

The Rebbe's father, Harav Levi Yitzchok, wrote many *chiddushei Torah*. Some of these he wrote in exile, on the margins of his Zohar, with the famous ink prepared by Rebbetzin Chana.

Many years later, the Zohar made its way to the Rebbe, and in Tammuz 5730*, the first volumes of ליקוטי לוי יצחק were printed from the notes in the margins.

The first two volumes to be printed included *biurim* on Tanya and on Zohar Bereishis.

A few weeks later, on Chof Av, the *yahrtzeit* of Harav Levi Yitzchok, the Rebbe walked into the farbrengen holding the new *sefer* on Tanya. For the next few months, the Rebbe explained a piece from his father's *biurim* on Iggeres Hateshuva by most Shabbos farbrengens. After that the Rebbe switched to the *biurim* on Zohar.

By almost every Shabbos farbrengen until 5748*, the Rebbe would have a ליקוטי לוי יצחק in front of him, and would say a *sicha* on a *biur* from his father on the Zohar of that week's *parsha*.

Being that Harav Levi Yitzchok wrote these *biurim* on the margins of the Zohar due to lack of paper, they are by necessity quite concise. As the Rebbe explained, since space was so limited, he only wrote the *chiddush*, leaving us to connect the dots.

In addition, he also only wrote the Kabbalah aspect of the *biur*, leaving it to us to figure out the *hora'a* in *avodas Hashem*, how it connects with Chassidus, etc.

This year, in honor of 75 years since the passing of Harav Levi Yitzchok, this column will feature some of these beautiful and fascinating sichos.



In the year 5744*, marking the 40th *yahrtzeit* of Harav Levi Yitzchok, the administration of Kolel Tiferes Zekeinim Levi Yitzchok in Crown Heights planned a special kinus. In the schedule they submitted to the Rebbe, they had started off with “opening words” (as you can see below). The Rebbe added that the opening words should be from the Torah of his father. However, since his Torah is very Kabbalistic and deep, the Rebbe pointed out that they should make sure to teach a section that can be understood by the audience—one consisting of a wide variety of people.

* 5744-1984, 5730-1970, 5748-1988

A FOCUSED STORM

Rebbi Yosi began his commentary on parshas Chayei Sara as follows:

“They lifted Yonah and threw him into the sea and the raging sea became calm.” (Yonah 1:15.) Here we must understand, why it was specifically the ocean that raged against Yonah and not the dry land [i.e. with an earthquake or the like]. Since he was running away from the Shechina, why did his troubles begin only when he entered the sea?

“Surely it was all proper. For ‘The sea reflects the heavens, and the heavens [reflect] the Throne of Glory.’ Since he was running from the ‘sea’ (Hashem), the [physical] sea struck him in its place.”

(Zohar Bereishis, page 121:1)

In the commentary of Harav Levi Yitzchok on the Zohar, he explains the mystical meaning of this Zohar, yet doesn’t address a basic question!

How can the Zohar not understand why it was specifically the sea that raged against Yonah? It is common knowledge that השטן מקטרג בשעה הסכנה, the *satan* accuses in a time of danger.

Traversing the sea is dangerous, which is why we make *birchas hagomel* upon our safe return. So it would seem quite obvious why Yonah was only in danger once he boarded the ship—when there is natural danger, you must also be protected from spiritually induced danger. So what is the Zohar’s question?!

RIGHT AND LEFT

Much of the commentary on *sefer Yonah* comes from Pirkei D’rabbi Eliezer, where the story is explained at length:

Yonah began his flight on Thursday. Why did he run? Because previously Hashem had sent him to prophesize regarding the destruction of Yerushalayim. Once the Yidden did *teshuva* and Hashem decided not to destroy the city, Yonah was accused of being a false prophet!

Knowing that the people of Nineveh were spiritually sensitive and prone to repentance, Yonah said to



A LOOK AT THE TORAH OF
HARAV LEVI YITZCHOK
THROUGH THE REBBE’S SICHOS

himself, "If I inform them that they will be destroyed, they will repent. It's bad enough that the Jews accuse me of being a false prophet, now the gentiles will too. I would be better off running away!"

So Yonah went to the port of Yaffo and there were no ships. The nearest ship had already set sail two days prior. In order to test Yonah, Hashem sent a strong wind that blew the ship back to port.

Yonah saw this and was certain that Hashem approves of his plan, as he was doing it only for the sake of the Jewish people and for the glory of Hashem (i.e. to avoid the *chilul Hashem* of being called a false prophet).

Once Yonah boarded the ship, next came a storm. Why did the ship's captain and sailors react so strongly to the storm? They were after all seasoned sea-goers, and storms and raging seas were part of their everyday routine! Why did they suddenly feel the need to "draw lots and discover who is causing us this harm?"

The reason for their panic was because they looked to the right and to the left, and saw all the other ships sailing on calm seas. Only their ship was in trouble, to the extent that it was on the brink of sinking!

In other words, only once the crew saw that theirs was the only ship caught in the storm, did they know it must be from Hashem. They understood that it was not natural, and therefore they decided to cast lots.

We now understand why the Zohar could not use 'השטן מקטרג בשעת הסכנה' to explain why only the sea tried to stop Yonah. Because it was not a dangerous situation! On the contrary, all the other ships were coming and going peacefully.

Furthermore, "right and left" does not mean only in direction, or it would just say "they looked to the sides." Rather it means spiritually as well. The **right** means people who were greater than Yonah, and the **left** means people who were not as spiritually elevated.

On Yonah's ship itself the people were much lower spiritually. As he later said about them, "They keep worthless futilities and abandon their kindness" (Yonah 2:9); i.e. they didn't fulfill their promise to bring *karbanos* and thank Hashem after the storm subsided.

Yet, although there were people to the **left**—spiritually lacking people—on Yonah's ship itself, the only one who ended up suffering from the storm was Yonah. This shows us that it was not a natural danger at all, thereby

allowing the Zohar to wonder: Why was it only the sea that got angry?

WE ARE ALL YONAH

As for the lesson in *avodas Hashem* from the story of Yonah:


In another place the Zohar explains the story of Yonah at great length (being the most thorough commentary on Yonah in all of Chazal).

Yonah descending to the boat refers to the souls of people, which descend to this world to be in human bodies.

The soul is called Yonah based on the word אֹנוּאָה—trickery. A person goes in to this world like a person boards a ship that is about to sink in the ocean.

The soul is tricked by the body into believing that bodily pleasures and needs are important. The body shows the soul how beautiful and pleasurable the worldly desires are, until it forgets what is truly important and forgets why it came down to this world!

The goal is to be Yonah ben **Amitai**—from the word *emes*, truth.

Our soul, our Yonah, must be illuminated with the light of truth, the truth of the eternal G-d. To recognize what is truly important, and to fulfill its purpose in descending to this world. Then it will be not just Yonah, but **Yonah ben Amitai!** 

Based on *sichas Shabbos Chayei Sara* 5742

לזכות
הת' שמואל שיחי'
לרגל הגיעו לעול מצוות ו' תשרי ה'תש"פ
נדפס ע"י הור"י
הרה"ת ר' ישראל זוגותו מרת דבורה לאה
ומשפחתם שיחי'
פינסאן