... as he is called in public (Kol HaTor, Chapter 3, Paragraph 10).

\*

ברכות ז' ע"ב

מאי רות? אמר רבי יוחנן, שזכתה ויצא ממנה דוד, שרונהו להקדוש ברוך הוא בשירות ותשבחות. ומנא לן דשמה גרים? אמר רבי אלעזר, דאמר קרא, "לכו חזו מפעלות ה' אשר שם שמות בארץ" (תהלים מ"ו ט'). אל תקרי שמות (שממה) אלא שמות:

### Berachot 7b

What does the root of the name *Ruth* mean [and is there a connection between this and the character of Ruth the convert]? Rabbi Yohanan said, "[Because she dedicated herself wholeheartedly to serving Hashem] Ruth merited to have David who *rivah*-satiated the Holy One blessed-be-He with songs and praises.

From where do we know that a person's name is causative [i.e. that the name a person is given at birth will determine the kinds of events that will occur in his lifetime]? Rabbi Elazar said: It is written, "Go, behold the great works of Hashem; He has made *shamot* ['desolations'] in the world" (Tehillim 46:9). Do not only read *shamot* ["desolations"], but also *shemot* ["names"].

[By looking deeply into the names of the people we meet, we can know what Hashem has planned for them. If these people are especially great, their name will also contain information about what Hashem has planned for the whole world.]

\*

בראשית רבה ל"ז ז'  
 "ולשם יולד גם הוא אבי כל בני עבר" (בראשית י' כ"ה). אין אנו יודעין אם שם הוא הגדול אם יפת הוא הגדול מן מה דכתיב אלה תולדות שם שם בן מאת שנה ויולד את ארפכשד שנתיים אחר המבול הוי יפת הוא הגדול ולעבר יולד שני בניו שם האחד פלג כי בימיו נפלגה הארץ רבי יוסי ורשב"ג רבי יוסי אומר הראשונים ע"י שהיו מכירים את ייחוסיהם היו מוציאים שמן לשם המאורע אבל אנו שאין אנו מכירים את ייחוסינו אנו מוציאים לשם אבותינו רשב"ג אומר הראשונים על ידי שהיו משתמשים ברוח הקודש היו מוציאים לשם המאורע אבל אנו שאין אנו משתמשים ברוח הקודש אנו מוציאים לשם אבותינו.

### Bereshit Rabbah 37:7

It is written, "Eber had two sons. The name of the first was Peleg, because the world became divided [*nif'lagah*] in his days..." (Bereshit 10:25). Rabbi Yossi said: "The ancients knew their family lineage [i.e. they had records of their family lineage]. [They therefore did not name their children after their grandparents, in order to know who was born from whom. Rather,] they named their children after the events that occurred in their days. We don't know our family lineage. We therefore name our children after our parents." Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel disagreed: "The ancients had *ru'ah ha'kodesh* [divine inspiration]. They were therefore guided [from heaven] to name their children after events [that would occur during their lifetimes]. Having lost *ru'ah ha'kodesh*, we name our children after our parents."

\*

זוהר (תורגם לעברית)  
 ר' אלעזר פתח, לכו חזו מפעלות ה' אשר שם שמות בארץ (תהלים מ"ו ט'). הפסוק הזה למדנו (ברכות ז:). אבל לכו חזו, למה לשון חזו, כמו שכתוב, חזות קשה הוגד לי (ישעיה כ"א). אלא לכו חזו [תראו] שבמעשים שעושה הקב"ה הוא מגלה נבואה עליונה לבני אדם [דהיינו נבואת בני אדם שנותן בפיהם לקרוא שמות על שם העתיד בלי היותם מוכנים לכך]. [ועל זה אמרו אל תקרי שמות אלא שמות] שמות ודאי, שהשם הוא גורם הכל [שעל ידי השם שקוראים לנו יודעים בני אדם מה יהיה בעולם]... ולכן כתוב לגבי נח, ויקרא את שמו נח לאמר זה ינחמנו ממעשנו... שעשה לו ה' כדוגמה של מעלה. אמר ר' יצחק... אשריהם הצדיקים שהם רשומים בחותם ובצלם המלך להיות רשומים בשמו ו[אז] הוא שם את שמותם [למטה] בארץ כמו שצריך. (תרגום זוהר נח ד"ס ע"א ע"פ ר' אברהם גלאנטי וע"פ פירוש אור החמה לר' אברהם אזולאי)

### Zohar Noah (1:60a)

Rabbi Elazar opened [his discourse], "Go, behold the great works of Hashem; He has made *shamot* ['desolations'] in the world" (Tehillim 46:9). We have already learned that this verse has a double meaning [as per Berachot 7b]... The meaning of this verse is that we must go and behold how the Holy One reveals what He is going to do in the world by giving human beings a flash of exalted prophecy [with which they give names to their children]. [This is the meaning of 'do not only read *shamot* (desolations) but also *shemot* (names).'] For names effect reality. [For by virtue of the name that a child is given, we know what will happen in the world.]... It is thus written, "Lamech lived 182 years, and he had a son. He named him Noah, saying, 'This one will bring us relief [ye'naha'menu] from our work and from the anguish of our hands, from the soil that Hashem has cursed" (Bereshit 5:28-29)...

\*

יזמא פ"ג ע"ב  
 רבי מאיר ורבי יהודה ורבי יוסי, הווי קאזלי בארץ. רבי מאיר הווי דייק בשמא. רבי יהודה ורבי יוסי לא הווי דייקי בשמא. כי מוטו להווי דוקתא, בעו אושפיזא, [יהבו להו]. אמרו ליה, מה שמך? אמר להו, "כידור". אמר (להו רבי מאיר), שמע מינה, אדם רשע הוא, דכתיב, (דברים ל"ב כ') "כי דור תהפכות המה". רבי יהודה

ורבי יוסי אשלימו ליה פיסיהו, רבי מאיר לא אשלים ליה פיסיה. אַזל (רבי מאיר) אותביה בכדא, וקבריה בקברא דאבוה דההוא גברא ברישיה. איתחזי ליה אבוה בחלמא - "תא שקיל פיסא דמנח ברישיה דההוא גברא". למחר (אתא לקמיה דרבי מאיר) אמר להו, הכי איתחזי לי בחלמאי. אמרו ליה, חלמי דבי-שמשי (בטלי אינון) [לית בהן ממשא]. אַזל רבי מאיר, נטריה כולי יומא. לאורתא שקלי לכיסיה, ואתא. למחר, אמרו ליה, הב לן פיסין. אמר להו, לא היו דברים מעולם. אמר להו רבי מאיר, אמאי לא תבדקו בשמא? אמרו ליה, אמאי לא אמרת לן מר? אמר להו, אימור דאמרי אנא - אחששא. אחזוקי, מי אמרי?! משכוח, ועילוהו לחנותא, (אשקויה חמרא) חזו טלפחי (בדיקניה) [אשפמיה], אַזלו ויהבו סימנא לדביתהו, ושקלוהו לכיסיהו, [ואיתו]. אַזל איהו וקטלה לאתתיה. היינו (דתנו) [דתנא], מים הראשונים האכילו בשר חזיר, מים האחרונים הרגו את הנפש. לסוף - הווי דייקי בשמא. כי מטו לביתהו דגברא דשמיה "בלה". לא עילי לגביה. אמרו, שמע מינה, רשע הוא, דכתיב, (יחזקאל כג) "ואמר לבלה נאפים":

### Yoma 83b

Rabbi Meir, Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Yossi were traveling together. Rabbi Meir always paid close attention to people's names, whereas Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Yossi didn't. When they arrived at a certain village, they asked for and received lodging [in an inn]. They asked the innkeeper, "What is your name?" He answered, "Kidor." He [Rabbi Meir] immediately understood that the man was a rasha [evil], for it is written, '*Ki dor tahapuchot hema* – they are a defiant generation' (Devarim 32:20). [Since it was Friday, Erev Shabbat,] Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Yossi entrusted their purses to him [Kidor]; Rabbi Meir did not entrust his purse with him, but rather went and placed it on the head of the grave of his [Kidor's] father... [The Gemara continues, relating that although Kidor tried to steal the purses that were entrusted to him, they eventually were recovered with Rabbi Meir's help. From that time on, the other rabbis also made it their business to pay attention to people's names.]

\*

בראשית ב' י"ט-כ

ויצַר יהוה אֱלֹהִים מִן הָאָדָמָה כָּל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה וְאֵת כָּל עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיָּבֵא אֶל הָאָדָם לְרְאוֹת מֶה יִקְרָא לוֹ וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָא לוֹ הָאָדָם נִפְשׁ חַיָּה הוּא שְׁמוֹ: וַיִּקְרָא הָאָדָם שְׁמוֹת לְכָל הַבְּהֵמָה וְלְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלְכָל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה...

### Bereshit 2:19-20

Elokim formed every wild beast and every bird of the sky out of the ground. He then brought [them] to Adam to see what he would name each one. Whatever Adam called each living creature – that was [to remain] its name. Adam named every livestock animal and bird of the sky, as well as all the wild beasts...

\*

הבעל שם טוב

"וכל אשר יקרא-לו האדם נפש חיה הוא שמו". שמעתי ממורי כמו שתפיסת הגוף הוא בגשמי שאוחז בגופו, כך תפיסת הנשמה הוא ע"י שמו. גם ביטן ניעור משינתו בקראו שמו. (תולדות יעקב יוסף, שמות; ספר בעל שם טוב על התורה, בראשית, סימן קל"א)

### Baal Shem Tov

"Whatever Adam would call each living creature – that was [to remain] its name" (Bereshit 2:19). I heard from my Master (the Baal Shem Tov) that just as we can hold on to a person physically by holding his body, so also can we hold on to a person's soul via his name. Even when one is sleeping, the most effective way to awaken him is by calling his name (Toldot Yaacov Yoseph, Shemot; Sefer Baal Shem Tov, Bereshit 131).



\*

תורה אור  
ועכשיו אף שאנו קוראים שמות בנינו על שם אבותינו או על שם קרובים כדאיתא במדרש (בראשית רבה ל"ז ז'), עם כל זה גילה האר"י זלה"ה שגם אלו השמות אינם דרך מקרה או [אפילו רק] רצון האב או האם, שקוראין לבניהם כך. אך הקב"ה הוא נותן שכל וחכמה ודעת בלב אביו ואמו לקרותו בשם שהוא שורש נשמה של הבן. ומחמת זה האדם מושרש בשמו מאד מאד. והראיה לזה, אם יפנה אדם מכל עסקיו ויעסק [רק] בדבר אחד, וישים עינו ולבו ומחשבתו בדבר ההוא... אף אם יבואו בני אדם לדבר עמו, ואפילו מדברים אליו בנוכח, הוא אינו פונה אליהם ואינו שומע דבריהם... גם אם אוחזין אותו... אעפ"כ אינו מרגיש... אכן אם יקראו אותו בשמו, תיכף הוא נפרד מעסקיו וממחשבתו, והכל הוא מטעם הנזכר, ששמו הוא שורש נשמתו. וזה גם פירוש (יומא פ"ג ע"ב) ר' מאיר דייק בשמא שהיה מאיר ומנהיר וכו' והיה יודע שורש נשמתו של כל אחד ואחד (תורה אור לר' שניאור זלמן מליאדי, פרשת בראשית; מובא ספר בעל שם טוב שם סימן קל"א אות ק"י).

### **Torah Or** (R. Shneur Zalman of Liadi)

Although we name our children after our parents or other relatives, as per [Rabbi Yossi's opinion in] the Midrash, still, the ARI (may he be remembered for eternal life) revealed that even these names are not by chance. It is also not just the [conscious] desire of the father and mother to call their child by such-and-such a name. Rather, the Holy One plants sechel [intelligence], hochmah [wisdom] and da'at [consciousness] into the hearts of the child's parents, to call him by the exact name that is appropriate to his soul-root. It is for this reason that a person is deeply connected to his name... Evidence of this is manifest in the fact that a person can be so deeply involved in thinking about something, that he will not respond when people come to speak to him. He simply does not hear them, even if they touch him! He is not aware... If they call his name, however, he will immediately respond. This follows from what we said, that a person's name is [connected with] his soul-root. This is also the reason why Rabbi Meir paid such close attention to people's names. For as his own name Meir means "the one who illuminates," he was able to know the soul-root of others [through their names] (Torah Or, Bereshit; cited in Sefer Baal Shem Tov, Bereshit 131, note 110).

\*

הרב צבי הירש מזידיטשוב  
קבלנו מרבותינו היות שם האדם הוא שורש נשמתו באותיות של שמו, לכן תמיד ראוי לו לייחד יחוד שמו כי יש בו ניצוץ מזה השם אשר הוא חי בו. כי אם לא היה לו מצד זה חיותו, לא היה אפשר לחיות רגע אחת. ואמרו רבותינו ז"ל בשם אדונינו הבעל שם טוב מופת על זה [כי בקריאת שמו והוא ישן, נתעורר מהשינה] (ספר בית ישראל, נח; ספר בעל שם טוב על התורה בראשית סימן קל"ג).

### **R. Tzvi Hirsch of Ziditchov**

We have received a tradition from our teachers that the root of a person's soul is hinted at in the letters of their name. It is therefore fitting to make it a habit to combine his name in a yihud-unification (i.e. to intertwine it with the letters of Hashem's Name, YKVK), for it is only through a spark of this Name (YKVK) that he is alive [with a spark of divinity]. If he would not constantly receive lifeforce via this Name, it would be impossible to survive for a single instant. We have learned from our teachers, in the name of the Baal Shem Tov, that a test of this is to call a person's name when he is sleeping. Only thus will he awaken... (Beth Yisrael, Parashat Noah; Sefer Baal Shem Tov on the Torah, Bereshit 133).

\*

הרב צבי הירש מזידיטשוב המקובל אצלינו מרבותינו, אשר עיקר נפש ונשמה הוא שמו של האדם, הוא הצירוף אותיות אשר בא לתקן בזה העולם, וכח הייחוד אשר צריך לייחד שמו [של הקב"ה] ברוך הוא וברוך שמו. וכן קבלתי בשם הבעל שם טוב, והוא דבר ידוע ומפורסם בתפילה, וביחוד בתפילה על החולים וכל צרה שלא תבא על האדם, הוא בהזכיר שם החולה ולעשות הייחוד בשמו, להמתיק הדין האוחז באותיות שמו... והכל ע"י צירופי אותיות... ויש לזה סמך בזוהר הקודש בכמה מקומות (ובפרט בפר' נח ד"ס ע"א) אֲשֶׁר שֵׁם שְׁמוֹת בְּאֶרֶץ (תהלים מ"ו ט) שְׁמוֹת וּוְדָאֵי דְהָא שְׁמָא גְרִים לְכוּלָא וְכוּ' זְכָאִין אִינוּן צְדִיקָא דְרִשְׁמִין בְּרִשְׁמִין דְּגוֹשְׁפִנְקָא דְמַלְכָא לְמִיְהוּי בְּשִׁמְיָה רִשְׁמִין וְאִיהוּ שׁוּי שְׁמֵהּן בְּאַרְעָא כְּדָקָא יְאוּת יְעוּשׁ. (עטרת צבי בזוהר ויצא דקנ"ג ע"ב; בספר בעל שם טוב שם סימן קל"ד)

### R. Tzvi Hirsch of Ziditchov

We have received a tradition from our teachers that the essence of a person's nefesh and neshamah is [in] his/her name. Such that the combination of letters that make up his name indicate what he has come to fix in the world... Thus I have received in the name of the Baal Shem Tov. And it is known, especially as regards praying for someone who is sick or in any trouble: His name must be mentioned, and combined in a yihud-unification with Hashem's Name (YKVK) in order to sweeten the judgment that has grabbed unto the letters of his name... (Ateret Tzvi on Zohar 1:153b; Sefer Baal Shem Tov, Bereshit 134).

\*

ר' יצחק אייזיק מקאמרנא "וְיִקְרָא אֱדָם שְׁמוֹת לְכָל-הַבְּהֵמָה וְלְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלְכָל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה". ידוע לנו ממרן הבעל שם טוב ששם אדם הוא עצם החיות, וכל הבהמות ועופות וחיות לפי ערך ניצוצי אותיות התורה כך שמו. והוא נשרש בשורש שלו [למעלה] עד עדי עד והבן. ועיין בתיקונים (תיקון נ"ז) שקרא אדם שמוות לכל חיות הקודש, ולפי שורשו בספירות כך שמו. (היכל הברכה, בראשית דנ"ד ע"א; בספר בעל שם טוב שם סימן קל"ו)

### R. Yitzhak Izik of Kamarna

"Adam named every livestock animal and bird of the sky, as well as all the wild beasts..." It is known, in the name of our Master, the Baal Shem Tov, that a person's essence life-force is contained in his or her name. [This is why it was so important that Adam name all the animals, for] all living creatures are endowed with life-force through the letters of the Torah through their names. In this way, each one is rooted [i.e. connected] to its root above, all the way up [to the highest root]. Understand this [i.e. understand that even animals have a spiritual root]. This is seen in the Tikuney Zohar (Tikun 57), where it is explained that Adam gave names [not only to physical animals, but] to the *Hayot HaKodesh* [the angels of *Yetzirah* who are called *Hayot*, "Animals"] (Heichal HaBerachah, Bereshit, p. 54a; Sefer Baal Shem Tov, Bereshit 136).

\*

### Sha'ar HaGilgulim (Rabbi Hayim Vital)

We have explained above that all the holy sparks of souls [i.e. each soul has many parts to it, which, when separated off, are called sparks] are themselves sparks of a particular limb of the Adam HaElyon HaKadosh, the Holy Supernal Man [i.e. the great treasury of souls above]. Now, just as each holy soul has a known name, in accord with the limb from which it is hewn...; so also, each spark of klipah-shell has a known name, all its own [i.e. this 'spark of klipah' is the yetzer hara that a person is given when he is born that comes from the system of evil known as the Adam Bli'al, "the Man Without a Yoke," i.e. the Sitra Ahra]. This is in

accord with what our sages have taught on the verse, “Go, behold the great works of Hashem; He has made *shamot* [desolations] in the world” (Tehillim 46:9): “Do not only read *shamot* [desolations], but also *shemot* [names]” (Berachot 7b; Zohar 1:60a). This being the case [i.e. that each spark has its own name to distinguish it from all others], it is clear that one person’s yetzer hara is totally different than that of any another.

It follows that, when each person is born, the name that his parents give him is certainly not by chance. Rather, the Holy One has inspired them to give this particular name, a name that is necessary for this particular soul... This name is actually inscribed above on the Throne of Glory [from which all souls are hewn]. This is why the sages were adamant about the power of a name; for a person’s name is causative [i.e. it determines the kinds of events that will occur in this person’s lifetime]. This is precisely why Rabbi Meir would pay such close attention to people’s names (Yoma 83b)...

We thus conclude that each person has two names; one from the side of holiness, and one from the side of the shell, as per the verse, “Elokim has set the one parallel to the other” (Kohelet 7:14). Just as the holy soul has a fixed name, which is none other than the name given by the mother and father (which, in the case of a male, is given when he is circumcised), so also, he has another name for the yetzer hara, which is the spark of klipah that entered him when he was born.

Now, behold, if a person could know his klipah name while he was alive, he could investigate and discover the source-limb in the Klipah, i.e. Adam Bli'al, from which his yetzer hara originates. In this way, he could know what he has done wrong, and what he needs to correct. He could then correct it easily and thereby cause that particular klipah to disengage itself from him while he is still alive, instead of having to suffer the tortures of *Hibut HaKever* [“punishment of the grave”; the psychological anguish of the soul in seeing its earthly remains in a state of decay].

It is for this reason that, when a tzadik passes on, he is not asked what his *sitra ahra* name was. For the tzadikim work hard and suffer in order to rid themselves of the yetzer hara during their lifetimes. They therefore do not suffer *Hibut HaKever*. The rasha [wicked man; by definition, one who denies G-d and consciously defies the spiritual laws of the Torah], on the other hand, worked hard to bind himself to his yetzer hara. He therefore must suffer the most torturous afflictions in the process of disengaging himself from the klipah... (Sha'ar HaGilgulim, Hakdamah 23. pp. 172-173 in Bnei Aharon).

\*

תניא

וכן בכל הנבראים שבעולם, השמות שנקראים בהם בלשון הקודש הן הן אותיות הדיבור [האלוקי] המשתלשלות ממדרגה למדרגה מעשרה מאמרות שבתורה ע"י חילופים ותמורות האותיות בר"א שערים עד שמגיעות ומתלבשות באותו נברא להחיותו, לפי שאין פרטי הנבראים יכולים לקבל חיותם מעשרה מאמרות עצמן שבתורה, שהחיות הנמשך מהן עצמן גדול מאד מבח' הנבראים פרטיים, ואין כח בהם לקבל החיות אלא ע"י חילופים ותמורות האותיות וגימטריאות, שהן חשבון האותיות, עד שיוכל להתצמצם ולהתלבש ולהחיות ממנו נברא פרטי. וזה שמו אשר יקראו לו בלה"ק, הוא כלי לחיות המצומצם באותיות שם זה... (שער היחוד והאמונה א')

**Tanya** (Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi)

And so it is with all created things in the world. Their names in Lashon HaKodesh [the Holy Tongue, the Transcendental Language of Prophecy] are the very letters of G-d's 'speech' that descend, level by level, from the Asarah Ma'amarot [Ten Utterances of Creation] recorded in the Torah, by means of substitutions and transpositions of letters through the 231 Gates [of permutations], until they reach down and become clothed in that particular created entity. [This gradual descent is necessary] because individual creatures are simply incapable of receiving their life-force directly from the Asarah Ma'amarot of the Torah, for the life-force issuing directly from them is far greater than the capacity of individual creatures to receive. They can only receive it when it descends and [its power] is progressively diminished, step by step... until it can be condensed and clothed [in a lower form], and finally bring into existence an individual creature. The name that that creature is then called in Lashon HaKodesh is a conduit for the life-force that is condensed into its letters... (Tanya, Sha'ar Ha'Yihud Ve'ha'Emunah, Chapter 1, p. 77a).

\*

זוהר פרשת נח (תוספתא)

למה נח נח פעמים? אלא כל צדיק וצדיק בעולם יש לו שני רוחות, רוח אחד בעולם הזה [הגשמי] ורוח אחד בעולם הבא [הרוחני]. וככה תמצא בכל הצדיקים [שהשם שלהם כתוב פעמים] משה משה, יעקב יעקב, אברהם אברהם, שמואל שמואל, שם שם, [כולם] חוץ מיצחק שלא כתוב בו כמו שכתוב בהם. וזה בגלל שייצחק, בשעה שנתקרב על גבי המזבח, יצאה נשמתו שהיה בו בעולם הזה. וכיון שאברהם אמר עליו ברוך מחיה המתים, חזרה נשמתו של [בחינת] העולם הבא. ובגלל זה תמצא שהקב"ה לא יחד שמו [בחינים] אלא ביצחק בגלל שנחשב כמת. (זוהר, תוספתא, נח נ"ט-ס)

**Zohar Noah Tosefta 1:59b-60a**

"These are the toldot [generations, chronicles] of Noah. Noah was a righteous man and perfect in his generations; Noah walked with Elokim" (Bereshit 9). Why is Noah written twice in succession. [The Torah could have saved ink and just written, "these are the toldot of Noah, a tzadik..."] Rather, every tzadik in the world has two souls [i.e. exists in two dimensions simultaneously]; one on this lower earthly plane, and one in the spiritual dimension above. You will thus find with all the tzadikim that their names are written twice: Moshe Moshe, Yaacov Yaacov, Avraham Avraham, Shmuel Shmuel, Shem Shem. This is true of all the tzadikim except Yitzhak! The reason for this is: when Yitzhak was bound on the altar, his earthly soul departed from him. When Avraham pronounced the blessing over him, "Blessed is He who revives the dead!" only the other-worldly soul returned to him. You will thus find that the Holy One did not join His Name with any of the tzadikim while they alive, except Yitzchak! [for he was never again fully alive after that in the physical sense of the term]. (Zohar, Tosefta to Noah, 1:59b-60a)

\*

**Me'or Eynayim**

Hashem spoke to Moshe in the Sinai Desert, in the Communion Tent, on the first [day] of the second month, in the second year after their going forth from the land of Mitzrayim, saying: "Se'u et rosh bnei Yisrael – Raise up the head of each one of the entire congregation of the children of Israel, according to their families [le'mish'pehotam], according to their fathers'

houses [*le'beit avotam*], number the names [*be'mispar shemot*] of each male according to their heads [*kol zachar le'gulgotam*]..."

[Referring to the stars and the angels, and by extension, to Israel] it is written, "He brings their hosts forth by number; He calls them all by name" (Yeshaya 40:26). The Holy One brings forth the children of Israel by number. Not one is allowed to be missing. They must always be shalem, complete. The Rabbis have thus taught, "The Shechinah does not dwell on any less than 22,000 Jews." Certainly, this number is just the bare minimum...

The second part of the verse reads, "He calls them all by name." A person's name is his connection to his soul and his mission. [He is like a tree, and] the letters of his name are like the root and life-juice [that make this tree grow to full maturity]. It is through the power of these letters that he serves Hashem, learns, and prays.

We can therefore understand the tradition that states that the *resha'im* [those who do not serve Hashem] are said to "forget their names" [when they arrive in the Next World]. This means that they never understood why they were given the particular combination of letters that made up their name [while they were alive]...

Still, every Jew is precious, and Hashem gives each soul many chances. Even those souls which have fallen. He will not allow even one of them to be lost! He therefore has them reincarnate through *gilgul*, as many times as necessary, until they are fixed and elevated.

Now, remember, when the children of Israel were in Egypt, they were fallen. When they finally stood at Sinai to receive the Torah, they were cleansed of the poison of the Nahash, but it returned again full-force when they worshipped the golden calf.

It is in this context that Hashem speaks to every Jew in the initial verses of our parashah: Raise up the head of each Jew [*se'u et rosh bnei Yisrael*]. All of them must be elevated, even if they have fallen! Raise them up to their families [*le'mish'pehotam*], i.e. to the reason that each one of them was born into his or her particular family. Inspire them to strive to attain the exalted levels that their fathers, Avraham, Yitzhak and Yaacov, attained [*le'beit avotam*]. Number them by their names, i.e. help each one of them connect to their soul root [*be'mispar shemot*]. Each male according to their heads [*kol zachar le'gulgotam*]. Although the word *le'gulgotam* means "their heads," it also contains that same letters as *gilgul* [reincarnation]. The meaning is therefore: If they need it, they will go through *gilgul* [reincarnation] any number of times. But why should they have to go through this suffering if they are able to fix themselves in this lifetime?! (R. Menahem Nahum of Chernobyl, Me'or Eynayim, Parashat Bamidbar).

\*

שמות א' א'  
וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַבָּאִים מִצְרָיִם אֶת יַעֲקֹב אִישׁ וּבֵיתוֹ בָּאוּ.

### Shemot 1:1

These are the *shemot*-names of the children of Israel who came to Mitzrayim with Yaacov – each individual who came with his family.

The *shemot*-names that descended to Mitzrayim with Yaacov can be understood to refer to the *neshamot*-souls that come down to this-world – which is likened to Mitzrayim. They descend “with Yaacov,” that is, with the higher soul-power that they need in order to transmute all their negative energies into a powerful service of Hashem.