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Magic, Miracle, Technolgy or What?

By Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben [David](fathers.html) (Greg Killian)

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[I. Miracles, Magic, or Science 7](#_Toc137103408)

[II. I can See Forever 9](#_Toc137103409)

[III. Flying People 10](#_Toc137103410)

[IV. Space Elevator 11](#_Toc137103411)

[V. Flying Chariots 17](#_Toc137103412)

[VI. Wings of an Eagle 20](#_Toc137103413)

[VII. Talking Animals 20](#_Toc137103414)

[VIII. An Amazing Window 23](#_Toc137103415)

[IX. Engineering Feats of Excellence 25](#_Toc137103416)

[X. Seeing Sound 27](#_Toc137103417)

[XI. Hearing Lightning 28](#_Toc137103418)

[XII. Water from a Rock – Miriam’s Well 29](#_Toc137103419)

[XIII. Raising Hands, Winning the War 29](#_Toc137103420)

[XIV. Durable Clothing 30](#_Toc137103421)

[XV. Rapid Travel – Leaping Land 32](#_Toc137103422)

[XVI. Staff > Serpent > Staff Eating Staff 39](#_Toc137103423)

[XVII. An Invincible Army 40](#_Toc137103424)

[XVIII. Magic Wand 47](#_Toc137103425)

[XIX. Solid Water 49](#_Toc137103426)

[XX. Burning and not consumed 51](#_Toc137103427)

[XXI. Weather Control 52](#_Toc137103428)

[XXII. Aligning the firmament 53](#_Toc137103429)

[XXIII. Quantum Tunnelling 54](#_Toc137103430)

[XXIV. The Sun and Moon Stand Still 56](#_Toc137103431)

[XXV. Fire Proof 58](#_Toc137103432)

[XXVI. Men becoming Animals (Amalek) 60](#_Toc137103433)

[XXVII. Creating Life 61](#_Toc137103434)

[XXVIII. Raising the Dead 65](#_Toc137103435)

[XXIX. Talking to the Dead - Necromancy 67](#_Toc137103436)

[XXX. Walking on Water 69](#_Toc137103437)

[XXXI. Foretelling the Future 70](#_Toc137103438)

[XXXII. Secrets - סוֹדוֹת‎ 72](#_Toc137103439)

[XXXIII. Polyglots 72](#_Toc137103440)

[XXXIV. Endless food 74](#_Toc137103441)

[XXXV. Limitless space and Time 75](#_Toc137103442)

[XXXVI. Perfect Physician 78](#_Toc137103443)

[XXXVII. Demon Control 78](#_Toc137103444)

[XXXVIII. Eyes that can See 78](#_Toc137103445)

[XXXIX. Incredible Longevity 78](#_Toc137103446)

[XL. Astral Projection 84](#_Toc137103447)

[XLI. Prayers vs. Incantations (spells) 85](#_Toc137103448)

[XLII. Seeing Angels 90](#_Toc137103449)

[XLIII. Burning Vinegar 90](#_Toc137103450)

[XLIV. Conclusion 90](#_Toc137103451)

[Books 91](#_Toc137103452)

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There is a very, VERY intrigueing pasuk in the Nazarean Codicil that I have been considering as I looked through the Tanach and discovered numerous wounderous things:

***Yochanan (John) 14:12*** *Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.*

According to the above pasuk, because [Yeshua](yeshua.html) walked on water, so **we** will [walk](walking.html) on water. [Yeshua](yeshua.html) cured many illnesses, so **we** will cure many illnesses. [Yeshua](yeshua.html) raised the dead, so **we** will raise the dead. [Yeshua](yeshua.html) changed water into [wine](wine.html), so **we** will change water into [wine](wine.html). [Yeshua](yeshua.html) could make fish give coins, so **we** will make fish give coins. This is very intrigueing. The question is: ‘How’ are we going to accomplish these *miracles*?

Will *magic* play a role in our [new](new.html) found abilities, or maybe technology? The reason that these questions are so pertinent is because *magic* has always played an important role in Judaism, and clearly technology is playing an important role now.

Has technology played a more important role in the past? Consider that we stll do not have the technology to align and build the great pyramid in Egypt.

In this [study](study.html) I would like to look at various [events](feasts.html) in the Tanach and Nazarean Codicil and try to understand the role of magic, miracles, and technology.

I am reminded of Clarke's [third](three.html) [law](law.html):[[1]](#footnote-1)

***Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.[[2]](#footnote-2)***

What is a miracle?

The common [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for miracle is nes (נס), which translates as something that is “raised up or elevated”. For example, a flagpole upon which a banner is raised is also called a nes. So a miracle is an elevated and elevating [event](feasts.html). It is something extraordinary that happens, where we see [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [hand](fourteen.html) clearly.

Ordinarily, when we look around us, we are not privileged to see [HaShem](hashem.html) working openly. However, it is tough to argue with a miracle—a supernatural [event](feasts.html) that indicates strongly that [HaShem](hashem.html) is at work. When we witness a miracle, we are elevated. We have been given [new](new.html) [insight](insights.html) into the meaning of the ordinary [events](feasts.html) in our life, and we realize that they too are really [HaShem](hashem.html)'s work.

Rabbi Tzvi Ashkenazi[[3]](#footnote-3) explains that what we refer to as nature is actually miraculous and *unnatural*. It is only because *natural* [events](feasts.html) happen all the [time](time.html) that we take them for granted. Nature is a puppet attached to the strings of the Master. It is a mask hiding the [Face](body.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html).

Consider, for example, when the [Jews](gen-jew.html) were in the desert for [forty](forty.html) years after the [exodus](exodus.html) [from Egypt](thebirth.html), and the manna rained down from the sky each morning. Imagine a child who was born in the desert and saw his [food](food.html) rain down from the sky daily. He would not be surprised at all and would think it perfectly normal![[4]](#footnote-4)

In common English parlance and as a matter of general intuition, we think of a miracle as an [event](feasts.html) that violates the [laws](law.html) of nature. However, this idea would not have made sense for [Jews](gen-jew.html) in antiquity who did not conceive of [HaShem](hashem.html), The Creator, as outside nature. The Tanach’s word for miracle, *nes*, means something like *banner* or [*sign*](signs.html), a miracle was something [HaShem](hashem.html) wrought in order to make a statement, to change the course of human affairs.

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 4:35*** *Unto thee it was shown, that thou mightest* [*know*](daat.html) *that* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, He is God; there is nothing besides Him -* אֵיןעוֹד, מִלְּבַדּוֹ*.*

According to the Slonimer Rebbe, the word *"echad"* ([one](one.html)), of the [shema](shema.html),[[5]](#footnote-5) carries the same implication as the verse *"Ein od mil'vado"* אֵיןעוֹד, מִלְּבַדּוֹ*.*- There is nothing besides Him. This [three](three.html)-word phrase, "ein od milvado," ("There is nothing other than Him") is actually a profound philosophical and existential statement: There is nothing outside of God. Nothing else truly exists. Reality is God; God is the only reality. While we may "see" many false gods, sense and [experience](experience.html) many illusionary realities, there is in fact only [one](one.html) reality - the infinite God who cleared away a small corner of His infinite existence in order to allow our finite universe to coexist. Everything that exists within the finite universe does so at the will of the Infinite God. Should He cease to allow this to be so, our finite universe would be subsumed into God's infinite reality.

What is Magic?

In general, [Talmudic](orallaw.html) Rabbis are not concerned with magical actions per se, but rather with the character and intentions of the person performing the act. As in the Torah, whether an unusual [event](feasts.html) is a miracle, and therefore praiseworthy, or magic, and thus deplorable, depends on who does it and for what purpose.

In the rabbinic view, an unusual [event](feasts.html) is *magic*, and culpable, or a *miracle*, and laudable, depending upon who does it, in what context, and for what purpose. Exactly what is accomplished is rarely at issue at all. The distinction between miracles and magic is purely [one](one.html) of perspective: what distinguishes the two is the ultimate source of the power that makes the deed possible.

For the Rabbis, the Torah, [HaShem](hashem.html)’s revelation, is incarnate in the Sage who as a result can use the power of [HaShem](hashem.html) to perform wonders. Like Moshe, whose wonders were achieved through special capacities granted him by [HaShem](hashem.html), so the Sage can carry out astounding acts that are deemed [legitimate](legitimate.html) and appropriate.

***Soncino*** [***Zohar***](orallaw.html)***, Bereshith, Section 1, Page 167a*** *Balaam his grandson said: “For there is no enchantment with* [*Jacob*](israelja.html)*, neither is there any divination with* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*”.[[6]](#footnote-6)*

***Soncino*** [***Zohar***](orallaw.html)***, Bereshith, Section 1, Page 56a*** *R. Eleazar said: ‘In the* [*time*](time.html) *of Enosh, men were skilled in magic and divination, and in the art of controlling the heavenly forces.* [*Adam*](adam.html) *had brought with him from the* [*Garden of Eden*](eden.html) *the* [*knowledge*](knowledge.html) *of “the leaves of the tree”, but he and his wife and their children did not practise it. When Enosh came, however, he saw the advantage of these arts and how the heavenly courses could be altered by them, and he and his contemporaries* [*studied*](study.html) *them and practised magic and divination. From them these arts descended to the* [*generation*](toldot.html) *of the* [*Flood*](noach.html) *and were practised for evil purposes by all the men of that* [*time*](time.html)*. Relying upon these arts, they defied* [*Noah*](noach.html)*, saying that divine justice could never be executed upon them, since they* [*knew*](daat.html) *a way to avert it. The practice of these arts commenced with Enosh, and hence it is said of his* [*time*](time.html)*, THEN WAS THE* [*NAME*](name.html) *OF THE LORD CALLED UPON PROFANELY. R.* [*Isaac*](isaac.html) *said: All the righteous men that were among them sought to restrain them, such as Jered, Methuselah, and Enoch, but without success, and the* [*world*](worlds.html) *became full of sinners who rebelled against their Master saying, “What is the Almighty that we should serve him?”.[[7]](#footnote-7) This is not so foolish as it sounds, for they* [*knew*](daat.html) *all the arts we have mentioned and all the ruling chieftains in charge of the* [*world*](worlds.html)*, and on this* [*knowledge*](knowledge.html) *they relied, until at length God disabused them by restoring the earth to its primitive state*

The modern technical [world](worlds.html) began with the Industrial Revolution,[[8]](#footnote-8) about two hundred plus years ago. Since this period, we have progressed to the point that we are able to unravel the mysteries of huge [celestial](celestal.html) [bodies](body.html), as well as sub-atomic particles. We have conquered the force of gravity to [travel](mashal.html) in [space](place.html), and can produce [number](nchart.html)-crunching machines that do billions of mathematical computations in a fraction of a second; all this in two hundred years.

By Rabbi Nachman Kahana

[Noach](noach.html) and his [generation](toldot.html) lived [one](one.html) thousand years after the [first](one.html) man and woman were [created](bara.html). Now, if we, in two hundred years, were able to leap from a semi-primitive existence to the wonders that compose our lives today, it would be the height of arrogance to think that mankind in the [space](place.html) of a thousand years was unable to unfold the [secrets](sod.html) of science.

I suggest. [Noach](noach.html) and his [generation](toldot.html) had developed a society far beyond our imagination. Forces of nature not yet discovered by us were harnessed to serve mankind: cities enclosed in weather control bubbles; [space](place.html) [travel](mashal.html) which melted light years into days; a [time](time.html) where no [one](one.html) heard of the multiplication table and peace existed among all people. All this, and much more, were common [place](place.html) to the people of the [time](time.html), but to the degree that society developed to a point of almost total bliss, the need to recognize and worship a higher being became redundant, and from there it was a small leap to form life patterns which negated the values of morality. At some point, God, the Creator, decided that the wisdom gained from the Tree of [Knowledge](thetree.html) was serving the interests of evil, and society could no longer continue, as such.

*Prophecy*

Prophecy is [one](one.html) of the basic pillars of Judaism. In fact, prophecy is not miraculous at all! It is a human faculty that is built into all [Jews](gen-jew.html) and functions automatically with proper [experience](experience.html) and training. In other words, Judaism views prophecy as a human faculty. A [Jew](gen-jew.html) who takes a prophecy course delivered by a qualified [teacher](teacher.html), himself an experienced prophet, and implements the information he learned in his life will automatically [experience](experience.html) prophecy, just as someone who studies physics in university will automatically be a qualified physicist.

Anyone can be a prophet; the reason why there aren't a lot of them around is due to the difficulties of qualifying. To understand the requirements, let us consult Maimonedes once again::

***Yesodei Hatorah 7:1*** *It is* [*one*](one.html) *of the foundations of our religion that God communicates by prophecy with man. Prophecy 'falls' only upon a very wise sage, a person of strong character who never allows himself to be overcome by his natural inclinations in any regard.*

*A person who is full of all these qualities and is* [*physically*](physical.html) *sound [is fit for prophecy]. When he enters the* [*Pardes*](remez.html) *[the* [*study*](study.html) *of the Torah's hidden meanings and* [*secrets*](sod.html)*] and is drawn into these great and sublime concepts, if he possesses the correct perspective to comprehend them he will become holy. He will advance and separate himself from ordinary people who are occupied with the darkness of the* [*world*](worlds.html) *under* [*time*](time.html)*. He must continue and diligently train himself not to have any thoughts whatever about fruitless things or the vanities and intrigues of the times.*

*Instead, his mind should constantly be directed upward, bound beneath God's throne, striving to comprehend the holy and pure forms and gazing at the wisdom of God in its entirety from the most* [*spiritual*](physical.html) *form until the navel of the earth, appreciating His greatness from them. After these preparations the spirit of prophecy will immediately [i.e. automatically] rest on him.*

*Communication Devices*

Assuming that man has a soul: What does a soul do? Is it a [type](types.html) of muscle? A sort of [spiritual](physical.html) organ that helps drive the human machine? Obviously not! The soul is immaterial and incorporeal. In fact the soul is a communication device. It allows man to obtain information about the [world](worlds.html) that is not accessible through the application of his senses to [physical](physical.html) reality.[[9]](#footnote-9)

A young rabbi was once imprisoned and tortured by the Russians. When, after a while, he was unexpectedly released, it was discovered that [one](one.html) of the reasons given for his release was that he was insane. The authorities had seen him putting on [tefillin](tefillin.html), and when they asked him what this was, he answered that it was a communication device through which he [spoke](mashal.html) with [HaShem](hashem.html). After examining the [tefillin](tefillin.html) inside and out and not finding any batteries or antennas, and particularly after seeing him put this device on his [head](body.html) and begin to talk, they came to the conclusion that he was definitely insane.[[10]](#footnote-10)

The Holy [Ark](ark.html) is a communication device whereby [HaShem](hashem.html) speaks to His servants.[[11]](#footnote-11)

The Torah is our communication device, our cellphone, if you will, by which we [speak](mashal.html) to [HaShem](hashem.html) and He speaks to us.[[12]](#footnote-12)

**Parchment panic button? Cleverly concealed spycam?** [**Star**](star.html) **Trek communicators?**

What’s the real meaning of that funny looking capsule stuck on the doorposts of [Jewish](gen-jew.html) homes?

Answer: A [mezuzah](mezuzah.html) — which is all of the above. Well, almost. Read on!

The Torah states: “You shall write them on the doorposts (*mezuzot*) of your house and upon your gates.” The word [mezuzah](mezuzah.html) means literally “a doorpost”. But in common [speech](voice.html) when we [speak](mashal.html) of a [mezuzah](mezuzah.html) we are referring to that which we put *on* the doorpost: the parchment scroll containing the [first](one.html) two paragraphs of the “[Shema](shema.html)”. We are told to affix these verses on our doorways, which declare our belief in G-d and our commitment to performing His [commandments](cmds613.html).

The [mezuzah](mezuzah.html) can be imagined as a parchment panic button (security feature), a concealed spycam (watching every move we make and every breath we take), and a [Star](star.html) Trek communication device (syncing with the “[Cloud](important.html)”).[[13]](#footnote-13)

*Technology in the Tanach*

The [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for "electricity" is *chashmal* חשמל.[[14]](#footnote-14) *Chashmal* is a fiery radiance identified in the vision of Ezekiel as surrounding the Divine countenance seated upon the heavenly [chariot](merkava.html). That is originally a biblical word, only appearing [three](three.html) times[[15]](#footnote-15) (all in the book of Yechezkel).[[16]](#footnote-16)

In Modern [Hebrew](hebrew.html), the word chashmal means “electricity”. Today, it is common to [hear](mashal.html) in [Jewish](gen-jew.html) circles that the Modern [Hebrew](hebrew.html) chashmal has nothing to do with Ezekiel’s chashmal, which must have been something [spiritual](physical.html), and not electricity. In reality, the Modern [Hebrew](hebrew.html) term is perfectly precise. It was [first](one.html) [resurrected](techiyat.html) in 1878 by [Yehuda](fathers.html) Leib Gordon.[[17]](#footnote-17)

Aside from Ezekiel’s juxtaposition of “lightning” with chashmal, how did Gordon decide the word must be electricity? Linguists had pointed out that the word chashmal was highly connected to the word leshem (לשם) meaning “amber”. The thing about amber is that it can build up a large amount of static electricity. The ancient Greek philosophers were fascinated by it, and [knew](daat.html) they could rub amber to generate sparks. The Greek word for “amber”? Elektros. This is where the term “electricity” comes from! And when Gordon looked in the Septuagint, the original Greek translation of the Tanakh, our own ancient Sages had translated chashmal as “elektron”. They [knew](daat.html) the [secret](sod.html) power hidden in that word. Chashmal is electricity, and that explains everything.

Here are the [three](three.html) verses in the Tanach which use this strange word - *chashmal*:

***Yehezchel (Ezekiel) 1:4*** *looked, and lo, a stormy wind came sweeping out of the north—a huge* [*cloud*](important.html) *and flashing* [*fire*](fire.html)*, surrounded by a radiance; and in the center of it, in the center of the* [*fire*](fire.html)*, a gleam as of* ***chashmal****.* ***5*** *And out of the midst thereof came the likeness of* [*four*](four.html) *living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had the likeness of a man.* ***6*** *And every* [*one*](one.html) *had* [*four*](four.html) *faces, and every* [*one*](one.html) *of them had* [*four*](four.html) *wings.* ***7*** *And their* [*feet*](heel.html) *were straight* [*feet*](heel.html)*; and the sole of their* [*feet*](heel.html) *was like the sole of a calf's* [*foot*](heel.html)*; and they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass.*

Out of the sky comes something like a [cloud](important.html) with flames [coming](coming.html) out of it. A bright light all around. Whatever Ezekiel sees has [four](four.html) wings. It has [one](one.html) “leg” [coming](coming.html) out the bottom. The leg appears to be made of some kind of metal. It has a [foot](heel.html) that resembles a calf’s cloven hoof. Ezekiel continues to say that these “creatures” had what looked like “burning torches” [coming](coming.html) out their bottoms. Also at their bottoms were “wheels within wheels” (v.16) which allowed them to move without having to actually turn.

Every person should really go through this chapter carefully, word-by-word, and try to envision what Ezekiel saw as accurately as possible. It suffices to point out only that he sees metal “hooves” that shoot forth [fire](fire.html), along with “straight, conjoined wings” (meaning, these are not at all the “angelic”, bird-like, curved and feathered wings that we tend to think of). It has “wheels within wheels”—gyroscopes—at the bottom, reminiscent of the gyroscopes on our own International [Space](place.html) Station. (The gyroscopes on the ISS keep it in [place](place.html) in orbit, allowing it to move effortlessly, “without turning”.) Ezekiel also says that the “creatures” have a covering over their heads made of what looks like clear “ice” (v. 22). Keep in mind he probably would not have been familiar with glass.

Most importantly, on several occasions Ezekiel describes them as moving like, or being powered by, “lightning” or “flashes of lightning”. Such statements would not have made sense to anyone until 1752, when scientists in France [first](one.html) confirmed that lightning was *electricity*.

***Yehezchel (Ezekiel) 1:27*** *From what appeared as his loins up, I saw a gleam as of* ***chashmal*** *—what looked like a* [*fire*](fire.html) *encased in a frame; and from what appeared as his loins down, I saw what looked like* [*fire*](fire.html)*. There was a radiance all about him.*

***Yehezchel (Ezekiel) 8:2*** *As I looked, there was a figure that had the appearance of* [*fire*](fire.html)*: from what appeared as his loins down, [he was]* [*fire*](fire.html)*; and from his loins up, his appearance was resplendent and had the color of* ***chashmal****.*

Rashi on Ezekiel 1:4 it was like the color of the chashmal “Chashmal” is an [angel](angels.html) bearing that [name](name.html), and he [Ezekiel] saw [something] like the appearance of its color in the midst of the [fire](fire.html). And so did our Sages say: There was an incident involving a child who was expounding on the account of the [Chariot](merkava.html). He perceived the meaning of “chashmal,” [whereupon] [fire](fire.html) emanated from the chashmal and consumed him. They said further that the word itself is a combination: When they asked, “What is chashmal?” replied Rav Judah, “Living beings (חֶיוֹת) of [fire](fire.html) (אֵש) that [speak](mashal.html) (מִמַלְלוֹת) …

Maimonides[[18]](#footnote-18) writes that there are [ten](ten.html) classes of [angels](angels.html). The highest class of [angels](angels.html) — above which only G-d stands — are the chayot, or chayot hakodesh. Then come the ophanim, erelim, chashmalim, seraphim, malachim, elohim, bnei elohim, [cherubim](angels.html), and finally, the ishim.

The [fourth](four.html) class of [angels](angels.html), chashmalim, reveal themselves to prophets through fiery flashes of light. The [Talmud](orallaw.html)[[19]](#footnote-19) explains that the [name](name.html) of this class of [angels](angels.html) is comprised of the two words chash (“quiet”) and mal (“[speak](mashal.html)”), because they sometimes [speak](mashal.html) of G-d’s glory and they sometimes remain quiet. The School of the Rokeach interprets the word chashmal as a portmanteau of chashuv (“important” on account of their proximity to G‑d’s glory) and mal (“[speak](mashal.html)” because they [speak](mashal.html) of G-d’s holiness). In Modern [Hebrew](hebrew.html), the word chashmal refers to “electricity.”

The Arizal may have been the [first](one.html) (perhaps since the boy in *Chagigah*) to truly grasp chashmal. While he speaks of chashmal countless times throughout his teachings, this is only on the more basic level as the relationship between chashmal and the [eight](eight.html) garments that protect the [eight](eight.html) Sefirot from Binah to Malkhut. The real [secret](sod.html) of chashmal is not expounded upon. Rabbi Chaim Vital only dared to [speak](mashal.html) of it once, briefly, in a single sentence in *Sha’arei Kedushah*,[[20]](#footnote-20) stating [emphasis mine] “This is the most sublime [secret](sod.html) of chashmal… that it is the vessel and the [*physical*](physical.html) *substance* of the [lights](lights.html) of the [angels](angels.html). May God [forgive](forgive.html) me for revealing this most sublime [secret](sod.html).” Rabbi Vital could [speak](mashal.html) no more of this, only to reveal to us that chashmal is the very substance (חומר) *that gives the* [*angels*](angels.html) *power*. Before him, the Ramak had similarly stated that chashmal is a [physical](physical.html) force that “carries” and “gives life” to the angelic [Chariot](merkava.html).[[21]](#footnote-21)

Now we get to a VERY interesting perspective of the nature of chashmal.

The Ba’al HaTurim[[22]](#footnote-22) offered a little more, relating chashmal to some kind of concrete *force*. Incredibly, he says that the [Ark](ark.html) of the [Covenant](covenant.html) was powered by chashmal. This is alluded to when the Torah says *vayehi binsoa ha’aron,* “And it was, when the [Ark](ark.html) set forth…”[[23]](#footnote-23) where the word *binsoa* (בנסע) in Atbash rearranges to form *chashmal* (חשמל)! In other words, the [Ark](ark.html) sets forth and moves by chashmal. The Ramak[[24]](#footnote-24) would later explain that chashmal is [one](one.html) of the [thirteen](thirteen.html) supernal *kochot*, “powers” or “forces” of the highest [Heavens](heaven.html).[[25]](#footnote-25) Meanwhile, the [Zohar](orallaw.html)[[26]](#footnote-26) adds that chashmal is the source of prophecy, and what allowed the prophets to see their visions.

It would be very easy for modern man to see the [ark](ark.html) as a kind of technology which is powered by inter-dimensional energy.

Putting it all together, this is what we [know](daat.html) so far of chashmal: It played a key role in the early days of [Creation](bara.html). [Adam](adam.html) used it to see across the universe. It is a “force [field](field.html)” of sorts that guards the Sefirot. It powered the [Ark](ark.html) of the [Covenant](covenant.html). It can be used to generate visions. It gives power to the [angels](angels.html), particularly those associated with God’s “[Chariot](merkava.html)”. And it isn’t entirely [spiritual](physical.html), but has a clear [physical](physical.html) aspect.

# Miracles, Magic, or Science

***Yesoodei HaTorah 8:1*** *The* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *did not believe in Moses, our* [*teacher*](teacher.html)*, because of the wonders that he performed. Whenever anyone's belief is based on wonders, [the commitment of] his* [*heart*](body.html) *has shortcomings, because it is possible to perform a wonder through magic or sorcery.[[27]](#footnote-27)*

***Yesoodei HaTorah 8:2*** *Just as we are commanded to render a [legal] judgment based on the testimony of two witnesses, even though we do not* [*know*](daat.html) *if they are testifying truthfully or falsely, similarly, it is a* [*mitzvah*](cmds613.html) *to listen to this prophet even though we do not* [*know*](daat.html) *whether the wonder is true or performed by magic or sorcery.*

***Yesoodei HaTorah 8:3*** *Therefore, if a prophet arises and attempts to dispute Moses' prophecy by performing great* [*signs*](signs.html) *and wonders, we should not listen to him. We* [*know*](daat.html) *with certainty that he performed those* [*signs*](signs.html) *through magic or sorcery. [This conclusion is reached] because the prophecy of Moses, our* [*teacher*](teacher.html)*, is not dependent on wonders, so that we could compare these wonders,* [*one*](one.html) *against the other. Rather we saw and heard with our own* [*eyes*](body.html) *and* [*ears*](body.html) *as he did.*

What is a nes nistar - נס נסתר, a hidden miracle? According to Nahmanides,[[28]](#footnote-28) these are miracles which are frequent in human life, but we discount them, placing them under the category of coincidence or happenstance. In the [Amida](amida.html) we [speak](mashal.html) of “miracles which are daily with us”, these are the hidden miracles.

In [one](one.html) of the [first](one.html) real mystery stories, “The Purloined [Letter](letters.html),” Edgar Allen Poe has the crucial [letter](letters.html) cleverly hidden in plain sight. For not only that which is invisible is hidden. In some circumstances, “hidden” miracles may be precisely those which we can see. Think of a lizard on a leaf: camouflage is a means of hiding by being seen. Camouflage makes the lizard look unremarkable, but its ordinariness is an illusion.

There are two ways of looking at the [world](worlds.html), declared Einstein: as if nothing is a miracle, and as if everything is a miracle. Are miracles the common currency of existence? Some will hold out for miracles being only the exceptional, the radical break from normality. Others will say, along with Nachmanides, that, “the foundation of Torah is hidden miracles.” We should not rely on miracles, counsels the [Talmud](orallaw.html) -- but we should not ignore them, either.

[**Jewish**](gen-jew.html) **Thought**

An excerpt from Rabbi Kaplan's Handbook of [Jewish](gen-jew.html) Thought.

Many of our traditions predict that there will be an extremely advanced technology in the Messianic Era. All disease will be eliminated, as the prophet foretold, "Then the [eyes](body.html) of the blind will be opened, and the [ears](body.html) of the deaf will be unstopped. Then the lame man will leap as a hart, and the [tongue](spirit.html) of the dumb will sing".[[29]](#footnote-29)

In order that man devote himself totally to achieving [spiritual](physical.html) perfection, many forms of labor will become obsolete. A [number](nchart.html) of miracles are predicted, such as grapes as large as hen's eggs and grains of wheat as big as a fist. As we now [know](daat.html), all this can become possible with a technology not too far removed from that of today. Indeed, when Rabbi Gamliel [spoke](mashal.html) of these predicted miracles, he stated that they would not involve any change in the [laws](law.html) of nature, but are allusions to a highly advanced technology. Thus, so little labor will be needed to process agricultural products that clothing and loaves of bread will seem to grow on trees. Similarly, as we learn the [secrets](sod.html) of all life processes, it will become possible to make trees bear fruit continually.

When we think of the miracles of the Messianic Age as being technological rather than manifest, then we have no trouble understanding traditions that predict such things as [space](place.html) flight and interstellar colonization in the Messianic Age, even according to those who believe that it will not be a [time](time.html) of manifest miracles.

All of this would be mere conjecture and even forced interpretation if it were not for the fact that our present technological revolution has also been predicted, with an approximate date as to its inception. Almost 2000 years ago, the [Zohar](orallaw.html) predicted, "In the 600th year of the 6th [millennium](millenium.html), the gates of wisdom on high and the wellsprings of lower wisdom will be opened”. This will prepare the [world](worlds.html) to enter the 7th [millennium](millenium.html), just as a person prepares himself toward sunset on Friday for the [Sabbath](sabbath.html). It is the same here. And the mnemonic for this is,[[30]](#footnote-30) 'In the 600th year… all the foundations of the great deep were split'."

Here we see a clear prediction that in the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) year 5600 (1840 CE), the wellsprings of lower wisdom would be opened and there would be a sudden expansion of secular [knowledge](knowledge.html). Although the year 1840 did not yield any major scientific breakthrough, the date corresponds with almost uncanny accuracy to the onset of the present scientific revolution.

The tradition may have even anticipated the tremendous destructive powers of our modern technology. Thus, we are [taught](teacher.html) that the Messianic Era will begin in a [generation](toldot.html) with the power to destroy itself.

The rapid changes on both a technological and sociological level will result in great social upheaval. The cataclysmic changes will result in considerable suffering, often referred to as the Chevley [Mashiach](mashiach.html) or [birth](birth.html) pangs of the [Messiah](mashiach.html). If the [Messiah](mashiach.html) comes with miracles, these may be avoided, but the great changes involved in his [coming](coming.html) in a natural manner may make these [birth](birth.html) pangs inevitable.

# I can See Forever

When God [created](bara.html) the [world](worlds.html) and said, "Let there be light",[[31]](#footnote-31) the illumination that resulted was not what we see today. This was a light, say our Sages, which enabled [one](one.html) "to see from [one](one.html) end of the [world](worlds.html) to another".[[32]](#footnote-32)

***Chagigah 12a*** *For R. Eleazar said: The light which the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He,* [*created*](bara.html) *on the* [*first*](one.html) *day,* [*one*](one.html) *could see thereby from* [*one*](one.html) *end of the* [*world*](worlds.html) *to the other; but as soon as the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, beheld the* [*generation*](toldot.html) *of the* [*Flood*](noach.html) *and the* [*generation*](toldot.html) *of the Dispersion,[[33]](#footnote-33) and saw that their actions were corrupt, He arose and hid it from them, for it is said: But from the* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *their light is withholden.[[34]](#footnote-34) And for whom did he reserve it? For the righteous in the* [*time*](time.html) *to come,[[35]](#footnote-35) for it is said: And God saw the light, that it was good;[[36]](#footnote-36) and ‘good’ means only the righteous, for it is said: Say ye of the righteous that he is good.[[37]](#footnote-37) As soon as He saw the light that He had reserved for the righteous, He rejoiced, for it is said: He rejoiceth at the light of the righteous. Now Tannaim [differ on the point]: The light which the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He,* [*created*](bara.html) *on the* [*first*](one.html) *day* [*one*](one.html) *could see and look thereby from* [*one*](one.html) *end of the* [*world*](worlds.html) *to the other; this is the view of R.* [*Jacob*](israelja.html)*.*

***Bereshit Rabbah 11:2*** *When the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *set following the* [*sixth*](six.html) *day of* [*Creation*](bara.html)*,* [*Hashem*](hashem.html) *wanted to hide away the Divine Light [i.e. the Divine Light should have been limited to the* [*Garden of Eden*](eden.html)*, and when* [*Adam*](adam.html) *and Chava were chased out of the* [*Garden of Eden*](eden.html) *at sunset of the* [*sixth*](six.html) *day (Sanhedrin 38b) they should have lost the privilege of seeing the Divine Light -Maharzu]. However, in honor of the* [*Shabbat*](sabbath.html)[*Hashem*](hashem.html) *let the light remain. [That is to say, He let the light remain in the entire* [*world*](worlds.html)*, even outside the* [*Garden of Eden*](eden.html)*, and He didn't limit it to the* [*Garden of Eden*](eden.html) *until after* [*Shabbat*](sabbath.html) *-Maharzu]. This is what the verse means, "*[*Hashem*](hashem.html) *blessed the* [*seventh*](seven.html) *day and sanctified it" (Bereishit 2:3). How did He bless it? With the Divine Light...*

*Rav Levi said, quoting Rav Ze'ira: For* [*thirty-six*](thirtysix.html) *hours Man enjoyed the Divine Light --* [*twelve*](twelve.html) *hours before* [*Shabbat*](sabbath.html)*,* [*twelve*](twelve.html) *hours on the eve of the* [*first*](one.html)[*Shabbat*](sabbath.html)*, and* [*twelve*](twelve.html) *hours on the day of* [*Shabbat*](sabbath.html)*. When the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *set following the* [*first*](one.html)[*Shabbat*](sabbath.html)*, darkness came.*

***Bereshit (Genesis) 1:3*** *And God said: 'Let there be light.' And there was light.*

The *pasuk* says that on the [first](one.html) day of [Creation](bara.html): *God said, “Let there be light” — and there was light”.* Rashi*,[[38]](#footnote-38)* quoting the [Midrash](orallaw.html)*,* comments on the *pasuk*: *God saw that it is not fitting for the light to be used by the* [*wicked*](wicked.html)*, so He set it aside for the righteous to use in the* [*future*](future.html)*.* The [Gemara](orallaw.html) explains that with this light [Adam](adam.html) HaRishon[[39]](#footnote-39) was able to see from [one](one.html) end of the [world](worlds.html) to the other.[[40]](#footnote-40) What is the deeper meaning behind this? The commentaries explain that the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for [world](worlds.html), *olam,* shares its root with the word *he’*[*elim*](stages.html) (hid).[[41]](#footnote-41) This is because the natural [world](worlds.html) is meant to hide [HaShem](hashem.html)’s presence, enabling free will to choose between good and evil. As a result, when we look at the [physical](physical.html) properties that comprise our [world](worlds.html), it is very hard to see [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [Hand](fourteen.html) at work. Light is the medium that enables us to see. Ordinary light only reveals an object’s [physical](physical.html) makeup. The *ohr haganuz* (the light that was later put away for the righteous), however, did not only reveal the [physical](physical.html) properties of an item, but also its [spiritual](physical.html) essence. The *ohr* *haganuz* had the unique characteristic of being able to reveal [HaShem](hashem.html) in the [world](worlds.html). This is the deeper meaning behind the [Gemara](orallaw.html) that says [Adam](adam.html) HaRishon was able to see from [one](one.html) end of the [world](worlds.html) to the other. The *ohr* *haganuz* shone through the mask of the [world](worlds.html) of nature that hides [HaShem](hashem.html), by revealing the guiding [Hand](fourteen.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html) everywhere.[[42]](#footnote-42)

# Flying People

[Jewish](gen-jew.html) tradition does relate incidents of people, both righteous and [wicked](wicked.html), who were able to fly.

Bilaam had the power of flight? Why yes, according to several midrashic sources, and Rashi who indirectly cites them in his comment on Num 31:6.

Targum Yonatan ben Uziel describes the scene of Bilam's death in the war.

***Targum Yonatan Num. 31:8*** *"When Bilam the* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *saw Pinchas the* [*kohen*](priests.html) *chasing after him he uttered a magic word and flew up in the air heavenward. Immediately, Pinchas uttered the Great and Holy* [*Name*](name.html) *and flew after him. [Pinchas] seized him by the* [*head*](body.html) *and pulled him down. [Pinchas] unsheathed his sword and was about to kill him. [Bilam] opened his* [*mouth*](body.html) *with words of supplication and he said to Pinchas, 'If you let me live I will subjugate myself to you; for all the days that I live I will not curse your* [*nation*](nations.html)*.'*

*[Pinchas] answered, 'But you are Lavan the Aramean who tried to finish Yaacov our father. You went* [*down to Egypt*](thebirth.html) *to destroy his offspring. After they left Egypt, you incited the* [*wicked*](wicked.html)[*Amalekites*](amalek.html) *against them. When you were jealous, you were incited to curse them. When you saw that your words would not succeed and God would not accept it from you, you advised the evil king Balak to places his [*[*nation*](nations.html)*?s] daughters at the crossroads to lead [the People of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*] astray. As a result,* [*twenty*](twenty.html)*-*[*four*](four.html) *thousand of us fell. As such, I cannot let you live.' Immediately, Pinchas unsheathed his sword and killed him."*

**the sacred utensils:** *The holy* [*Ark*](ark.html)*[[43]](#footnote-43) and the golden showplate,[[44]](#footnote-44) since Balaam was with them and through sorcery was able to make the Midianite kings fly, and he flew along with them, he [Phinehas] showed them the showplate on which* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*’s* [*Name*](name.html) *was engraved, and they fell down [to earth]. For this reason it says, concerning the Midianite kings, “upon their slain”,[[45]](#footnote-45) for they fell from the air on top of those slain. Likewise, it says in the book of Joshua[[46]](#footnote-46) in* [*connection*](connection.html) *with Balaam,“upon (sic) their slain.”[[47]](#footnote-47)*

Targum Yonaton Ben Uziel relates fascinating details as to how Bilaam was apprehended: When threatened, Bilaam used powers and began flying in the air, thus eluding the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) army.

Pinchas, who was in charge of the war, recited a special holy [name](name.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html) which suspended him in the air and he was able to catch up with Bilaam and kill him by sword.

The fate of Bilaam, however, was different. The [Zohar](orallaw.html) continues: Seeing Bilaam flying, Pinchas sought someone to fly after him and bring him down alive. Tzaliah, of the [tribe](tribes.html) of Dan volunteered. Equipped with a Holy [Name](name.html) with which to cancel the power of Bilaam, he took off after him. When Bilaam saw Tzalia he managed to deceive him and disappeared in the air. Tzalia feared being harmed by the impure forces. Pinchas, with the power of the [High Priest](priests.html) [Head](body.html) Plate, helped him from the ground, and Tzaliah saw Bilaam again. He then caught Bilaam and brought him down before Pinchas.

Pinchas instructed Tzaliah to kill Bilaam, not by using Holy Names, but with Bilaam’s own sword. Pinchas did not want Bilaam to die through the mentioning of a Holy [Name](name.html), so as not to have his soul be included on any level of holiness that dwells with the Holy Names of [HaShem](hashem.html). Targum Yonatan states that Bilaam begged Pinchas not to kill him and swore never to curse the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people, but it was too late. Tzaliah slew Bilaam with Bilaam’s own sword, as the verse states1 “And Bilaam son of Beor they killed with the sword.”[[48]](#footnote-48)

Rashi said that Pinchas, Bilaam, and the [five](five.html) kings, had the power of flight. How did they do this?[[49]](#footnote-49)

Now this incident in Egypt, when [HaShem](hashem.html) lead His people through the wilderness, has the good guys and the bad guys both flying!

\* \* \*

It is further written [of Pinchas] that [HaShem](hashem.html)'s [covenant](covenant.html) of life and well-being was with him, "the true Torah was in his [mouth](body.html). He walked with Me in peace and equity, nothing perverse was on his lips. With complete loyalty, he served Me, deterring many from committing iniquity. For the lips of a [priest](priests.html) guard [knowledge](knowledge.html) and people seek Torah from his [mouth](body.html), seeing that he is an [angel](angels.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html) G‑d of Hosts".[[50]](#footnote-50) This verse clearly alludes to Pinchas, since Pinchas became an [angel](angels.html), as our Sages comment on Joshua.[[51]](#footnote-51)

Telling stories about the Tzaddikim help s cleanse and [purify](purity.html) the mind. But for every story about a Tzaddik we find a parallel story about a [wicked](wicked.html) person , because the realm of evil is a reflection of that of holiness. Thus we are told that Pinchas flew in the air, and the same is said of the [wicked](wicked.html) Bilaam, except that in his case it was through witchcraft. The ability to distinguish between light and darkness enables us to distinguish between stories about true Tzaddikim and those that are not.

To separate the light from the darkness requires the ultimate level of faith. This can be attained only in the land of [Israel](city.html).[[52]](#footnote-52)

# [Space](place.html) Elevator

The Tower of [Babel](bavel.html) episode was not simply a tower but meant to “lift off” and “conquer” the [Heavens](heaven.html). Rabbi Yehonatan [taught](teacher.html) that the Torah's Genesis story about the building of the Tower of [Babel](bavel.html) was not about building a tower at all. Rabbi Eibeschitz claimed they were building a Rocket Ship! Or a Launching Pad! Or a [Space](place.html) Elevator! Truth!

Our Sages long ago [taught](teacher.html) that the people who built the Tower [knew](daat.html) the wisdom of the [angels](angels.html) and were using angelic powers to accomplish their plans.[[53]](#footnote-53) God “came down” to confound them. He wiped their memories and jumbled their languages so that they wouldn’t be able to collaborate in such a megalomaniacal way. Today, we live in a [world](worlds.html) that is once more getting really close to being “of singular language and singular words”,[[54]](#footnote-54) and once again we see science stepping into the dangerous territory of “playing God”. Hopefully this [time](time.html) humanity will get it right and use the astounding abilities that God made possible in His universe only for the good.

**Rav Eibishitz**

Rav Yonasan Eibeshitz's idea of the [generation](toldot.html) attempting to build a tower so high it would reach beyond the gravitational pull of the Earth. Then, they planned to have a boat-like vessel atop the tower to be carried up from the Earth's winds to the [moon](chodesh.html), where they would no longer need to [fear](fear.html) torrential rain. (Rav

Sanhedrin 106b Rav said, 'Doeg and Achitophel asked [four](four.html) hundred questions about a tower that floats in the air'.

Rashi gives a [number](nchart.html) of explanations, among them:

**במגדל הפורח באויר** - לעשות כישוף להעמיד מגדל באויר

**About a tower that floats in the air** - to perform kishuf, magic, to make a tower float in the air.

**Rabbi Zucht The Tower Of** [**Babel**](bavel.html) **Was A Rocket Ship!**

The [Zohar](orallaw.html),[[55]](#footnote-55) points out that these people of [Babylon](bavel.html) discovered special magical (technological) powers. It seems they found highly advanced information and possibly artifacts from the Bible's pre-[Noah](noach.html) era which survived The [Flood](noach.html). They say that in earlier times the Earth was inhabited by a group of fallen angles called The Nefilim, giants. The Torah says,[[56]](#footnote-56) "The Sons of G-d (fallen [angels](angels.html)) had come to the daughters of man and had fathered them. The Nefilim were the mightiest ones who ever existed, men of renown." They were all destroyed in the [Flood](noach.html). But could these mighty "men of renown" left vital magical and technological information that was not destroyed during the Deluge?

Rabbi Yehonosan Aibshitz claims the Babylonians found this treasure trove of information. The Rabbi Zucht (says) that in The Torah;[[57]](#footnote-57) "Come, let us build a [city](city.html), and a tower, with its [head](body.html) in the [heavens](heaven.html), and we shall make a [name](name.html) for ourselves", exposes Nimrod's plan to [travel](mashal.html) to the [heavens](heaven.html). He received the technology from the Nefilim.

The following table lists some of the differences between the antidiluvian [world](worlds.html) and the [world](worlds.html) we live in:

| **Before the** [**flood**](noach.html) | **After the** [**flood**](noach.html) |
| --- | --- |
| There were a great many people. | All but [Noach](noach.html) and his family were destroyed. |
| People were forbidden to [eat](eating.html) meat. | Men could now [eat](eating.html) meat.[[58]](#footnote-58) |
| Animals did not [eat](eating.html) meat, just as they will not [eat](eating.html) meat in the [future](future.html) [redemption](redemption.html).[[59]](#footnote-59) | Animals could [eat](eating.html) meat. |
| The [world](worlds.html) could be flooded. Before the [Flood](noach.html), the [world](worlds.html)’s very existence was contingent upon its moral state. | God promised never to [flood](noach.html) the [world](worlds.html) again. |
| The Earth did not have a tilt to its axis. Climate was uniform.[[60]](#footnote-60) | The earth was now tilted on its axis by 23 degrees. We have seasons. The [worlds](worlds.html) climate is established as we [know](daat.html) it today. |
| Pangea had not yet been broken up. | Shortly after the [flood](noach.html), in Peleg’s day, Pangea was split apart. |
| No tall mountains, though there were higher and lower places. | The [world](worlds.html) was filled with tall mountains and deep valleys. |
| People lived much longer, some more than 900 years.[[61]](#footnote-61) | People were reduced to lifespans of around 70 to 80 years. |
| There were no cold or warm fronts and no storms. No snow, rain, or storms. | Now we have cold and warm fronts with the resulting storms, as well as rain and snow. |
| All the animals were in [one](one.html) [place](place.html) for [Adam](adam.html) to [name](name.html) and all were there at the [time](time.html) [Noah](noach.html) summoned them into the [Ark](ark.html). | Animals are now dispersed to locations unique to their [needs](needs.html). |
| There was no sunlight[[62]](#footnote-62) peaking through the vapor canopy, this explains why the rainbow could not have been seen until [Noah](noach.html)'s day. | Now we have bright sunlight and rainbows because the clouds are thinner.[[63]](#footnote-63) |
| During the year of the [flood](noach.html) the [sun](hachama.html) did not set.[[64]](#footnote-64) | The [sun](hachama.html) sets normally. |
| The canopy formed what we would recognize as a terrarium. The earth watered itself just as a terrarium does. This can be seen in Genesis 2:5-6. The canopy also did a couple of other things. It protected the earth from cosmic radiation. It also kept the earth pressure at about 3 atmospheres. This allowed all living creatures the ability to heal much faster than we do today. Just like the medical use of a hyperbaric chamber. R’ [Yitzchak](isaac.html) Abarbanel z”l writes: The [physical](physical.html) [laws](law.html) which cause a rainbow to appear existed from [creation](bara.html), but there had never been a rainbow before the [flood](noach.html). This was due to a difference in atmospheric conditions before and after the [flood](noach.html).[[65]](#footnote-65) | We have lost the canopy, resulting in rain to water the earth. We have also lost atmospheric pressure and we are now down to [one](one.html) atmosphere. |
| [Sun](hachama.html), [moon](chodesh.html), and [stars](mazaroth.html) were not functional nor visible trough the vapor canopy. | The [celestial](celestal.html) [bodies](body.html) began to function again and we could now see the [sun](hachama.html), [moon](chodesh.html), and [stars](mazaroth.html). |
| Men had [six](six.html) [mitzvot](cmds613.html). | Men had [seven](seven.html) [mitzvot](cmds613.html). |
| Animals in [Gan Eden](eden.html) could talk, [walk](walking.html), and fornicate with people. | Animals cannot talk, [walk](walking.html), or fornicate with people in the normal wway. |
| Men were smarter, e.g. Genesis 4:22 which seems to be describing some of Tubalcain’s metallurgical hobby projects, including something about bronze and iron. Have a look at the masoretic [Hebrew](hebrew.html), which calls Tubalcain a *lotesh kal-horesh* (לֹטֵ֕שׁ כָּל־חֹרֵ֥שׁ) that is to say “an instructor of every craftsman”. | Men are not as smart but able to make progress through sheer [numbers](nchart.html) of people. People like Einstein, smart as he was, stood on the [shoulders](body.html) of Newton, who stood on the [shoulders](body.html) of wise men before him. |
| A child never died during its parent’s lifetime.[[66]](#footnote-66) | Children occasionally die during their parent’s lifetime. |
| A single crop would yield enough [food](food.html) for 40 years.[[67]](#footnote-67) | A single crop yields enough [food](food.html) for [one](one.html) year. |
| Wild animals did not hurt people.[[68]](#footnote-68) | Wild animals hurt and kill people. |
| No special effort was needed to harvest a crop. Strolling a [field](field.html) and collecting was sufficient.[[69]](#footnote-69) | Lots of effort must be extended to harvest a [field](field.html). |
| *Everyone* practiced the magic handed down from [Adam](adam.html).[[70]](#footnote-70) | Only the [wicked](wicked.html) practice this same kind of magic. |
| Pdre before the [flood](noach.html) the [clean](purity.html) animals were much, much more numerous than the unclean animals. The [Midrash](orallaw.html) tells us that not all of the unclean animals got on the [ark](ark.html), but all of the [clean](purity.html) animals did. |  |
| **for all flesh had corrupted:[[71]](#footnote-71)** Even cattle, beasts, and fowl would mate with those who were not of their own species.[[72]](#footnote-72) Only uncorrupted animals were allowed on the [ark](ark.html).[[73]](#footnote-73) | Each animal breeds with its own kind. |
| [Noach](noach.html) and his family did not [sleep](mashal.html) on the [ark](ark.html) because they had to feed the animals.[[74]](#footnote-74) |  |

Rabbi Yehonosan points out in the [Midrash](orallaw.html) it [teaches](teacher.html) that the [desire](needs.html) of the Babylonians to "make a [name](name.html) for ourselves" shows their arrogance and refusal to accept [Hashem](hashem.html). In fact, the Rabbi claims Nimrod thought this Rocket will put him on equal or higher [standing](mashal.html) than [HaShem](hashem.html). Nimrod wanted [HaShem](hashem.html) to be the opening act and that he would get top billing.

[HaShem](hashem.html) let the Rocket construction continue for some [time](time.html) and then finally put the old kibbash on the entire project. The Torah says at the [time](time.html) all people [spoke](mashal.html) [one](one.html) single language. [HaShem](hashem.html) confounded their [speech](voice.html) and made them all unintelligible to each other. Think of it like far left Democrats talking to far right Republicans at a cocktail party. They all babbled on and on but no [one](one.html) will understand what anyone else is saying. I report, you decide.

Instead of destroying the whole [place](place.html) like [HaShem](hashem.html) did in The [Flood](noach.html) he decided to pursue another way. [HaShem](hashem.html) unleashed the [first](one.html) Stuxnet virus in recorded history. No [fire](fire.html) and brimstone here. Just confound the communication and scatter the Babelers.

Rabbi Yehonosan [teaches](teacher.html) us that the [Babylonian](bavel.html)'s were actually building a ship which could fly up into [heaven](heaven.html). That was his words, not mine. Some claim that it was more like an elevator to the [moon](chodesh.html). Rocket Ship. Launch Pad. Elevator smelevator, [one](one.html) thing's for sure, Rabbi Yehonosan sure saw things in unconventional ways.

Rabbi Aibshitz was not just extremely versed in Torah and Kabbalah; he was also acquainted with the current science of the 18th Century. He incorporates the science of his [time](time.html) into his interpretations of The Torah and [Talmud](orallaw.html). He said that the higher [one](one.html) goes from Earth the air becomes less murky. He goes on to say Nimrod's engineer's use gunpowder at the bottom of the Rocket to give it enough thrust to get past the murky air of Earth and getting the Rocket Ship above the clouds and into the less murky air higher up where the Rocket can then sail to the [moon](chodesh.html). Sounds like the vacuum of [space](place.html) to me. On the [moon](chodesh.html) they planned to set up colonies to coordinate an [attack](attacks.html) on [HaShem](hashem.html). He came up with this centuries before [Star](star.html) Trek. Beam me up Scotty.



Rav Yonasan Eibeshutz writes as follows (here and here):

"And [HaShem](hashem.html) smelled the sweet smell, and [HaShem](hashem.html) said to His [heart](body.html), 'I will no longer curse the land because of man.'" This that is written 'to his [heart](body.html)' is because it was not the Will of [HaShem](hashem.html) to reveal that he would no longer destroy the [world](worlds.html) again, in order that the [fear](fear.html) would be on mankind so that they would not do as the abominations of the [generation](toldot.html) of the Deluge, lest, forfend, a deluge come to the [world](worlds.html)."

[Josh: I am skipping a lengthy insertion from the maatik (scribe) resolving how this would work with [HaShem](hashem.html) revealing this to [Noach](noach.html).]

"And this was the matter of the [generation](toldot.html) of the Dispersion, that they wished to construct a tower unto the [heavens](heaven.html). For there is to understand -- were they such fools?! For if so, they would have needed a foundation, based on the science of architecture, to be wider than the globe of the earth! Rather, they judged, based on the science of nature, that all the [rains](rains.html) descended from the steams and the mists which arose from the earth and the element of water. And from this came to be the clouds, and from there they poured forth their water. And the water did not come from the [Heavens](heaven.html) at all. And they already estimated, based on observation, that the measure of the clouds, which was from the thick mists which arise from the earth, was not higher than [five](five.html) mil at most. And if so, perforce the fine mists which distribute the water do not rise higher than that. For if they did rise higher than that, then even the clouds would be higher than that from the earth. And therefore, they thought to build a tower higher than the altitude of these clouds, and if so, it would be impossible for rain to fall upon them. And the language (in pasuk 4) of וְרֹאשׁוֹ בַשָּׁמַיִם is an exaggerated expression.

However, it is [known](daat.html) that in the sphere of the [Moon](chodesh.html) there is also a [place](place.html) for settlement just as on the sphere of the Earth. And they already discovered the craft of flying, which is to make something like a mast (and sail) resting parallel to the width of the earth. And therefore, by virtue of the fact the the wind arises from the earth, and so too all the winds arising from the earth below. And therefore I have written that [Noach](noach.html) did not [travel](mashal.html)..."

"in a ship to the sea in the middle of the ocean. For certainly the Deluge did not descend there. For what purpose would there be for a Deluge in the sea? And if so, he should have gotten into a ship and not in an [ark](ark.html). {Josh: I would guess he treats it as a box, rather than as a boat.} And if they did not [know](daat.html) how to construct a ship, [HaShem](hashem.html) should have instructed him the construction of a ship in [place](place.html) of the [command](cmds613.html) of the [ark](ark.html). And even if we believe that the Ocean surrounds the [world](worlds.html) from edge to edge, like a pipe {tzinor}, such that on [one](one.html) side are the [three](three.html) parts of the [world](worlds.html) -- Asia, Africa, and Europe -- and on the other side is the [New](new.html) [World](worlds.html) which is called America. And if so, how could humans have come there before the Deluge to the [New](new.html) [World](worlds.html) without a ship? And if you say that there were no men there, then even the Deluge didn't descend there, for it would be to no purpose. And if so, what advantage does Eretz Yisrael have that it is called Pure because the water of the Deluge did not descend there? Behold even the [New](new.html) [World](worlds.html) is Pure, for the waters of the Deluge did not descend there! Rather, it is in accordance with what I wrote, that in the Deluge, all the power of the Earth was reduced such that the Wind did not go out at all from the earth. And if so, it was not possible for [Noach](noach.html) to traverse the water in a ship in the sea of the Ocean, since in the [place](place.html) he was at the [time](time.html) of the Deluge, the Wind did not move, and it is not possible to move in the water without wind. And if so, that which I have written that the wind traveled from the earth below to above, it is fitting, that the vessel made in the craft of aviation, that the wind blows on the mast {sail} and the wind lifts up the vessel up and up, and it does not return further to the ground, but rather, it return to the ground is caused by the strong and thick wind close to the earth, which weighs down on the thing and compels {drives} it..."

"to descend. And therefore, the engineer assays that via the explosive powder they call polvir {gunpowder} with great force of the explosive powder placed in a tube and shoots the ball which is placed within it such that it goes up and up until it reaches that [place](place.html), and the ball {bullet?} does not descend all all down, for there is not found a ball at all on the ground, even though according to the natural way it would descend in a short amount of [time](time.html). And from this they judge that the ball ascended [first](one.html) above the thick and murky air, via the force of the polvir. And when it is above it, it {=the thick air}prevents it afterwards from descending. And if so, if it is possible to bring all the flying vessels above this thick air, it is possible to [travel](mashal.html) in the wind up and up, until the sphere of the [Moon](chodesh.html), for the wind would continually lift it up to [travel](mashal.html), and above, the wind moves mightily. And they have already written articles on how to make such a ship as this to [travel](mashal.html) to the [Moon](chodesh.html). But the main point is that this ship must [first](one.html) rise above this murky air.

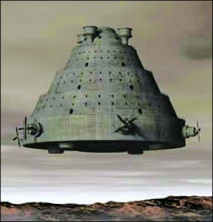
And this was the intent of the [Generation](toldot.html) of the Dispersion, as well. That the wished to establish their residence in the sphere of the [Moon](chodesh.html), for there they would be [saved](salvation.html) from a Deluge. And they figured out how to construct the aforementioned ship. However, how would they lift this ship above the murky air? And therefore they figured to build a tower, so tall that it was higher than that air. And from there, they would be able to utilize the aforementioned ship to [travel](mashal.html) in the air until the sphere of the [Moon](chodesh.html).

And there was another group in the [generation](toldot.html) of the Dispersion who thought of another reason to build the tower. And this is that it is [known](daat.html) that from the [heavens](heaven.html) to the earth, all of the airspace is filled with winds. For it is not possible that from the earth to the [heavens](heaven.html) is emptiness and a vacuum, and it is not within the realm of the understanding of a scholar to understand that they are so empty to such an extent that there is no matter there. And if so, perforce there must be winds, and the winds which are close to the earth are thicker and coarser, while the winds which are closer to the [heavens](heaven.html) are lighter and purer and better. And the entire matter of the [generation](toldot.html) of the Deluge was before the Deluge, that they offered [incense](ketoret.html) to these winds {spirits}..."

"and they attached themselves to them, and via them they performed many {wondrous} things. And the winds {spirits} lied to them, falsely assuring them that they would not drown in the waters of the Deluge. But in the [generation](toldot.html) of the Dispersion, they already saw that they had misled them, and also judged that these winds which were close to the ground did not have power and understanding. But they thought to build a higher than high tower, and there the winds are pure and clear, and if they offered [incense](ketoret.html) to them, they would perform their will, for their force was strong. And in truth, there was in the [generation](toldot.html) of the Dispersal difference groups, [one](one.html) group thinking this and another group thinking that, as stated in the [midrash](orallaw.html). {Josh: probably the [midrash](orallaw.html) discussing [three](three.html) different groups and purposes to building the tower, e.g. to wage war, etc.}And therefore it states וַיְהִי כָל הָאָרֶץ שָׂפָה אֶחָת, that is that all of them agreed with [one](one.html) accord to build the tower. Yet, וּדְבָרִים אֲחָדִים, {separate purposes}, that this [one](one.html) had this reason and that [one](one.html) had that reason. And at any rate, we [know](daat.html) that they were afraid of the Deluge, and therefore they said that Bilaam went as a talebearer, revealing the [secret](sod.html) of the hidden things of [HaShem](hashem.html) to the [gentiles](gen-jew.html), and also this is reckoned as a curse for them. For the [gentiles](gen-jew.html) fenced themselves off in many ways for they were afraid of the Deluge, but Bilaam told them that [HaShem](hashem.html) already swore that he would not bring a Deluge to the [world](worlds.html). And because of him, they returned to their evil ways. And therefore [HaShem](hashem.html) said it at [first](one.html) in His [heart](body.html), so as not to cause a disgrace, such that they would have [fear](fear.html) from a Deluge."

**Rabbi Menachem Tziyuni's Hover-Tower[[75]](#footnote-75)**

The best evidence of a position that the tower of Bavel itself flew. But the reference is to the *sod* of what seems to be a different, **Israelite**, tower, and since this is after all *kabbalah*, which could very well be allegorical, I am not entirely convinced that he understood the *migdal Bavel* as literally a flying ship.



The most promising for the thesis that the tower itself flew is a statement from Rabbi Menachem Tziyuni, a possible grand-student of the Ramban.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 11:4-7*** *And they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make ourselves a name, lest we be scattered upon the face of the entire earth".* ***5.****And the****Lord****descended to see the city and the tower that the sons of man had built.* ***6****And the LORD said: 'Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this is what they begin to do; and now nothing will be withholden from them, which they purpose to do.* ***7******Come, let us go down****, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech'.*

For the matter of "descending" is to be merciful in His judgment. And because of this, that He does not put aside any thing of the creation of the Director, they were left alive. City and tower, their sod is known in the verse {Kohelet 9:14} {though I'm going to add a bit of context}:

***Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 9:13-16*** *This also have I seen as wisdom under the sun, and it seemed great unto me:* ***14****there was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it;* ***15****now there was found in it a man poor and wise, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man.* ***16****Then said I: 'Wisdom is better than strength; nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.'*

And the city is one of the cities of the Kingdom. And the tower is the one which flies in the air, which they saw in the Heavens, which is in the verse:

***Eicha (Lamenatations) 2:1*** *How hath the Lord covered with a cloud the daughter of Zion in His anger! He hath cast down from heaven unto the earth the beauty of Israel, and hath not remembered His footstool in the day of His anger.*

The tower which flies in the air is the beauty of Israel in the verse. Would we really say that the Israelites took over the tower of Bavel and used it to their own ends, until HaShem brought it down in His anger? He says that the **sod** of the tower was that. Can we really take something which is labeled *sod*, and is clearly intended kabbalistically, to be literal and historical. It strikes me that it likely is intended allegorically, to explain some spiritual aspect of the *Tower of Bavel,*or else the spiritual, allegorical meaning of the narrative of the *Tower of Bavel* itself.

# Flying [Chariots](merkava.html)

The story of Elijah, the great prophet of [Israel](gen-jew.html), being taken to [heaven](heaven.html) is found in Melachim (2 Kings) 2:1–18. The chapter begins, “When the Lord was about to take Elijah up to [heaven](heaven.html) in a whirlwind . . .” (verse 1). The Bible doesn’t actually say that Elijah rode to [heaven](heaven.html) in a [chariot](merkava.html) of [fire](fire.html), but that is the assumption, since there was a flaming [chariot](merkava.html) and horses of [fire](fire.html) at the scene, along with the whirlwind. It would make sense that Elijah boarded the vehicle that pulled up in front of him.

***Melachim (2 Kings) 2:11*** *And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a* [*chariot*](merkava.html) *of* [*fire*](fire.html)*, and horses of* [*fire*](fire.html)*, which parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*.*

He was [one](one.html) of very few to have perfected himself to such a degree that he was permitted to enter a level of [Heaven](heaven.html) during his lifetime.[[76]](#footnote-76) The other [known](daat.html) example is Enoch, great-grandfather of [Noah](noach.html).[[77]](#footnote-77) As a result, Elijah became part human and part [angel](angels.html).[[78]](#footnote-78) [[79]](#footnote-79)

[One](one.html) of the commentators explains that the [chariot](merkava.html) of [fire](fire.html) represented that Elijah’s [body](body.html) (in its original [physical](physical.html) state) was consumed, and he thus assumed angelic form when he ascended to [Heaven](heaven.html).[[80]](#footnote-80) Alternatively, the [fire](fire.html) separated the [spiritual](physical.html) and [physical](physical.html) sides of Elijah into two separate parts. He could thus ascend to [Heaven](heaven.html) as a [spiritual](physical.html) being, while his [body](body.html) remaining separate, as a “[garment](garment.html)” he could put back on whenever he would need to assume [physical](physical.html) form.[[81]](#footnote-81)

As a result, Elijah is alive today, living as an [angel](angels.html) in [Heaven](heaven.html) yet regularly visiting Earth in human form to meet with people and to carry out missions. The [Talmud](orallaw.html), as well as later [Jewish](gen-jew.html) tradition, contains literally hundreds of stories of Elijah visiting great rabbis (many on a regular basis) or disguising himself as an ordinary human (such as a palace guard) and using his assumed identity to intercede with non-[Jewish](gen-jew.html) authorities and the like.[[82]](#footnote-82) Occasionally Elijah would bring other righteous people with him on visits to [Heaven](heaven.html).[[83]](#footnote-83)

There is further a tradition that Elijah will come [one](one.html) day to resolve all doubts we have in [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [law](law.html). The Sages have a common expression that an item whose status cannot be resolved (such as a lost item whose owner cannot be located) “shall rest until Elijah comes”.[[84]](#footnote-84)

The most famous appearance Elijah will make, God willing, will be the [one](one.html) you mentioned. The prophet Malachi, in the final prophecy of all the books of the Prophets, states, in:

***Malachi 3:23-24*** *Behold I will send to you Elijah the Prophet, before the* [*coming*](coming.html) *the great and* [*awesome*](awesome.html)[*day of the Lord*](day.html)*. And he will bring back the hearts of the* [*fathers*](fathers.html) *to the sons, and the hearts of the sons to their* [*fathers*](fathers.html)*…*

Shortly before the [Messiah](mashiach.html)’s arrival and the great battles of the [End of Days](lastdays.html), Elijah will come. He will warn us of the upcoming Armageddon, and help bring us to unity and to repentance, in order that we are spared the suffering and live to [merit](merit.html) the [Redemption](redemption.html).

\* \* \*

Throughout the Tanakh, we read how our ancient prophets encountered “extraterrestrial” beings, and even witnessed “unidentified flying objects”. Eliyahu was [walking](walking.html) with his student Elisha when suddenly, out of the sky, “there appeared a [chariot](merkava.html) of [fire](fire.html), and horses of [fire](fire.html), which parted them both asunder; and Eliyahu went up by a whirlwind into [heaven](heaven.html)”.[[85]](#footnote-85) A “[chariot](merkava.html)” from the sky literally abducted Eliyahu! Far more detail is provided by Ezekiel in the famous opening prophecy of his book. [One](one.html) who carefully reads his description of the “divine [chariot](merkava.html)” will undoubtedly see the striking parallels to “flying saucers”.

Ezekiel describes a flying vehicle with wings, flashing [lights](lights.html), electricity; a shiny, “brass-like” (or metallic) exterior, torches of [fire](fire.html) shooting out the bottom, all controlled by a creature [sitting](mashal.html) behind a cockpit of clear “ice”,[[86]](#footnote-86) as the prophet was unfamiliar with glass. Best of all, the mechanism of propulsion is *ofanim*, “spinning wheels”, or “discs”.[[87]](#footnote-87) We must remember that this was not just a vision or hallucination; Ezekiel interacted with this flying craft and, like Eliyahu, it took him up and transported him: “Then a wind lifted me up and I heard a great noise behind me…”[[88]](#footnote-88)

Some inaccurately believe that there is just [one](one.html) such holy *Merkavah*, or “[chariot](merkava.html)”. In reality, the Sages [speak](mashal.html) of multitudes of such [chariots](merkava.html) in God’s legions, as it says in [Psalm](psalms1.html) 68:18, “The [chariots](merkava.html) of God are myriads, even thousands upon thousands; the Lord is among them, as in [Sinai](stages.html), in holiness.” Based on this verse,[[89]](#footnote-89) the Sages state that 22,000 such [chariots](merkava.html) descended upon Mt. [Sinai](stages.html) during the giving of the Torah.[[90]](#footnote-90) This is [one](one.html) reason why [HaShem](hashem.html) is sometimes referred to in the Tanakh as [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *Tzva’ot* (יהוה צבאות), the “God of Legions”.

So, if we [know](daat.html) that [HaShem](hashem.html) has thousands of legions upon flying “[chariots](merkava.html)” decked out with spinning wheels at His disposal, why should we be surprised at the countless sightings of flying saucers—breaking the [laws](law.html) of nature and generally acting benevolently—visiting Earth? All that [one](one.html) has to realize is that the supposed “[aliens](aliens.html)” we [hear](mashal.html) about in the media and in science fiction are none other than [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [angels](angels.html).

Fighting [stars](mazaroth.html)

***Shoftim (Judges) 5:20*** *They fought from* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*, the* [*stars*](mazaroth.html) *in their courses fought against Sisera.*

In the Book of Judges (5:23), Deborah the prophetess sings about the victory of Barak over Sisera. In her song, she says, “Cursed be Meroz! Cursed, cursed be its inhabitants, says the [angel](angels.html) of G‑d!”

Where is Meroz, and who are its inhabitants? The [Talmud](orallaw.html) gives two explanations, [one](one.html) of them being that Meroz is a [star](star.html) or planet. The heavenly [bodies](body.html) had also come to help the Israelites, as Deborah stated just [one](one.html) verse earlier, “From the [heavens](heaven.html) they fought, the [stars](mazaroth.html) from their orbits . . .” This [star](star.html), however, which was the dominant [star](star.html) of Sisera, apparently did not come to their aid. And so, General Barak penalized Meroz—and its inhabitants.

Possibly the most blatant evidence of extraterrestrial life from the [Talmud](orallaw.html) is in [Moed](settimes.html) Katan 16a. There, the Sages discuss what Deborah meant in her song when she said:

They fought from [heaven](heaven.html), the [stars](mazaroth.html) from their paths fought against Sisera… “Cursed be Meroz,” said the [angel](angels.html) of God, “Cursed be its inhabitants, because they did not come to help God, to help God against the mighty”.[[91]](#footnote-91)

The Tanakh is apparently telling us that beings from the [Heavens](heaven.html) descended to Earth to help her in the great battle against the evil Sisera. Deborah then quotes an “[angel](angels.html) of God” who curses a [place](place.html) called Meroz because its inhabitants failed to help in the battle. Where is Meroz? Who are its inhabitants? Why is it an [angel](angels.html) that is criticizing them for not [coming](coming.html) to help? The [Talmud](orallaw.html) [first](one.html) cites an opinion that Meroz was the [name](name.html) of a great man. But how could this be if the Tanakh says that the “inhabitants” of Meroz are cursed? It cannot be referring to a man; the language is clearly referring to a [place](place.html). The [Talmud](orallaw.html) then says that Meroz is a [star](star.html)! [One](one.html) might deduce that [angels](angels.html) inhabit various other [worlds](worlds.html), and they came to help Deborah and Barak in their battle. The [angels](angels.html) from Meroz didn’t show up, so a fellow “[angel](angels.html) of God” curses them.

Indeed, Kabbalistic texts [speak](mashal.html) of [angels](angels.html) inhabiting other planets and [worlds](worlds.html). The [Zohar](orallaw.html) states that God [created](bara.html) many hidden [worlds](worlds.html) in the cosmos, and they are inhabited by 60 million of God’s supernal servants and soldiers.[[92]](#footnote-92) Perhaps this is the meaning of the [Talmud](orallaw.html)’s statement that “God roams over 18,000 [worlds](worlds.html)”.[[93]](#footnote-93) The source for this [teaching](teacher.html) is also [Psalm](psalms1.html) 68, where we read of His 22,000 [chariots](merkava.html). Here, the [Talmud](orallaw.html) interprets the verse slightly differently, concluding that God “rides his Cherub” over 18,000 [worlds](worlds.html).

As much as mainstream media and science would like to ignore it, the conclusion from our own ancient texts and from the countless sightings of “extraterrestrial” beings is that there is certainly other life forms out there. God [created](bara.html) far more than the little we see here on this lowly [world](worlds.html). While it may be hard to wrap our heads around the idea of [aliens](aliens.html) and [angels](angels.html) being [one](one.html) and the same, the evidence is overwhelmingly in favour of this conclusion. It is also important to move past the notion that [angels](angels.html) are entirely “[spiritual](physical.html)” entities that have no [physical](physical.html) form, or that they inhabit some other realm outside of this universe.

Throughout the Tanakh, and beyond, we see that [angels](angels.html) are just as much a part of this universe as humans are, and are [created](bara.html) within the same [space](place.html), as are the “[Heavens](heaven.html)”.[[94]](#footnote-94) They are God’s special servants and messengers, and as such are generally concealed from us. The truth is that most of this vast universe is concealed from us anyway. Scientists have determined that what we can presently see is no more than 4% of the universe. The rest is hiding behind mysterious things like “dark matter” and “dark energy”. We shouldn’t be surprised if we [one](one.html) day find God’s [angels](angels.html) there.

We’ll conclude with another beautiful passage from the [Talmud](orallaw.html)[[95]](#footnote-95) which, upon closer examination, ties everything together. The Sages ask: what does it mean when the Tanakh says that the gates of [Jerusalem](city.html) will be made of precious stones?[[96]](#footnote-96) Rav Yochanan [taught](teacher.html) that in the Messianic [future](future.html), God will bring massive gems that are [thirty](thirty.html) by [thirty](thirty.html) cubits in size and fashion them into [Jerusalem](city.html)’s gates. [One](one.html) of Rav Yochanan’s students scoffed at this unbelievable idea, for the Earth’s precious stones are no larger than an egg! Some [time](time.html) later, the student was out at sea and saw a vision of [angels](angels.html) mining massive gems precisely of that size. He asked them: “For whom are these?” The [angels](angels.html) replied: “For the Holy [One](one.html), Blessed be He, Who will in the [future](future.html) [place](place.html) them at the gates of [Jerusalem](city.html).”

# Wings of an Eagle

The [Pshat](remez.html), the plain meaning of the Torah text is always true.

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 19:4*** *You saw what I had done to Egypt, and I have carried you on the wings of eagles and I have brought you to me.*

The great commentator of the Torah, Rashi, explains the phrase “and I have carried you on the wings of eagles.” Except for eagles, birds carry their fledglings under them for [fear](fear.html) that atop the wings would make the fledglings vulnerable to [attack](attacks.html) from higher flying predators. But eagles have no such [fear](fear.html), since they fly the highest. The danger to eagles is from Man who could shoot an arrow at them from the ground, so the eagle carries the fledglings on its wings with the thought that better the arrow should pierce its [body](body.html) but not the fledglings.[[97]](#footnote-97)

In the [future](future.html) those that wait on the LORD will fly like an eagle:

***Isaiah 40:31*** *But they that wait for* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall* [*walk*](walking.html)*, and not faint.*

# Talking Animals

In the beginning God gave man dominion over all the animals. Much of than dominion has not been realized due to our [sins](sin.html). Nevertheless, there have been righteous individual who have excercized dominion over the animals to the extent that they could even communicate with them. It is also [known](daat.html) that men interacted peacefully with animals before the [flood](noach.html).

***Bereshit (Genesis) 1:26*** *And God said: 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.'*

The serpent in the garden.

As evidenced by the episode in which the serpent tempts Eve to [eat](eating.html) a forbidden fruit, humans and animals originally could [speak](mashal.html) [one](one.html) another’s language:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 3:1-6*** *Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the* [*field*](field.html) *which* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *God had made. And he said unto the woman: 'Yea, hath God said: Ye shall not* [*eat*](eating.html) *of any tree of the garden?'* ***2*** *And the woman said unto the serpent: 'Of the fruit of the trees of the garden we may* [*eat*](eating.html)*;* ***3*** *but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said: Ye shall not* [*eat*](eating.html) *of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.'* ***4*** *And the serpent said unto the woman: 'Ye shall not surely die;* ***5*** *for God doth* [*know*](daat.html) *that in the day ye* [*eat*](eating.html) *thereof, then your* [*eyes*](body.html) *shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil.'* ***6*** *And when the woman saw that the tree was good for* [*food*](food.html)*, and that it was a delight to the* [*eyes*](body.html)*, and that the tree was to be desired to make* [*one*](one.html) *wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did* [*eat*](eating.html)*; and she gave also unto her husband with her, and he did* [*eat*](eating.html)*.*

The Serpent was a [physical](physical.html) animal which was part of the natural [world](worlds.html). In fact, according to the [Talmud](orallaw.html), it was much more humanlike before its [sin](sin.html) (Sanhedrin 59b). However, it was given a [mission](mission.html) from God – to tempt man to [sin](sin.html), to cause [Adam](adam.html) and Eve to transgress the [one](one.html) [commandment](cmds613.html) they had been given.

Bilaam’s [ass](chamor.html)

As Bilaam sets out on his [journey](stages.html) to curse the Israelites, his [donkey](chamor.html) seems disobedient. [First](one.html), she turns off course, then she presses Bilaam’s leg against a fence; finally, she crouches down under Bilaam and refuses to budge. Each step of the way, the beast is responding to her vision of [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [angel](angels.html) obstructing the path. In response to each act of disobedience, Bilaam strikes the animal. At this point, [HaShem](hashem.html) “opens the [donkey](chamor.html)’s [mouth](body.html)” – and it delivers a full-fledged “Mussar lesson” to Bilaam:

“What have I done to you, that justifies you having hit me [three](three.html) times?”

“Am not I your [donkey](chamor.html), upon which you have ridden your whole life until today? Did I ever let you down?”

Bilaam’s [donkey](chamor.html) is described in [Talmudic](orallaw.html) sources[[98]](#footnote-98) as a special formulation from the inception of [Creation](bara.html). [Numbers](nchart.html) 22

Shlomo Communicates with Animals

Song of Songs Rabbah, a Land of [Israel](city.html) [midrash](orallaw.html) compiled after the [time](time.html) of the Talmuds, describes a nocturnal vision experienced by Shlomo HaMelech (King Solomon) at Gibeon, in which he asks [HaShem](hashem.html) for wisdom instead of money, property or the lives of his enemies:

***Melachim alef (I Kings) 3:5-10*** *In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a* [*dream*](dreams.html) *by night; and God said: 'Ask what I shall give thee.' 6 And Solomon said: 'Thou hast shown unto Thy servant* [*David*](fathers.html) *my father great kindness, according as he walked before Thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of* [*heart*](body.html) *with Thee; and Thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that Thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. 7 And now,* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *my God, Thou hast made Thy servant king instead of* [*David*](fathers.html) *my father; and I am but a little child; I* [*know*](daat.html) *not how to go out or come in. 8 And Thy servant is in the midst of Thy people which Thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. 9 Give Thy servant therefore an understanding* [*heart*](body.html) *to judge Thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to judge this Thy great people?' 10 And the* [*speech*](voice.html) *pleased* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, that Solomon had asked this thing. 11 And God said unto him: 'Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern justice; 12 behold, I have done according to thy word: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding* [*heart*](body.html)*; so that there hath been none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. 13 And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honour--so that there hath not been any among the kings like unto thee--all thy days. 14 And if thou wilt* [*walk*](walking.html) *in My ways, to keep My statutes and My* [*commandments*](cmds613.html)*, as thy father* [*David*](fathers.html) *did* [*walk*](walking.html)*, then I will lengthen thy days.' 15 And Solomon awoke, and, behold, it was a* [*dream*](dreams.html)*; and he came to* [*Jerusalem*](city.html)*, and stood before the* [*ark*](ark.html) *of the* [*covenant*](covenant.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, and offered up burnt-offerings, and offered peace-offerings, and made a feast to all his servants.*

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah - The Song of Songs I:9*** *R. Simon said in the* [*name*](name.html) *of R. Simeon b. Halafta: [Solomon resembled] a councillor who was a great favourite at the king's court, and to whom the king once said, ‘Ask me for anything you want.’ Said the councillor to himself: If I ask for silver and gold, he will give me. Said he: I had better ask for the king's daughter, and that includes everything. Even so, In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a* [*dream*](dreams.html) *by night, and God said: Ask what I shall give thee.[[99]](#footnote-99) Said Solomon to himself: If I ask for silver and gold and precious stones and pearls, He will give me. But what I will do is to ask for wisdom, and that will include everything. So it says, Give thy servant therefore an understanding* [*heart*](body.html)*.[[100]](#footnote-100) Said the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, to him: ‘Solomon, thou hast asked for wisdom and thou hast not asked for wealth and possessions and the life of thine enemies. As thou livest, wisdom and* [*knowledge*](knowledge.html) *are granted to thee, and thereby I will give thee riches and possessions.’ Forthwith, Solomon awoke and, behold, it was a* [*dream*](dreams.html)*.[[101]](#footnote-101) R.* [*Isaac*](isaac.html) *said: [This means that] the* [*dream*](dreams.html) *stood upon its foundation.[[102]](#footnote-102) If an* [*ass*](chamor.html) *brayed, he* [*knew*](daat.html) *what it meant; if a bird chirped, he* [*knew*](daat.html) *what it meant. Straightway, he came to* [*Jerusalem*](city.html) *and stood before the* [*ark*](ark.html) *of the* [*covenant*](covenant.html) *of the Lord and offered up burntofferings and offered peace-offerings and made a feast to all his servants. Said R. Eleazar: From this we learn that a feast is made to celebrate the conclusion of the reading of the Torah.[[103]](#footnote-103) R. Judan said: This is to show that whoever* [*teaches*](teacher.html) *the Torah publicly* [*merits*](merit.html) *that the holy spirit should rest on him. For so did Solomon; he* [*taught*](teacher.html)*, and the holy spirit rested on him, and he composed* [*three*](three.html) *books, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and The Song of Songs.*

***Melachim alef (I Kings) 5:9-14*** *And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of* [*heart*](body.html)*, even as the sand that is on the sea-shore. 10 And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the* [*east*](east.html)*, and all the wisdom of Egypt.[[104]](#footnote-104) 11 For he was wiser than all men: than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Calcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol; and his fame was in all the* [*nations*](nations.html) *round about. 12 And he* [*spoke*](mashal.html)[*three*](three.html) *thousand proverbs; and his songs were a thousand and* [*five*](five.html)*. 13 And he* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *to the trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall; he* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *also to the beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes.[[105]](#footnote-105) 14 And there came of all peoples to* [*hear*](mashal.html) *the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, who had heard of his wisdom.*

Although most commentators insisted that King Solomon’s communications were *about* nature, the Aggadah, [Jewish](gen-jew.html) tradition, took it more literally: that King Solomon, in his great wisdom, **could actually** [**speak**](mashal.html) **to the animals and plants in their own languages**.

Solomon was able to draw moral instruction from the vegetable and animal kingdoms,[[106]](#footnote-106) or, according to **Rashi**, he [knew](daat.html) their characteristics and medicinal properties. [Jewish](gen-jew.html) tradition credits him with the ability to converse in the language of every beast, fowl, fish, plant, and [demons](demons.html).[[107]](#footnote-107)

What is the difference between [speaking](mashal.html) to trees and [speaking](mashal.html) about them? [Speaking](mashal.html) to trees involves some kind of dialogue, relationship, interaction in which both parties might be affected and from which both might grow.

[Speaking](mashal.html) of trees, on the other [hand](fourteen.html), is a purely analytical pastime, less active, less equal, less subject to risk that anything might be lost or won. The monologue sustained by this view of the philosopher-king does not necessitate that he so much as move from his Throne.

[HaShem](hashem.html) was very pleased that Solomon had asked for wisdom, as opposed to wealth or the like. [HaShem](hashem.html) granted his request. He became famous for his wisdom and [knowledge](knowledge.html). With his legendary wisdom, Solomon had control over [demons](demons.html)[[108]](#footnote-108) and could [speak](mashal.html) the language of animals.[[109]](#footnote-109) The following [Midrash](orallaw.html) has Solomon summoning eagles as a demonstration of his control:

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah -*** [***Ruth***](ruth.html) ***III:2*** *And* [*David*](fathers.html) *died on a* [*Pentecost*](shavuot.html) *which coincided with the* [*Sabbath*](sabbath.html) *and the Sanhedrin went up to present themselves to Solomon. He said to them, ‘Move him from* [*place*](place.html) *to* [*place*](place.html)*.’ They said to him, ‘But does not a* [*Mishnah*](orallaw.html) *state that a corpse may be anointed and washed as long as the limbs are not moved? ‘’ He said to them, 'The dogs of my father's house are hungry’.[[110]](#footnote-110) They answered him, ‘Does not a* [*Mishnah*](orallaw.html)*[[111]](#footnote-111) state that pumpkins may be cut [on the* [*Sabbath*](sabbath.html)*] for an animal, and a carcase for dogs?’ What did he do? He took a curtain and spread it over [the* [*body*](body.html)*] that the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *should not beat down upon it, while others explain that he summoned eagles[[112]](#footnote-112) who spread their wings over him that the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *should not beat down upon him.*

In addition to control of animals, King Solomon also had control of [demons](demons.html):

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah - The Song of Songs III:18*** *Before Solomon sinned he ruled over sharim and sharoth;[[113]](#footnote-113) as it says, I got me men-singers and women-singers, and the delights of the sons of men,[[114]](#footnote-114) i.e. baths, shidah and shidoth, that is* [*male*](male+female.html) *and* [*female*](male+female.html)[*demons*](demons.html)*, who used to heat them. But after he sinned, he* [*appointed*](settimes.html) *sixty mighty men of the mighty men of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html) *to keep his couch, as it is written, BEHOLD THE LITTER... ALL MEN THAT HANDLE THE SWORD,[[115]](#footnote-115) because he was afraid of the spirits.*

# An Amazing Window

***Bereshit (Gensis) 6:16*** *A light* (Tzohar - צֹהַר) *shalt thou make to the* [*ark*](ark.html)*, and to a cubit shalt thou finish it upward; and the door of the* [*ark*](ark.html) *shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and* [*third*](three.html) *stories shalt thou make it.*

Literally : “A "brightness you will make.”

The word צהר (tzohar) is a hapax legomenon - it appears once, and only once, in the Tanach.

It appears that [Noah](noach.html) had a practical problem the tzohar was meant to address - where was he to get light? Was it a window or a precious jewel? These are the two main opinions. In [Jewish](gen-jew.html) thought, these two opposite ideas will be resolved when a [third](three.html) idea reconciles them.[[116]](#footnote-116)

This term, (transliterated as either tzohar or tsohar), which literally means "Bright/glittering/noon light" (The [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for noon, tzohoriyim, is derived from the same root), is not further defined in the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) Bible. Some translate this simply as "window." [Jewish](gen-jew.html) esoteric tradition, however, regards the tzohar to be a kind of luminous gemstone holding the primordial light of [creation](bara.html).

A precious stone is to let the light in. A window is to look out. But what were they supposed to look out at? An empty waterscape of gray in every direction?

The fact that the word for “noon/zenith,” tzohoriyim, shares the same root, but especially because of its linguistic similarity to the word [zohar](orallaw.html) (“shine/radiant”), triggered an assumption that it is a form of light source rather then an aperture to let light in.

***Targum Pseudo Jonathan*** *to 6:16 - Go you unto Phison, and take from thence* ***a precious stone****, and fix it in the* [*ark*](ark.html) *to illuminate you: with the measure of a cubit (or span) will you complete it above. And a door will you set in the side of the* [*ark*](ark.html)*; and with* [*dwelling*](dwelling.html)*-places, inferior, second, and* [*third*](three.html)*, will you make it.*

Rashi to Genesis 6:16 - **a skylight:** Heb. צֹהַר, lit. light. Some say [that it was] a window, and some say [that it was] a precious stone, which gave them light.[[117]](#footnote-117)

***Genesis Rabbah 31:11*** *During the entire* [*twelve*](twelve.html) *months that* [*Noah*](noach.html) *was in the* [*Ark*](ark.html) *he did not require the light of the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *by day or the light of the* [*moon*](chodesh.html) *by night, but he had a* ***polished stone*** *which he hung up – when it was dim, he* [*knew*](daat.html) *it was day, when it was bright, he* [*knew*](daat.html) *it was night.*

***Sanhedrin 108b*** *“Make a tzohar for the* [*ark*](ark.html)*.” R. Johanan said, The Blessed Holy* [*One*](one.html) *instructed* [*Noah*](noach.html)*: 'Set there* ***precious stones*** *and jewels, so that they may give you light, bright as the noon [in* [*Hebrew*](hebrew.html)*, this is a play on words between tzohar and tzohoriyim].*

The matter might rest there, but elsewhere in the [Talmud](orallaw.html), there is another tradition that [Abraham](avraham.html) also had a miraculous stone:

***Baba Batra*** *16b R. Shimon b. Yochai said,* [*Abraham*](avraham.html) *had a precious stone hung round his* [*neck*](body.html) *which brought immediate healing to any* [*sick*](illness.html) *person who looked on it, and when* [*Abraham*](avraham.html) *our father left this* [*world*](worlds.html)*, the Blessed Holy* [*One*](one.html) *hung it from the wheel of the* [*sun*](hachama.html)*.*

This naturally led to speculation that that the stones of [Noah](noach.html) and [Abraham](avraham.html) were [one](one.html) and the same. And given Genesis Rabbah’s allusion to the river Pishon that flowed through the [Garden of Eden](eden.html), the logical origin for this tzohar would be with there, where God hid the supernal light of the [first](one.html) day for the sole use of the righteous:

***Genesis Rabbah 3:6*** *It was* [*taught*](teacher.html)*, the light which* [*created*](bara.html) *in the* [*six*](six.html) *days…cannot illumine by day, because it would eclipse the light of the* [*sun*](hachama.html)*. Where is it? It is stored for the righteous in the messianic* [*future*](future.html)*...He set it apart for the righteous in the* [*future*](future.html)

Even that is not the end of the matter. The [Zohar](orallaw.html) claims that Simon Ben Yochai possessed it in the Rabbinic era.[[118]](#footnote-118)

How was it possible that [one](one.html) small opening, either a single window or a precious stone was able to light up the entire [ark](ark.html), especially since each [type](types.html) of animal had its own compartment[[119]](#footnote-119) and each floor was separate from the next? Also, we [know](daat.html) that the light of the [sun](hachama.html) and the [moon](chodesh.html) did not penetrate during the [Flood](noach.html)[[120]](#footnote-120) so how could a window have helped anyway?

# Engineering Feats of Excellence

The Great pyramid.

An essential element in Solomon's construction of the [Temple](temple.html) was the miraculous shamir stonecutter. In instructing us how to make the permanent altar to [HaShem](hashem.html), the Torah says, "do not build it out of cut stone".[[121]](#footnote-121) Rashi comments on this verse that iron, the material of deadly weapons, should not be used to shape the stones of the [Temple](temple.html), the essence of which is peace.[[122]](#footnote-122)

The "glance" of the supernatural shamir could carve great stones. The [Talmud](orallaw.html) and later great rabbis described how the passage of the shamir along the surface of a stone would cause it to split perfectly into two pieces.

Small as a barleycorn (less than [one](one.html) centimeter), the shamir did not have an inspiring [physical](physical.html) appearance. Its supernatural essence came from having been [created](bara.html) at the twilight of the [first](one.html) [Sabbath](sabbath.html) Eve during the [Six](six.html) Days of [Creation](bara.html). According to R' Bachiya in the [Talmud](orallaw.html), the shamir was [first](one.html) used at the [time](time.html) of the construction of the [Tabernacle](mikdash.html) to engrave the names of the [tribes](tribes.html) on the precious jewels of the [High Priest](priests.html)'s breastplate.

For safekeeping, the shamir could not be put directly into any kind of metal vessel, including iron, which would be split apart. It was kept wrapped in wool, placed in a lead basket filled with barley bran[[123]](#footnote-123) The choice of these materials was specific, since no other materials were able to resist its penetrative powers.

The shamir was used by man only in the construction of the [Tabernacle](mikdash.html) and the [Temple](temple.html).

The [Mishna](orallaw.html)[[124]](#footnote-124) states that the shamir existed until the destruction of the Second [Temple](temple.html). Tosafot[[125]](#footnote-125) says that the shamir existed into the Common Era. According to the Tosefta, the shamir disappeared after the destruction of the [Temple](temple.html), since it was no longer needed. Correspondingly, the tachash, which had been [created](bara.html) so its skin could be used for the [Tabernacle](mikdash.html), disappeared after the [Tabernacle](mikdash.html) was completed. Considered a [kosher](eating.html) animal, the tachash was similar to a unicorn with a single [horn](shofar.html) on its [head](body.html).[[126]](#footnote-126)

The [Talmud](orallaw.html) says that the precision required to engrave the names of the [tribes](tribes.html) onto the precious jewels of the [high priest](priests.html)'s breastplate without losing any material was not humanly possible.

The shamir had no [physical](physical.html) limitations. It could effortlessly penetrate the hardest materials, and yet it was preserved in a basket of lead (a soft metal), attesting to its other than natural origin.

We learn more about the shamir from a Braita [taught](teacher.html) by the [Gemara](orallaw.html)[[127]](#footnote-127) which [teaches](teacher.html) us that the reason the shamir was used for inscribing the names of the Shevatim on the avnei hachoshen was that the Torah[[128]](#footnote-128) says of these stones, “b’miluosam”, that they were to be used “in their entirety”.

So it would seem from these teachings of Chazal that the shamir has the following characteristics:

It is a sea creature, but can survive outside the water as well.

It splits rocks and glass, as well as any hard surface, including mountains.

It does not enter the [rock](rock.html), but remains on the outside.

It does so without taking anything away from the mass.

It is extremely powerful and can be misused by humans.

It is the size of a barleycorn.

\* \* \*

The menorah used in the [Mishkan](mikdash.html) and the the [Temple](temple.html) was miraculously made of a single piece of gold that was beaten and not molded. Even to day we do not have such technology.

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 25:31-40*** *And you shall make a menorah of pure gold. The menorah shall be made of hammered work; its base and its stem, its goblets, its knobs, and its flowers shall all be* [*one*](one.html) *piece with it. And* [*six*](six.html) *branches* [*coming*](coming.html) *out of its sides:* [*three*](three.html) *menorah branches from its* [*one*](one.html) *side and* [*three*](three.html) *menorah branches from its second side.* [*Three*](three.html) *decorated goblets on* [*one*](one.html) *branch, a knob and a* [*flower*](flower.html)*, and* [*three*](three.html) *decorated goblets on* [*one*](one.html) *branch, a knob and a* [*flower*](flower.html)*; so for the* [*six*](six.html) *branches that come out of the menorah. And on the stem of the menorah shall be* [*four*](four.html) *decorated goblets, its knobs and its flowers. And a knob under the two branches from it, and a knob under the two branches from it, and a knob under the two branches from it; so for the* [*six*](six.html) *branches that come out of the menorah. Their knobs and their branches shall all be* [*one*](one.html) *piece with it; all of it shall be* [*one*](one.html) *hammered mass of pure gold. And you shall make its lamps* [*seven*](seven.html)*, and he shall kindle its lamps so that they shed light toward its* [*face*](body.html)*. And its tongs and its scoops shall be of pure gold. He shall make it of a talent of pure gold, with all these implements. Now see and make according to their pattern, which you are shown on the mountain.*

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 31:1-6*** *G‑d* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *to Moses, saying: “See, I have called by* [*name*](name.html) *Betzalel, son of Uri, son of Hur, of the* [*tribe*](tribes.html) *of Judah. I have filled him with a divine spirit, with wisdom, understanding and* [*knowledge*](knowledge.html)*, and with [talent for] all types of craftsmanship: to devise plans; to work with gold, silver and copper, and in cutting stones to be set, and in carving wood; and to do all types of creative work. Furthermore, I have assigned along with him Aholiav, son of Achisamach, of the* [*tribe*](tribes.html) *of Dan; and in the* [*heart*](body.html) *of every wise person I have placed wisdom. They shall execute everything that I have commanded you . . .”*

Pure gold menorah would not be able to support its own weight.

However, there was a second sacred object in the [Sanctuary](mikdash.html), also linked to the Torah: the Menorah. The root of this word is ner (candle), as in the verse, “the candle is [commandment](cmds613.html) and Torah is light”.[[129]](#footnote-129) The Menorah featured [six](six.html) branches with a cup on top of each. There was also a [seventh](seven.html), central candle stand [known](daat.html) as the Ner Elohim, the Lamp of God,[[130]](#footnote-130) that remained lit.[[131]](#footnote-131)

Ramban,[[132]](#footnote-132) [one](one.html) of the major commentators on the Torah, notes that Betzalel’s abilities were in themselves a miracle, since during the centuries of the [Jews](gen-jew.html)’ stay in Egypt they had no access to precious metals such as gold, silver and copper. Thus, the fact that Betzalel [knew](daat.html) how to work these metals and craft utensils from them was wholly unexpected.

In the words of the Torah: “You should make a Menorah of pure gold. The Menorah should be made hammered (from a single piece of metal). Its base and its stem, its cups, spheres and flowers should all come from it, (Rashi: i.e., all of its parts must be hammered out of [one](one.html) piece of gold).

This task proved so difficult and elusive, even for Moses, that, as Our Sages explain, [HaShem](hashem.html) told him to throw the gold into the [fire](fire.html) and the finished Menorah would emerge.[[133]](#footnote-133) (Was this a miracle, ro magic, or just technology?)

Rashi brings the [Midrash](orallaw.html) Tanchuma to explain the Torah's language that the Menorah "shall be made", as opposed to; "you shall make" the Menorah. The [Midrash](orallaw.html) tells us further that Moshe could not visualize how the Menorah should appear, so God showed him a Menorah of [fire](fire.html). Even then, after exerting great effort to make it, Moshe was still unable to do so. Therefore, God instructed him to throw the gold into the [fire](fire.html) and the complete Menorah emerged.

# Seeing Sound

Sound is a modality that is not normally amenable to seeing. Seeing, on the other [hand](fourteen.html), is not amenable to [hearing](mashal.html). Never the less we have at least [one](one.html) [time](time.html) where both these modalities were amenable. Was it a miracle? Was it normal?

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 20:14*** *All the people saw the sounds and the lightning, the* [*voice*](voice.html) *of the* [*horn*](shofar.html) *and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they fell back and stood at a distance.*

***Mekhilta d'Rabbi Yishmael 20:14*** *"And all the people saw the sounds and the lightnings": They saw what was visible and heard what was audible. These are the words of R. Yishmael. R. Akiva says: They saw (what was audible) and heard what was visible.*

***Rashi on*** [***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***20:15*** *(2) [THEY] SAW THE SOUNDS—they saw that which should be heard, something which is impossible to see on any other occasion.*

*(3) THE SOUNDS which issued from the* [*mouth*](body.html) *of the Almighty.*

Rashi is telling us to take the word see (in [Hebrew](hebrew.html) 'ro'im') literally. They literally could see the sound waves of the [voice](voice.html) of God as He [spoke](mashal.html). In modern psychology, this is called synesthesia, when the sense [experience](experience.html) crosses over to another tract. See the Ibn Ezra who describes this occurrence as a given fact. While the Ibn Ezra, being somewhat of a scientist in his [time](time.html), considers seeing sounds as a conceivable possibility, Rashi saw it as a miracle. Actually the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word ro'im can also mean to perceive, which is to receive information through any [one](one.html) of the [five](five.html) senses. And this is what Rashi is stressing: 'Ro'im' does not mean to perceive as in to [hear](mashal.html) the sounds, which would be quite a normal [experience](experience.html); instead says Rashi, it means to see the sounds, which is a miraculous [event](feasts.html).

**Ibn Ezra on** [**Exodus**](exodus.html) **20:15**: And all the [nation](nations.html) saw the sounds: I have previously explained the intent of seeing the sounds. All sensations join together and are processed at [one](one.html) point. And this is the meaning when they saw the sounds and the lighting. This drove a person to be afraid, and the [voice](voice.html) of the [shofar](shofar.html) was something never heard before. And the mountain itself was smoke. When they saw these wonders, they trembled.

***Shemot Rabbah 5:9*** *All the people saw the thunders. It's not written "thunder (hakol)," but rather "thunders (hakolot)." Rabbi Yochanan teachs that When God’s* [*voice*](voice.html) *came forth at Mount* [*Sinai*](stages.html)*, it divided itself into* [*seventy*](seventy.html) *human languages, so that the whole* [*world*](worlds.html) *might understand it, and every* [*nation*](nations.html) *heard it in their own language.*

**Kli Yakar on** [**Exodus**](exodus.html) **20:15** We have to understand how they could see the sounds ... It sounds reasonable that each word the G-d [spoke](mashal.html) became palpable and tangible to the extent that it took on [physical](physical.html) form and could be seen in the air as floating [letters](letters.html) as is they were written in front of them.

Rav Kook (1865-1935) explained: "The prophetic vision at Mount [Sinai](stages.html)...granted the people a unique perspective, as if they were [standing](mashal.html) near the source of [Creation](bara.html). From that vantage point, they were able to witness the underlying unity of the universe. They were able to see sounds and [hear](mashal.html) sights. God’s revelation at [Sinai](stages.html) was registered by all their senses simultaneously, as a single, undivided perception."[[134]](#footnote-134)

**The Sfat Emet (1847-1905)** [taught](teacher.html): "...the Seer looks at a thing in its completeness, exactly as it is. But for the Hearer, the sound changes as it enters his [ears](body.html), and it isn’t exactly the same sound that was originally made. That’s the advantage of Seeing. But with [Hearing](mashal.html), there is an advantage that the sound truly enters inside of him through the ear, whereas the sight remains outside. With this in mind, the verse [teaches](teacher.html) us that the Children of [Israel](gen-jew.html) had both advantages. They received the words in the manner of 'seeing sounds,' such that even though they truly entered inside of them, nevertheless they 'saw' the sounds, without any distortion."[[135]](#footnote-135)

**The** [**Zohar**](orallaw.html) **2:81b** says, Rabbi Abba said, “It is written: All the people were seeing הקלות (ha-qolot), the thundering. Were seeing—the verse should read were [hearing](mashal.html). However, we have learned as follows: Those קלין (qalin), voices, were engraved in that darkness, [cloud](important.html), and dense fog, and were visible in them as a [body](body.html) is visible, and they saw what they saw and heard what they heard from within that darkness, dense fog, and [cloud](important.html). From within the vision that they saw, they were illumined by supernal radiance and [knew](daat.html) what later [generations](toldot.html) [coming](coming.html) after them would not [know](daat.html). They all saw [face](body.html)-to-[face](body.html), as is written: [Face](body.html)-to-[face](body.html) YHVH [spoke](mashal.html) [with you] (Deut. 5:4) And what did they see? Rabbi Yose [taught](teacher.html), “Radiance of those voices—for there was not a single [voice](voice.html) that did not shine radiantly, enabling them to gaze upon all hidden, concealed treasures and all [generations](toldot.html) that will appear until King [Messiah](mashiach.html). Therefore, “All the people were seeing הקולת (ha-qolot) the voices—actually seeing!” ... Rabbi Shim’on said, “Upon this [voice](voice.html) of the [shofar](shofar.html) depends all. It is written: a mighty [voice](voice.html);[[136]](#footnote-136) a [voice](voice.html) of sheer silence[[137]](#footnote-137) - with radiance more subtle and lucid than all.”[[138]](#footnote-138)

Eleazar ben Judah of Worms ([Hebrew](hebrew.html), c. 1176-1238) The Image of [Speech](voice.html) at [Sinai](stages.html)

..the Creator lowered [fire](fire.html) on the mountain great glorious magnificent they say *Mount* [*Sinai*](stages.html) *was completely smoke for* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *dropped on it in* [*fire*](fire.html) surrounded it with [cloud](important.html) & mist & darkness a black [cloud](important.html) they say *made darkness His hiding* [*place*](place.html) the [voice](voice.html) mixed with [fire](fire.html) & the [voice](voice.html) came out in [fire](fire.html) - image of the [voice](voice.html) seen in a [cloud](important.html) - a word emerging chiseled in its bounds a [letter](letters.html) wavered in the air the people sawr the [speech](voice.html) the im­age of the [letters](letters.html) then they [knew](daat.html) that he was carving light from darkness because the tire blazed it flamed like light that breaks out of the sur­rounding dark they say [*HaShem*](hashem.html)[*speaking*](mashal.html) *to you from middle of the* [*fire*](fire.html) thus as if a man was [speaking](mashal.html) to you on a cold day [letters](letters.html) [coming](coming.html) from his [mouth](body.html) & cutting up the air to leave their image when he [spoke](mashal.html) at [Sinai](stages.html) *you could* [*hear*](mashal.html) *his* [*voice*](voice.html) *then in middle of the* [*fire*](fire.html) thus an inner [fire](fire.html) that burned beside his [speech](voice.html) *the flowering of your word illumines* wrapped in darkness so they could not see the [voice](voice.html) the [speech](voice.html) would enter in the hearer’s [heart](body.html) & then he thought he heard the [voice](voice.html) [speak](mashal.html) [mouth](body.html) to [mouth](body.html).

I wonder if this will all be an [experience](experience.html) of the [Olam HaBa](futures.html)?

# [Hearing](mashal.html) Lightning

וְכָל-הָעָם רֹאִים אֶת-הַקּוֹלֹת וְאֶת-הַלַּפִּידִם

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 20:14*** *And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the* [*shofar*](shofar.html)*, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off.*

They were able to go beyond the more [physically](physical.html) bounded ‘[***hearing***](mashal.html)***’***of the frequencies, and ‘***see’*** the frequencies in the form of light. The inverse paradoxical effect takes [place](place.html) with ‘[hearing](mashal.html) the lightning’.

Neurons devoted to visual processing occupy about 30 percent of the [brain](brain.html) cortex, as compared with 8 percent for touch and just 3 percent for [hearing](mashal.html). No wonder why if it’s visible in front of us, we take it as an objective reality. No wonder why, for us humans, seeing is believing.

We use “[hearing](mashal.html)” in a different but similar sense: When we [know](daat.html) about something because we heard it from someone else, or even read it in a blog or news story, we say, “Yes, I heard about that.” So [hearing](mashal.html), to human beings, is a kind of secondhand [experience](experience.html).

# Water from a [Rock](rock.html) – Miriam’s Well

While it is well [known](daat.html) that rocks contain a minute amount of water, there was [one](one.html) [rock](rock.html) that produced overwhelming streams of water that quenched the thirst of the millions of the Bne [Israel](gen-jew.html) for [forty](forty.html) years in the wilderness. This mysterious [rock](rock.html) contained millions of times its volume in water. Was this a miracle, or just magic? Was technology involved to transport the water to the [rock](rock.html)? Notice that real hardware was involved; a [rock](rock.html) and a [staff](staff.html). What was special about this hardware?

***Bamidbar (***[***Numbers***](nchart.html)***) 20:1-2*** *The entire congregation of the children of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html) *arrived at the desert of Zin in the* [*first*](one.html) *month, and the people settled in* [*Kadesh*](stages.html)*. Miriam died there and was buried there. The congregation had no water; so they assembled against Moses and Aaron.*

From the juxtaposition of Miriam’s death and the water shortage, the sages of [Talmud](orallaw.html) understand that for all the previous 40 years, they did have a ready water source and that it was in Miriam’s [merit](merit.html).[[139]](#footnote-139)

Although the well produced the water in Miriam’s [merit](merit.html), the [Mishnah](orallaw.html) lists it among the [ten](ten.html) unique things [created](bara.html) at twilight on the eve of the [first](one.html) [Shabbat](sabbath.html) after [creation](bara.html).[[140]](#footnote-140)

Do you really think that Moshe can bring water from a [rock](rock.html)? If water indeed comes from the [rock](rock.html), perhaps the people, will finally realize that it is [HaShem](hashem.html) who has brought you to this point and it is at His direction that everything has been provided for you.

Rabbi Chaim Vital, the main disciple of Rabbi [Yitzchak](isaac.html) Luria, the Arizal, gives the exact location for Miriam’s Well: “As you [walk](walking.html) along the shore of the Sea of Tiberias towards the hot springs of Tiberias, at the exact midway point, in a [place](place.html) where there are many palm trees on the sea shore, parallel to the tower that is atop the mountain, that is where the Well of Miriam is”.[[141]](#footnote-141)

Was the water from this mysterious [rock](rock.html) a miracle, or did the mighty men of old have a [connection](connection.html) to The Source that allowed them to bring forth water from this [rock](rock.html).

Remember that miracles come in two forms: nes nigleh[[142]](#footnote-142) (revealed miracles) and nes nistar[[143]](#footnote-143) (concealed miracles). Every breath you take is a miracle, yet because it constantly happens we have become inured to its miraculous nature. The basic foundation of all nature is that its is really a nes nistar, a hidden miracle, from [HaShem](hashem.html)

# Raising [Hands](fourteen.html), Winning the War

During the [exodus](exodus.html), Joshua led the bne [Israel](gen-jew.html) in a battle against [Amalek](amalek.html). During this battle, the outcome depended on the state of Moshe’s [hands](fourteen.html):

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 17:10-12*** *So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with* [*Amalek*](amalek.html)*; and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.* ***11*** *And it came to pass,* ***when Moses held up his*** [***hand***](fourteen.html)***, that*** [***Israel***](gen-jew.html) ***prevailed; and when he let down his*** [***hand***](fourteen.html)***,*** [***Amalek***](amalek.html) ***prevailed.******12*** *But Moses'* [*hands*](fourteen.html) *were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his* [*hands*](fourteen.html)*, the* [*one*](one.html) *on the* [*one*](one.html) *side, and the other on the other side; and* ***his*** [***hands***](fourteen.html) ***were faithful*** *until the going down of the* [*sun*](hachama.html)*.*

Emunah = Faithfulness = Faithful obedience.

When Moshe raises his [hands](fourteen.html), the bne [Israel](gen-jew.html) prevailed; when he lowers them, the Amalekim overcome them. So Aharon and Hur sit Moshe on a [rock](rock.html), and support his [hands](fourteen.html) on each side; in this way, the Torah tells us, Yadav lo emunah – his [hands](fourteen.html) were faithful.

Imagine winning a battle because someone, who is NOT fighting, raises his [hands](fourteen.html)! There is a lot of ‘remote control’ power. How did it work? Was it pschological? Was there technology involved?

If it was a miracle, then it was still a remotely controlled miracle.

The [Mishna](orallaw.html) in Tractate [Rosh Hashana](teruah.html) asks hypothetically, "Do the [hands](fourteen.html) of Moshe win or lose a war?" The [Mishna](orallaw.html) answers its own question and says, "As long as [Israel](gen-jew.html) cast their [eyes](body.html) skyward and subjugated their hearts to their Father in [Heaven](heaven.html), they overcame their enemy – if not, they fell."

Moshe as the [head](body.html) of the Bne [Israel](gen-jew.html) represented all of the Bne [Israel](gen-jew.html). In this way we understand that Moshe was fighting… He was connected to his people and his efforts were reflected in the accomplishments of the Bne [Israel](gen-jew.html).

Moshe's job is, to inspire, and to demonstrate emunah – faithfulness!

# Durable Clothing

During the [exodus](exodus.html) many strange and wonderful things occurred that have facinated many [generations](toldot.html). For example: Our clothes did not wear out and they grew with our children. This kind of clothing is something we expect to find on [Star](star.html) Trek, but we do not expect it in [one](one.html) of the most uninhabitable deserts is the [world](worlds.html).

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 8:2-4*** *And thou shalt remember all the way which* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *thy God hath led thee these* [*forty*](forty.html) *years in the wilderness, that He might afflict thee, to prove thee, to* [*know*](daat.html) *what was in thy* [*heart*](body.html)*, whether thou wouldest keep His* [*commandments*](cmds613.html)*, or no. 3 And He afflicted thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy* [*fathers*](fathers.html)[*know*](daat.html)*; that He might make thee* [*know*](daat.html) *that man doth not live by bread only, but by every thing that proceedeth out of the* [*mouth*](body.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *doth man live. 4* ***Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee****, neither did thy* [*foot*](heel.html) *swell, these* [*forty*](forty.html) *years.*

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 29:4*** *And I have led you* [*forty*](forty.html) *years in the wilderness; your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy* [*foot*](heel.html)*.*

Another example of clothing that never seemed to wear out is found in the [garment](garment.html) that God made for [Adam](adam.html) and Chava (Eve).

The [Midrash](orallaw.html) explains that that [Esav](edom.html)’s garments were the garments of the [first](one.html) man, [Adam](adam.html).[[144]](#footnote-144) The [first](one.html) man was a firstborn and his garments were *the garments of a* [*high priest*](priests.html). In order to become [Esav](edom.html), [Yaaqob](jacob.html) needed to wear [Esav](edom.html)’s special clothes. Like the clothes of the [High Priest](priests.html), [Esav](edom.html)’s clothes were very special.

[*Midrash*](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah -*** [*Numbers*](nchart.html) ***IV:8*** *…*[*Adam*](adam.html) *was the* [*world*](worlds.html)*’s firstborn. When he offered his* [*sacrifice*](korbanot.html)*, as it says: And it pleased the Lord better than a bullock that hath horns and hoofs[[145]](#footnote-145) - he donned* [*high priest*](priests.html)*ly garments; as it says: And the Lord God made for* [*Adam*](adam.html) *and for his wife garments[[146]](#footnote-146) of skins, and clothed them.[[147]](#footnote-147) They were robes of honour[[148]](#footnote-148) which subsequent firstborn used. When* [*Adam*](adam.html) *died he transmitted them to Seth. Seth transmitted them to Methuselah.[[149]](#footnote-149) When Methuselah died he transmitted them to* [*Noah*](noach.html)*.* [*Noah*](noach.html) *arose and offered a* [*sacrifice*](korbanot.html)*; as it says: And he took of every* [*clean*](purity.html) *beast... and offered burnt-offerings on the altar.[[150]](#footnote-150)* [*Noah*](noach.html) *died and transmitted them to Shem. But was Shem a firstborn? Japheth, surely, was the firstborn; as it says: Shem... the brother of Japheth the elder![[151]](#footnote-151) Why then did he* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *them on to Shem? Because* [*Noah*](noach.html) *foresaw[[152]](#footnote-152) that the line of the patriarchs would issue from him. There is proof that Shem offered sacrifices; since it says: And Melchizedek,[[153]](#footnote-153) king of Salem brought forth bread and* [*wine*](wine.html)*; and he was* [*priest*](priests.html) *of God the Most High.[[154]](#footnote-154) Now was it to him that the priesthood was given? The priesthood, surely, was not given to any man until Aaron arose. What then is the meaning of the statement here, ‘and he was* [*priest*](priests.html)*’? Because he offered sacrifices like* [*priests*](priests.html)*. Shem died and handed it on to* [*Abraham*](avraham.html)*. But was* [*Abraham*](avraham.html) *a firstborn?[[155]](#footnote-155) The fact is that because he was a righteous man* [*the birth*](thebirth.html)*right was transferred to him, and he offered sacrifices; as it says: And offered him[[156]](#footnote-156) up for a burnt-*[*offering*](korbanot.html) *in the stead of his son.[[157]](#footnote-157)* [*Abraham*](avraham.html) *died and handed it on to* [*Yitzchak*](isaac.html)*.* [*Yitzchak*](isaac.html) *arose and handed it on to* [*Yaaqob*](jacob.html)*. But was* [*Yaaqob*](jacob.html) *a firstborn? No; but you find that* [*Yaaqob*](jacob.html) *prudently took it [*[*the birth*](thebirth.html)*right] from* [*Esav*](edom.html)*. He said to him: Sell me* [*first*](one.html) *thy birthright.[[158]](#footnote-158) Do you suppose perhaps that it was for no good reason that* [*Yaaqob*](jacob.html) *asked* [*Esav*](edom.html) *to sell him* [*the birth*](thebirth.html)*right? No!* [*Yaaqob*](jacob.html) *wished to offer sacrifices and could not, because he was not the firstborn. Said* [*Esav*](edom.html)*: ‘What can I expect of this birthright? ‘ As it says: Behold I am at the point to die[[159]](#footnote-159); and what profit shall* [*the birth*](thebirth.html)*right do to me?*

[Midrash](orallaw.html) Tanchuma also [teaches](teacher.html) that [Adam](adam.html)’s garments were the garments of the [High Priest](priests.html):

[*Midrash*](orallaw.html) ***Tanchuma Buber, Toldot 12*** *THEN [THE LORD] GOD MADE TUNICS OF SKIN FOR* [*ADAM*](adam.html) *AND HIS WIFE AND CLOTHED THEM. What were TUNICS OF SKIN? [Garments] of* [*high priest*](priests.html)*hood, which the Holy* [*One*](one.html) *put on them, since he (*[*Adam*](adam.html)*) was the glory of the* [*world*](worlds.html)*.*

The special clothes that the [Priests](priests.html) wore while performing the service in the [Temple](temple.html) were meant to somehow “change the man”, to take the imperfect [Priest](priests.html) with all his deficiencies, and “cover up” with priestly garments that elevated the [Priest](priests.html) to the level that he could directly serve [HaShem](hashem.html).

The [Zohar](orallaw.html) indicates that at the [sod](sod.html) level, these special garments actually belonged to [Yaaqob](jacob.html).

***Soncino*** [***Zohar***](orallaw.html)***, Bereshit, Section 1, Page 224b*** *R. Judah said: ‘When* [*Yaaqob*](jacob.html) *went in to his father to obtain a blessing, he was wearing the garments of* [*Esav*](edom.html)*; nevertheless the text says that* [*Yitzchak*](isaac.html) *smelt* his *garments,[[160]](#footnote-160) to indicate that he caught the odor of his raiment in the* [*future*](future.html)[*world*](worlds.html)*, and it was therefore that he blessed him.*

[Yitzchak](isaac.html) blessed [Yaaqob](jacob.html) because the garments emitted this holy aroma, not because he was [deceived](garment.html). [Yitzchak](isaac.html) realized that this fragrance could only accompany someone worthy of the blessing. For if he did not deserve to be blessed, no holy aroma would be put forth. This is the meaning of the verse “and he smelled the smell of his garments, and blessed him”.

Thus, we learn that [Yaaqob](jacob.html) embodied the power and soul of [Esav](edom.html) as derived from [Adam](adam.html) HaRishon.[[161]](#footnote-161)

What kind of a magical [garment](garment.html) is this that it should last for multiple millenium?

# Rapid [Travel](mashal.html) – Leaping Land

Do we have wormholes on earth? Do we have [Star](star.html) Trek transporters? Torah records multiple instances of people who traveled great distances in a very short amount of [time](time.html) just as we would expect if they traveled through a wormhole or if Scotty had beamed them up.

A quantum leap is defined as a movement of a particle from [one](one.html) state to the other without occupying any [space](place.html) in between. [First](one.html) it is in [one](one.html) [place](place.html), and suddenly it is in another [place](place.html), without any evidence of having traveled between the two places. In the Torah we likewise find stories of "quantum leaps," unexplained [journeys](stages.html) that took a fraction of the expected [time](time.html).

Was this technology, magic, or miracles?

**Rashi’s Commentary for: ‎ D’barim (Deuteronomy) 1:2 It is** [**eleven**](eleven.html) **days** [**journey**](stages.html) **from Horeb** Moses said to them: “See what you caused! There is no shorter route from Horeb to [Kadesh](stages.html)-Barnea than the way through Mount Seir, and even that is a [journey](stages.html) of [eleven](eleven.html) days. But you traversed it in [three](three.html) days!” For they traveled from Horeb on the twentieth of lyar, as it is said, “And it came to pass in the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth of the month [... the children of [Israel](gen-jew.html) traveled...]” (Num. 10:11-12). And on the [twenty](twenty.html)-[ninth](nine.html) of [Sivan](feasts.html), they sent out the spies from [Kadesh](stages.html) Barnea, (an interval of 40 days; cf. Ta’anith 29a). Subtract from them the [thirty](thirty.html) days they spent at Kivroth Hataavah (Num. 11:34), where they [ate](eating.html) the meat a “month of days,” and the [seven](seven.html) days they spent at Hazeroth for Miriam to be confined [as a mezora’ath] (Num. 12:15); we find therefore, that this entire [journey](stages.html) [from Horeb to [Kadesh](stages.html)-Barnea] took [only] [three](three.html) days. And to such an extent did the Shechinah exert itself to hasten your arrival to the land of Canaan, but because you sinned, He made you [travel](mashal.html) around Mount Seir for [forty](forty.html) years. [from Sifrei]

The [Gemara](orallaw.html) speaks of [three](three.html) [journeys](stages.html) that were miraculously shortened (kefitzat [Kefitzas] HaDerech קְפִיצַת הַדֶּרֶךְ) or (kaftza lo ha'aretz) in order to accomplish a critical task in a transcendent way.

Whether we say that the “land leapt”, the “land folded”, “jumping of the way”, the “earth contracted”, the “earth shrink”, the “earth jumped”, the “Leap of the Earth”, “Kefisat ha-derekh”, “the jumping of the road”, “jumping of the path”, “leap of distance”, “folding the way”, “jumping of the path/road/way”, “leapfrogging”, “shrinking of the road”, teleportation, quantum leap, they all add up to a miraculous [journey](stages.html).

ְ קְפִיצַת הַדֶּרֶך קְפִיצַת הַארץ

kefitzat haderech Kefitzat Ha’Aretz

Kabbalah [teaches](teacher.html) that those episodes in which there was miraculous shortening of the distance, or "kefitzat HaDerech" in [Hebrew](hebrew.html), it was not the [traveling](mashal.html) [time](time.html) that was shortened but rather the distance itself. The tzaddik was suspended, so to [speak](mashal.html), above the boundaries of [time](time.html) and [space](place.html), so that he could move instantaneously from [one](one.html) [place](place.html) to another. The rules of nature remained in [place](place.html); the tzaddik simply transcended them.

Whether the land folded to permit an earlier arrival, or [time](time.html) slowed down, either way, kefitzat haderekh shortens the [time](time.html) it takes to reach a destination. In some way, kefitzat haderekh changes the normal rules of physics and merges [time](time.html) and [space](place.html) in a way that is not normally seen.

As we examine these [three](three.html) [journeys](stages.html) that were shortened, notice that ‘speed’ was not a critical issue. In each of these [three](three.html) [events](feasts.html), there was no need to get there quickly. This is an important point that we will examine as we look at these [journeys](stages.html).

The [first](one.html) [journey](stages.html) that was miraculously shortened was the [journey](stages.html) of the servant of [Avraham](avraham.html), Eliezer, who was sent by [Avraham](avraham.html) to get a wife for [Yitzchak](isaac.html) after the [Akeida](human.html), the binding of [Yitzchak](isaac.html). This wasn’t just a simple match. The [future](future.html) of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [nation](nations.html) was on the line. [Yitzchak](isaac.html)’s wife, Rivka, would not only replace Sarah imeinu, but she would become the next of the imahot. She would be the wife of the [first](one.html) [Jew](gen-jew.html) [circumcised](circumcz.html) on the [eighth](eight.html) day. This wife would make [Yitzchak](isaac.html) whole. This [first](one.html) [journey](stages.html) took [place](place.html) on [Tishri](feasts.html) 15, the [first](one.html) day of [Succoth](succoth.html). This [journey](stages.html) is recorded in: Bereshit (Genesis) 24:34.

Rashi comments: "Today I started on my [journey](stages.html) and today I arrived here." Hence, we may infer that the earth leapt for him (i.e., his [journey](stages.html) was miraculously shortened).

The second [journey](stages.html) that was miraculously shortened was [Yaaqob](jacob.html)’s [journey](stages.html)[[162]](#footnote-162) when he realized that he had passed the [Temple](temple.html) mount without [praying](prayer.html). He had gotten all of the way to Charan before he realized his mistake.[[163]](#footnote-163) This second [journey](stages.html) took [place](place.html) on [Tishri](feasts.html) 15, the [first](one.html) day of [Succoth](succoth.html).

***Chullin 91b*** *R. Akiba said: I once asked R. Gamaliel and R. Joshua in the meatmarket of Emmaus where they had gone to buy a beast for the* [*wedding*](wedding.html) *feast of R. Gamaliel's son: It is written: And the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *rose upon him. Did the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *rise upon him only? Did it not rise upon the whole* [*world*](worlds.html)*? R.* [*Yitzchak*](isaac.html) *said: It means that the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *which had set for his sake now rose for him. For it is written: And* [*Jacob*](israelja.html) *went out from Beer-Sheba, and went toward Haran.[[164]](#footnote-164) And it is further written: And he lighted upon the* [*place*](place.html)*.[[165]](#footnote-165) When he reached Haran he said [to himself], ‘Shall I have passed through the* [*place*](place.html) *where my* [*fathers*](fathers.html)[*prayed*](prayer.html) *and not have* [*prayed*](prayer.html) *too?’ He immediately resolved to return, but no sooner had he thought of this than the earth contracted and he immediately lighted upon the* [*place*](place.html)*. After he* [*prayed*](prayer.html) *he wished to return [to where he was], but the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He said: ‘This righteous man has come to my habitation; shall he depart without a night's rest?’ Thereupon the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *set.*

The [third](three.html) [journey](stages.html), that was miraculously shortened, involved a lesser [known](daat.html) personality, Abishai ben Zeruiah. Abishai was [coming](coming.html) to [save](salvation.html) [David](fathers.html) in this incident:

***Sanhedrin 95a*** *And Ishbi-benob, which was of the sons of the giant, the weight of whose spear weighed* [*three*](three.html) *hundred shekels of brass in weight, he being girded with a* [*new*](new.html) *sword, thought to have slain* [*David*](fathers.html)*.[[166]](#footnote-166) What is meant by ‘And Ishbi-be-nob’?[[167]](#footnote-167) — Rab Judah said in Rab’s* [*name*](name.html)*: A man who came on account of Nob.[[168]](#footnote-168) [For] the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He had said to* [*David*](fathers.html)*, ‘How long will this crime be hidden in thy* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*. [i.e. unpunished]. Through thee Nob, the* [*city*](city.html) *of* [*Priests*](priests.html)*, was massacred; through thee Doeg the Edomite was banished; and through thee Saul and his* [*three*](three.html) *sons were slain:[[169]](#footnote-169) wouldst thou rather thy line to end, or be delivered unto the enemy’s* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*? He replied: ‘Sovereign of the Universe! I would rather be delivered into the enemy’s* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *than that my line should end.’[[170]](#footnote-170)* [*One*](one.html) *day, when he [*[*David*](fathers.html)*] ventured forth to Sekhor Bizzae,[[171]](#footnote-171) Satan appeared before him in the guise of a deer. He shot arrows at him, but did not reach him, and was thus led on until inveigled into the land of the Philistines. When Ishbi-benob espied him, he exclaimed, ‘It is he who slew my brother Goliath.’ So, he bound him, doubled him up and cast him under an olive press; but a miracle was wrought, and the ground softened under him. Hence it is written, Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, that my* [*feet*](heel.html) *did not slip.[[172]](#footnote-172) Now that day was* [*Sabbath*](sabbath.html) *Eve, and Abishai the son of Zeruiah,[[173]](#footnote-173) washing his* [*head*](body.html) *in* [*four*](four.html) *gribahs[[174]](#footnote-174) of water, remarked some* [*blood*](body.html)*-stains [therein]. Others say a dove came and beat [its wings] before him. Thereupon he reasoned:* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*[[175]](#footnote-175) is likened to a dove, as it is written, ye are as the wings of a dove covered with silver;[[176]](#footnote-176) this must be an intimation that* [*David*](fathers.html) *is in trouble. So he went to his house, but did not find him. Now, said he, we learnt,* [*One*](one.html) *may not ride upon his [sc. a king’s] horse, nor sit upon his seat, nor use his sceptre:[[177]](#footnote-177) but how is it in a* [*time*](time.html) *of danger? So he went and propounded the question in the schoolhouse, and was answered, ‘In* [*time*](time.html) *of danger, it is permitted.’ He then mounted his [sc.* [*David*](fathers.html)*’s] mule and rode off,[[178]](#footnote-178) and the earth contracted under him.[[179]](#footnote-179) Whilst riding, he saw Orpah[[180]](#footnote-180) his [sc. Ishbi-benob’s] mother spinning. On descrying him, she broke off [the thread of] the spindle and threw it [the spindle] at him, intending to kill him. Then she said, ‘Young man, bring me the spindle.’[[181]](#footnote-181) but he threw it on the top of her* [*head*](body.html) *instead, and killed her. When Ishbi-benob beheld him, he said [to himself], Now that there are two they will slay me. So he threw* [*David*](fathers.html) *up [in the air] and stuck his spear [into the earth], Saying. ‘Let him fall upon it, and perish;’ but Abishai pronounced the Divine* [*Name*](name.html)*,[[182]](#footnote-182) by means of which* [*David*](fathers.html) *was held suspended between* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *and earth. (Why did not* [*David*](fathers.html) *pronounce it himself? — Because ‘a prisoner cannot free himself from prison.’) [Abishai] then enquired of him, ‘What dost thou here?’ — ‘Thus did G-d* [*speak*](mashal.html) *unto me,[[183]](#footnote-183) and thus did I answer Him,’ replied he. ‘Reverse thy* [*prayer*](prayer.html)*.’[[184]](#footnote-184) said he: ‘let thy grandson sell wax rather than that thou shouldst suffer.’[[185]](#footnote-185) ‘If so,’ said he, ‘do thou aid me [to reverse it].’ Hence it is written, But Abishai the son of Zeruiah succoured him,[[186]](#footnote-186) upon which Rab Judah commented in Rab’s* [*name*](name.html)*: He succoured him in* [*prayer*](prayer.html)*. Abishai then [again] pronounced the Divine* [*Name*](name.html) *and brought him down[[187]](#footnote-187) [from midair, where he was still suspended]. Now Ishbi-benob was pursuing them. When they reached Kubi[[188]](#footnote-188) they said to [each other], ‘Let us stand [and fight] against him.’ [But they were still afraid, and proceeded further.] When they reached Bethre[[189]](#footnote-189) they said, ‘Can two whelps kill a lion?’[[190]](#footnote-190) So they taunted him, ‘Go and find thy mother Orpah in the grave.’ On their mentioning his mother’s* [*name*](name.html) *to him[[191]](#footnote-191) his strength failed, and they slew him. Hence it is written, Then the men of* [*David*](fathers.html) *sware unto him, saying, Thou shalt no more go out with us unto battle, that thou quench not the light of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*.[[192]](#footnote-192)*

***Yochanan (John) 6:19*** *So when they had rowed about* [*five*](five.html) *and* [*twenty*](twenty.html) *or* [*thirty*](thirty.html) *furlongs, they see* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)[*walking*](walking.html) *on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid. 20 But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid. 21 Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.*

***II Luqas (Acts) 8:38-39*** *And he commanded the* [*chariot*](merkava.html) *to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. 39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.*

[***Numbers***](nchart.html) ***Rabbah 16:15*** *AND THEY RETURNED FROM SPYING OUT THE LAND AT THE END OF* [*FORTY*](forty.html) *DAYS (XIII,25). But do you not find that they walked [only] from the south to the north in* [*forty*](forty.html) *days? Would they then have walked through the whole of it in* [*forty*](forty.html) *days? [Certainly not;] but it was clear to the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, that they would come and utter slander concerning the land, and that years of suffering would be decreed against that* [*generation*](toldot.html)*, a year for each day of spying, and so the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, caused the road to shrink for them.*

Each of these [three](three.html) [journeys](stages.html) mentioned in the [Gemara](orallaw.html) have something in common. They each relate, indirectly, to the [Temple](temple.html).

1. [Yitzchak](isaac.html) became complete when he took Rivka into his tent and married her. The Torah declares that, “It is not good for Man to be alone. I will create for him a helpmate”.[[193]](#footnote-193) The whole porpose of the shortening of the way for [Avraham](avraham.html)’s servant was to bring back [Yitzchak](isaac.html)’s soul mate for [marriage](mashal.html). Consider that [Yitzchak](isaac.html) became the quintessential [korban](korbanot.html),[[194]](#footnote-194) which was offered in the [Temple](temple.html). The [event](feasts.html) that *immediately* preceeded the *kefitzat HaDerech of* [*Avraham*](avraham.html)*’s servant*, was the akieda of [Yitzchak](isaac.html) whereby he became a [korban](korbanot.html). [Yitzchak](isaac.html) would become the [first](one.html) indirect [korban](korbanot.html). (Bear in mind that [HaShem](hashem.html) never wanted a [human sacrifice](korbanot.html), which is why [Avraham](avraham.html) was not allowed to actually kill [Yitzchak](isaac.html).)
2. [Yaaqob](jacob.html) [journey](stages.html) was shortened only so that he could [pray](prayer.html) at the [place](place.html) of the [Temple](temple.html), spend the evening at the [place](place.html) of the [Temple](temple.html), and anoint the [rock](rock.html) that represented the [future](future.html) [Temple](temple.html). This location was called by [Yaaqob](jacob.html), “The [Place](place.html) – HaMakom”. [Yaaqob](jacob.html) would indirectly build the [Temple](temple.html) by anointing the [rock](rock.html).
3. Abishai ben Zeruiah’s [journey](stages.html) was shortened so that he could preserve the life of King [David](fathers.html), who would [desire](needs.html) to build the [Temple](temple.html). He would be the [one](one.html) to prepare all that was needed to build the [Temple](temple.html). [David](fathers.html) would be the indirect builder of the [Temple](temple.html).

Abraham and his small army set out in the darkness of night. Although they were ten days’ travel from the four kings, they miraculously reached Damascus, where the kings were, in a single day.

**Ramban 14:15** AND HE PURSUED THEM UNTO HOBAH, WHICH IS ON THE LEFT HAND OF DAMASCUS. It is known that there is a great distance from the oaks of Mamre in Hebron in the land of Judah, to Damascus, which is outside the Land. If so, he pursued them for many days until he forced them to leave the land for they were returning to Babylon, their country. Or possibly there occurred here a great miracle, just as our Rabbis expounded from the verse, *The way with his foot he treadeth not*.[[195]](#footnote-195)

**Midrash Rabbah - Genesis 43:3** R. Levi and Eleazar in R. Jose's name said: Abraham's steps were three miles long.[[196]](#footnote-196) R. Judah b. R. Sieon said: They were one mile long, for it says, ‘*The way with his feet he treadeth not*.’[[197]](#footnote-197)

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See also the document titled: “Leapt”.

Einstein later showed, together with another [Jewish](gen-jew.html) scientist named Nathan Rosen, that it would be theoretically possible to “bend” spacetime and connect two points that are vastly far apart. It would be like folding over the fabric and then poking a hole through both layers. Such an “Einstein-Rosen bridge”, better [known](daat.html) as a wormhole, would allow [travel](mashal.html) across extremely vast distances in a very short period of [time](time.html). In other words, it would be very much like *kefitzat haderekh!*

**\* \* \***

The [Zohar](orallaw.html) (I, 4b-5a) states that the malevolent [angel](angels.html) Samael can traverse as much as 6000 parsas in a single moment. This [number](nchart.html) is not arbitrary, for the [Talmud](orallaw.html) calculates that the Earth’s circumference is 6000 parsas (*Pesachim* 94a). This is an incredible piece of [Talmudic](orallaw.html) science, considering how little of the globe was [known](daat.html) then. Today, we [know](daat.html) that Earth’s exact circumference is 40,075 km at the equator, a value close to that of our Sages. In fact, if making the correct assumption that the Sages must have been exact in their [knowledge](knowledge.html), we might be able to properly identify the length of a [Talmudic](orallaw.html) *parsa.*

**\* \* \***

The [Talmud](orallaw.html)[[198]](#footnote-198) calculates that the distance of the Heavenly Ladder that [Jacob](israelja.html) saw in his vision was a whopping 8000 parsas, which would be over 50,000 km. The word used by our Sages is *rochav*, meaning “width”. A superficial reading of the [Talmud](orallaw.html) suggests that each [angel](angels.html) is 2000 parsas wide (based on Daniel 10:6), and since [Jacob](israelja.html) saw [four](four.html) [angels](angels.html), the width of the Ladder must have been 8000 parsas. However, this does not make sense if taken literally, for why would an [angel](angels.html)’s form be 2000 parsas wide? And if it was, how could [Jacob](israelja.html) even capture the sight of an [angel](angels.html) in his limited [field](field.html) of view? The [Talmud](orallaw.html) must be [teaching](teacher.html) something else. The big question here is why use the language of *width* as opposed to length or height, as might be expected?

The precise [Talmudic](orallaw.html) language of *rochav*, “width”, in a [place](place.html) where we might have expected height. Of course, we do have a dimension of height. However, when zooming out to a “flat” universe, we really only visualize it in terms of *width*, as if on a two-dimensional plane. Going further, Einstein later showed, together with another [Jewish](gen-jew.html) scientist named Nathan Rosen, that it would be theoretically possible to “bend” spacetime and connect two points that are vastly far apart. It would be like folding over the fabric and then poking a hole through both layers. Such an “Einstein-Rosen bridge”, better [known](daat.html) as a wormhole, would allow [travel](mashal.html) across extremely vast distances in a very short period of [time](time.html). In other words, it would be very much like *kefitzat haderekh!*

So, what our Sages may have been secretly implying in describing the *width* of [Jacob](israelja.html)’s Ladder is that this wormhole (of sorts) spanned 8000 parsas, or over 50,000 km. This is a distance even wider than the Earth and, scientifically, we would expect wormholes to be very large like this.

It is worth noting that when our Sages described the teleportation of [Jacob](israelja.html), they said that kaftzah ha’aretz, again using that term aretz, and implying that it “jumped” or “contracted” for him. So, another term for this phenomenon, truer to the language of the [Talmud](orallaw.html), would be kefitzat ha’aretz, the warping of the spacetime fabric of this universe. Kefitzat haderekh is accurate, too, implying that [one](one.html) “jumped the path”, finding an alternate shortcut from [one](one.html) point in the universe to another. This appears to have happened at [Sinai](stages.html), as well. Our Sages likened [Jacob](israelja.html)’s Ladder to the [Sinai](stages.html) Revelation, and the [Zohar](orallaw.html) (I, 149a, Sitrei Torah) even notes that the numerical value of “ladder” (סלם) and “[Sinai](stages.html)” (סיני) is the same—130. At [Sinai](stages.html), too, a “wormhole” opened up allowing 22,000 angelic “[chariots](merkava.html)” to descend upon the mountain (Bamidbar Rabbah 2:3).

Theoretical physics aside, can we actually create such wormholes? In 2017, scientists succeeded in producing tiny, microscopic wormholes for the [first](one.html) [time](time.html). It is certainly possible that in the near [future](future.html) we will have the technology to open up larger wormholes, making rapid [travel](mashal.html) across God’s vast universe feasible. It appears that God’s [angels](angels.html) already employ such a wormhole-style system of [travel](mashal.html), traversing thousands of parsas instantaneously. It might help explain the Tower of [Babel](bavel.html) episode which, as we’ve mentioned in the past, was not simply a tower but meant to “lift off” and “conquer” the [Heavens](heaven.html).[[199]](#footnote-199)

\* \* \*

***II Luqas (Acts) 8:26-40*** *And the* [*angel*](angels.html) *of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from* [*Jerusalem*](city.html) *unto Gaza, which is desert. 27 And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great* [*authority*](authority.html) *under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to* [*Jerusalem*](city.html) *for to worship, 28 Was returning, and* [*sitting*](mashal.html) *in his* [*chariot*](merkava.html) *read Esaias the prophet. 29 Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this* [*chariot*](merkava.html)*. 30 And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? 31 And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. 32 The* [*place*](place.html) *of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his* [*mouth*](body.html)*: 33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his* [*generation*](toldot.html)*? for his life is taken from the earth. 34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I* [*pray*](prayer.html) *thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? 35 Then Philip opened his* [*mouth*](body.html)*, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him* [*Jesus*](yeshua.html)*. 36 And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? 37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine* [*heart*](body.html)*, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that* [*Jesus*](yeshua.html) *Christ is the Son of God. 38 And he commanded the* [*chariot*](merkava.html) *to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. 39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. 40 But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.*

\* \* \*

The holy Baal Shem, as is well [known](daat.html), used to frequently [travel](mashal.html) with kefitzat haderech. The Baal Shem Tov would instruct the wagon driver to let go of the reins, and they would miraculously pass over great distances in very little [time](time.html).

Now, [travel](mashal.html) back then was not much different than [travel](mashal.html) today. Just as we have to make periodic stops, in rest areas or gas stations, to replenish the gas of our car or van (or tesla), so, too, then, there were “rest areas” at regular intervals, at which the horses could be watered and fed a [new](new.html) batch of hay (and pizza).

And just as today, even the driver [needs](needs.html) occasional recharging, and therefore there are hotels and motels in which the driver can spend the night, to rest up before continuing the [journey](stages.html), so, too, then there were the inns and kretchme’s to enable the wagon driver to rest up and [gather](gather.html) strength to resume his [journey](stages.html).

It happened that the horse of the Baal Shem Tov was pulling the wagon of the Baal Shem and company on [one](one.html) of these expedited [journeys](stages.html). The horse gazed in wonder as the miles and miles of road flew by from under them in no [time](time.html). Presently they passed rest area after rest area, and there was no [sign](signs.html) of stopping to feed the horse.

The horse tried to understand this. ‘It must be’, he thought to himself, ‘that serving as the horse of the holy Baal Shem Tov has had such a profound effect on me, I have become so refined, that I am no longer on the level of a horse, but I have, instead, graduated to the level of a human being, and these rest areas, which are for beasts, are no longer for me.

They continued along, and, behold, even inns and kretchme’s passed by, with no [sign](signs.html) of slowing down. The horse was even more amazed. Even his driver, a human being, had to stop periodically and rest up in [one](one.html) of the inns. ‘It can only be’, he concluded, ‘that my close association with the tzaddik has had such a profound impact on me that I have been elevated beyond even human status, and I have reached the level of an [angel](angels.html), who has no need even of inns’.

But eventually they reached their destination. The Baal Shem Tov went to accomplish whatever holy [mission](mission.html) he had come for. The horse was untied, and put into the stable and given a generous serving of hay, - which it proceeded to gobble up like a regular horse!

\* \* \*

Elijah is documented to have outrun the king's [chariots](merkava.html).

***Melachim alef (1Kings) 18:46*** *And the* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.*

Thus we see that there are men who had the ability to take quantum leaps, or pass through wormholes. Did they use technology to accomplish this task, or was it magic? In the end, it is all miraculous and is marvelous in our [eyes](body.html).

{I wonder how many of these miraculous things will be ‘normal’ in the messianic age and how many will be ‘normal’ in the [Olam HaBa](futures.html)}

# [Staff](staff.html) > Serpent > [Staff](staff.html) [Eating](eating.html) [Staff](staff.html)

In Egypt, when [HaShem](hashem.html) began redeeming His people, He has the good guys (Moshe Aharon) and the bad guys (Paro’s magicians) both changing dead staffs into live serpents. Both sides [CREATED](bara.html) LIFE!

OK, let’s get into the details…

Aharon’s [staff](staff.html) became a serpent and the magicians threw down their staffs and they became serpents.

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 7:10*** *And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *had commanded: and Aaron cast down his* [*rod*](staff.html) *before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent.*

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 7:11-12******11*** *Then Pharaoh also called for the wise men and the sorcerers; and they also, the magicians of Egypt, did in like manner with their* [*secret*](sod.html) *arts. 12 For they cast down every man his* [*rod*](staff.html)*, and they became serpents; but Aaron's* [*rod*](staff.html) *swallowed up their rods.*

The ability to turn dried up old sticks into live serpents is so easy that even women and children could perform this on a moment’s notice. It is so common [place](place.html) that Paro mocks Moshe and Aharon for trying to impress them with such a simple matter.

***Shemot Rabbah 9:6*** *He began to tease them, and to cluck at them like a chicken, and he said, “These are the kinds of wonders that your God does?! People generally bring merchandise to a* [*place*](place.html) *where they don’t already have it! Do they bring fish to Akko [a fishing town]?! Don’t you* [*know*](daat.html) *that all the magic arts are in my domain? He immediately called for children to be brought from their schools, so they could perform the same trick. And then he called in his wife, and she did it, too!*

So the Torah itself makes it clear that there was nothing special about this so-called *wonder*. Pharaoh seems to have seen this kind of thing before. And his own magicians have no trouble replicating it. The [Midrash](orallaw.html) just takes it a step further and says that even little children could do this! And then Paro’s wife walks in, and she does it, too, just like that! Looks like *everyone* knows the old stick-to-serpent trick! This is no great proof of the [one](one.html), true God; this is just common talent.

So, how many folks *today* can turn sticks into serpents? I have never even heard of anyone who had such power.

There is [one](one.html) final detail, however, that does give Aaron’s performance a slight edge. Just after Paro’s magicians have come in and reproduced the serpents from a stick with ease, we get [one](one.html) last bit of talent:

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 7:12*** *For they cast down every man his* [*rod*](staff.html)*, and they became serpents; but Aaron's* [*rod*](staff.html) *swallowed up their rods.*

Rashi to Shemot 7:12 **Aaron’s** [**rod**](staff.html) **swallowed their rods -** *After it returned and became a* [*rod*](staff.html) *again, then it swallowed them all.*

[***Shabbat***](sabbath.html) ***97a*** *The* [*Gemara*](orallaw.html) *proceeds to discuss another miracle that transpired at that* [*time*](time.html)*. With regard to the verse, “And each man threw down his* [*staff*](staff.html) *and they became serpents,* ***and Aaron’s*** [***staff***](staff.html) ***swallowed their staffs”*** *(*[*Exodus*](exodus.html) *7:12),* ***Rabbi Elazar said:*** *This was* ***a miracle within a miracle.*** *It was Aaron’s* [*staff*](staff.html)*, not his serpent, that swallowed the other staffs.*

Now so far we’ve just been dealing with “presto-change” transformations - “watch as I turn this lifeless [staff](staff.html)… into a serpent!” – just a normal ability. But this is different. If Rashi is right, it isn’t just that Aaron then charmed his serpent into [eating](eating.html) the other serpent. No, suddenly, something happens that makes no sense. Aaron’s serpent turns back into a [*staff*](staff.html), and then it swallows the others.

The Torah emphasizes that it was Aharon’s [*staff*](staff.html)that consumed the serpent-staffs of the Egyptian sorcerers. Our sages explain that since it is natural that a snake swallow another snake, [HaShem](hashem.html) made it so that Aaron’s [staff](staff.html) should swallow the others *after* it had reverted to its original, inanimate form,

Now a [staff](staff.html) doesn’t swallow anything. It doesn’t have a [mouth](body.html). So what’s going on here?

The [Talmudic](orallaw.html) passage that Rashi is borrowing from[[200]](#footnote-200) says that when Aaron’s [staff](staff.html) did the swallowing, this was “a miracle inside of a miracle.” That is, the magic was never to turn a stick into a serpent. The real magic was to get inside of the transformation, reconfigure it, and somehow use its variables to produce an outcome that was actually impossible, but somehow happening. This was something that only the good guys did.

What has become of this magic (or is it a miracle or technology)? Why can’t the common person demonstrate this ability?

As an aside: The [first](one.html) [three](three.html) miracles performed by Moshe and Aharon to intimidate Paro, turning a [staff](staff.html) into a snake and the [plagues](plagues.html) of [blood](body.html) and frogs, were duplicated by the magicians. This transmutation talent seemingly has been lost to most in the modern [world](worlds.html).

# An Invincible Army

When the Bne [Israel](gen-jew.html) went to battle for the Promised land, none of the Bne [Israel](gen-jew.html) were killed as long as they obeyed the [commands](cmds613.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html). When they disobeyed [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [command](cmds613.html), then He cursed them and some were killed.[[201]](#footnote-201)

**Ohr HaChaim to Bamidbar (**[**Numbers**](nchart.html)**) 32:22 - and the land will be conquered, etc.** Why did these words have to be written after we heard at the end of the last verse that God will drive out His enemies before Him? Furthermore, why did Moses have to mention once more: "and after that you will return?" We already understood from the context that after the other [tribes](tribes.html) had been settled the [tribes](tribes.html) of Reuven and Gad would return to their families on the [East](east.html) Bank. Actually, Moses wanted to tell the two [tribes](tribes.html) that as a result of their keeping their bargain a [number](nchart.html) of promises would be fulfilled. 1) The land would be subdued; 2) every [one](one.html) of them would return home whole in [body](body.html) and in spirit.

The Sages state that actually just [one](one.html) person was killed in the Battle of Ai, and he was equal to 36 of the 70 wise and righteous elders of the Sanhedrin. They extract this from the words of the Tanakh itself, which states *k’shloshim v’shisha ish*, literally translated as “like 36 men”. In other words, the casualty of the Battle of Ai was [one](one.html) man likened to 36. The Sages use the same expression elsewhere, in describing Abishai, the nephew of King [David](fathers.html).[[202]](#footnote-202)

After Yehoshua purged the evil from the midst of the Bne [Israel](gen-jew.html), then [HaShem](hashem.html) fought the battles for them. It was important that they not be killed in the battles for the Promised Land because they had already been counted for the division of the land. The division would not work if the Bne [Israel](gen-jew.html) were not all preserved until the land had been divided and allocated. Thus [HaShem](hashem.html) promised that they would *not* be killed in battle.

Was this a miracle, or did [HaShem](hashem.html) use technology to accomplish this? What kind of force [field](field.html) or armor did they have?

[*Avraham*](avraham.html) *and Eleazer defeated the* [*four*](four.html) *kings.*

When the [four](four.html) kings defeated the [five](five.html) kings, they took Lot captive.[[203]](#footnote-203) When [Abraham](avraham.html) heard about it he went to rescue his nephew. [Abraham](avraham.html) and his servant, Eleazer, rescued his nephew, Lot, and defeated the [four](four.html) greatest [nations](nations.html) on earth in the process.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 14:1*** *In the days of Amraphel, king of Shinar’- Rashi: Nimrod, who cast* [*Avraham*](avraham.html) *into the fiery* [*furnace*](furnace.html)*-‘Chedorlaomer the king of Elam’, and two other allied kings, ‘made war on Bera, king of Sodom, and* [*four*](four.html) *other kings, who rebelled against Chedorlaomer, whom they had previously served, and ‘Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him’ defeated the* [*five*](five.html) *kings, and seized all their wealth, ‘and they captured Lot,* [*Avraham*](avraham.html)*’s nephew, for he was residing in Sodom. And when* [*Avraham*](avraham.html) *heard that his kinsman was taken captive, he armed his disciples, he struck’ their captors, ‘and brought back his kinsman’.*

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah Bereshit 42:4*** *And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar: this alludes to* [*Babylon*](bavel.html)*; Arioch king of Ellasar: that alludes to Greece; Kedarlaomer king of Elam: that is Media; and Tidal the king of* [*Goyim*](gen-jew.html) *[lit. '*[*nations*](nations.html)*']: this alludes to the* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *Power [i.e. Rome] which levies troops from all the* [*nations*](nations.html) *of the* [*world*](worlds.html)*. R. Eleazar b. R. Abina said: When you see the Powers fighting each other, look for the* [*coming*](coming.html) *[lit. '*[*feet*](heel.html)*'] of the King* [*Messiah*](mashiach.html)*. The proof is that in the days of* [*Avraham*](avraham.html)*, because these Powers fought against each other, greatness came to* [*Avraham*](avraham.html)*.*

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah – Bereshit 42:2*** *R. Abin said: Just as he commenced with* [*four*](four.html) *kings, so will he conclude with* [*four*](four.html) *kings. [He commences with* [*four*](four.html) *kings, viz.]: With Kedarlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of* [*Goyim*](gen-jew.html)*, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar;[[204]](#footnote-204) so he ends with* [*four*](four.html) *kingdoms: the kingdom of* [*Babylon*](bavel.html)*, the kingdom of Media, the kingdom of Greece, and the empire of* [*Edom*](edom.html) *[i.e. Rome].*

The [Zohar](orallaw.html) HaKadosh expands: The [four](four.html) kings united, to rid themselves of [Avraham](avraham.html). Why? Because he [taught](teacher.html) the people that the ‘gods’ they served were false, and brought the people to believe in, and serve, [HaShem](hashem.html).

Now, how did [Abraham](avraham.html) defeat the greates [nations](nations.html) on earth? What kind of weapon did he have?

*With* [*Dust*](rock.html) *and Straw Missiles*

***Bereshit (Genesis) 14:8-16*** *And there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela--the same is Zoar; and they set the battle in array against them in the vale of Siddim;* ***9*** *against Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar;* [*four*](four.html) *kings against the* [*five*](five.html)*.* ***10*** *Now the vale of Siddim was full of slime pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and they fell there, and they that remained fled to the mountain.* ***11*** *And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way.* ***12*** *And they took Lot,* [*Abram*](avraham.html)*'s brother's son, who* [*dwelt*](dwelling.html) *in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.* ***13*** *And there came* [*one*](one.html) *that had escaped, and told* [*Abram*](avraham.html) *the* [*Hebrew*](hebrew.html)*--now he* [*dwelt*](dwelling.html) *by the terebinths of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner; and these were confederate with* [*Abram*](avraham.html)*.* ***14*** *And when* [*Abram*](avraham.html) *heard that his brother was taken captive, he led forth his trained men, born in his house,* [*three*](three.html) *hundred and* [*eighteen*](eighteen.html)*, and pursued as far as Dan.* ***15*** *And he divided himself against them by night, he and his servants, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left* [*hand*](mashal.html) *of Damascus.* ***16*** *And he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people.*

When [Abraham](avraham.html) learned that his nephew Lot had been captured by the [five](five.html) kings, he [gathered](gather.html) the 318 loyal members of his [household](househld.html) to join him on a daring rescue [mission](mission.html). [Abraham](avraham.html) sensed their [fear](fear.html), rebuked them for their lack of faith, and gave them money and precious stones. He even offered them a way out, “Is there anyone among you who is faint-hearted? Is there anyone who is afraid to go into battle? Let him return home now.” Most took up the offer, leaving just a few men at [Abraham](avraham.html)’s side, including Eliezer, his longtime faithful servant.[[205]](#footnote-205) As for [Abraham](avraham.html), he was not afraid; his indomitable faith in [HaShem](hashem.html) made him certain he’d succeed.

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah - Genesis 43:2*** *AND* [*ABRAM*](avraham.html) *HEARD, etc. Thus it is written, He stoppeth his* [*ears*](body.html) *from* [*hearing*](mashal.html) *of* [*blood*](body.html)*, etc.[[206]](#footnote-206) [[207]](#footnote-207) HE LED FORTH (WAYYAREK) HIS TRAINED MEN, etc. R. Judah said: It was they who turned a wrathful countenance (horiku panim) upon* [*Abraham*](avraham.html)*, saying, '* [*Five*](five.html) *kings could not defeat them, yet we are to defeat them?’[[208]](#footnote-208) R. Nehemiah interpreted it: He turned a defiant countenance (horik panim) to them and exclaimed, ‘I will go forth and fall in sanctifying the* [*name*](name.html) *of the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He.’[[209]](#footnote-209) R. Abba b. Zabda said: He made them glitter (horikan) with weapons, as you read, Burnish (harek-E.V. ‘draw out’) also the spear, and the battle axe, against them that pursue me; say unto my soul: I am thy* [*salvation*](salvation.html)*.[[210]](#footnote-210) R. Simeon b. Lakish said: He made them glitter with precious stones and pearls, as you read, With the shimmer of (yerakrak) gold.[[211]](#footnote-211) R. Levi said: He thinned their* [*numbers*](nchart.html)*[[212]](#footnote-212) by reading the section of the heralds, as you read, What man is there that is fearful (yare) and faint-hearted-rak?[[213]](#footnote-213) [[214]](#footnote-214) BORN IN HIS HOUSE. This means, those bearing his* [*name*](name.html)*, their* [*name*](name.html) *being* [*Abram*](avraham.html)*, like his own.[[215]](#footnote-215)* [*THREE*](three.html) *HUNDRED AND* [*EIGHTEEN*](eighteen.html)*. R. Simeon b. Lakish said: It was Eliezer alone, the numerical value of Eliezer being* [*three*](three.html) *hundred and* [*eighteen*](eighteen.html)*.[[216]](#footnote-216) AND PURSUED AS FAR AS DAN.* [*Idolatry*](idolatry.html) *smites both before it comes and after it has departed. It smites in anticipation, as it is written, AND PURSUED AS FAR AS DAN. It smites retrospectively, as it is written, The snorting of his horses is heard from Dan.[[217]](#footnote-217) [[218]](#footnote-218)*

Wishing to utilize the element of surprise,[[219]](#footnote-219) [Abraham](avraham.html) and his small army set out in the darkness of night. Although they were [ten](ten.html) days’ [travel](mashal.html) from the [four](four.html) kings, they miraculously reached Damascus—where the kings were—in a single day.[[220]](#footnote-220) [[221]](#footnote-221)

When [Abraham](avraham.html) and his small army faced their opponents, [Abraham](avraham.html) threw [dust](rock.html) and straw in their direction. Miraculously, when the [dust](rock.html) and straw were airborne, G‑d transformed the [dust](rock.html) into spears and the straw into arrows. Conversely, the arrows and spears that were directed at [Abraham](avraham.html) were transformed into [dust](rock.html).[[222]](#footnote-222)



[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah - Genesis 43:3*** *It is written, He giveth* [*nations*](nations.html) *before him, and maketh him rule over kings; his sword maketh them as the* [*dust*](rock.html)*, his bow as the driven stubble. R. Judah and R. Nehemiah differed.* [*One*](one.html) *maintained: This means that* [*Abraham*](avraham.html) *threw* [*dust*](rock.html) *at them [the* [*four*](four.html) *kings] which turned to swords; stubble, and it turned to arrows. But the other argued: It is not written, ‘He maketh* [*dust*](rock.html)*,’ but ‘He maketh them as the* [*dust*](rock.html)*’: they threw swords at* [*Abraham*](avraham.html) *which turned to* [*dust*](rock.html)*; and arrows, which became stubble.*

A concluding thought from the Shem miShmuel: ‘The [four](four.html) kings that [Avraham](avraham.html) vanquished, are the ‘fore-runners’ of the [four](four.html) kingdoms that were to subjugate Bne [Israel](gen-jew.html)’; and, just as the [four](four.html) kings, in our Parasha, fell at the [hands](fourteen.html) of [Avraham](avraham.html), so too will our [four](four.html) subjugators’- The deeds of the forefathers are a [sign](signs.html) to their descendants.

[Abraham](avraham.html) defeated the [five](five.html) kings by hurling [dust](rock.html) and straw at them. This [dust](rock.html) and straw became missiles which decimated their vast armies. What kind of technology, magic, or miracle is this?

The following story illustrates the power of [Abraham](avraham.html)’s [dust](rock.html) and straw:

Many years ago, when our [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people lived in our Holy Land under the rule of the Romans, there lived among them a great and saintly sage, named Nachum. Rabbi Nachum used to say that everything [HaShem](hashem.html) does is for the good. Therefore, even if something that happened to him did not appear so good, or even seemed so bad that others would call it a misfortune, he - Nachum - would say "this, too, is for the good." He used to say it so often, that people soon began to call him Nachum Ish Gam Zu, "Nachum the Gam-zu Man."

[One](one.html) day, the [Jews](gen-jew.html) were dismayed to learn that the Roman emperor was about to make a [law](law.html) that would make life very difficult for the [Jews](gen-jew.html), for he was no friend of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people. The [Jewish](gen-jew.html) sages and leaders got together to decide what to do. They decided to send a beautiful gift to the king in Rome in order to make him friendlier to the [Jews](gen-jew.html) and not give them trouble. But who was to take the gift to the King?

"No [one](one.html) is more suitable than Nachum Ish Gam Zu," all the Sages agreed, for he was a man for whom G‑d made many miracles. They [knew](daat.html) the [journey](stages.html) to Rome was a long and dangerous [one](one.html), and the king was a cruel man. You really needed a miracle to succeed in such a dangerous [mission](mission.html). So they all asked Nachum to be their shaliach (messenger). Nachum humbly agreed, saying only, "Gam zu l'tovah."

With the blessings of all the sages, Nachum set out for Rome, carrying with him a beautiful box filled with precious gems and pearls for the king and queen.

Just before reaching Rome, Nachum stopped at an inn overnight. During the night, while Nachum was [asleep](mashal.html), two thieves sneaked into his room, looked through his things, and found the box. They opened it and saw it was filled with costly gems and pearls. They emptied it of its precious contents, which they put in their pockets, and filled the box with sand. Then they left quietly.

The following day, Nachum appeared at the royal palace and told the guards that he came all the way from the Land of [Israel](city.html), carrying a gift for the king from the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people.

The [Jewish](gen-jew.html) sage was ushered into the presence of the king. Nachum told [his majesty](yeshua.html) that he brought humble greetings and good wishes from the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people, as well as a gift for the king and queen. The king sent over [one](one.html) of his servants to fetch the box. After admiring the beautiful box for a moment, the king opened it, and his [face](body.html) turned red with anger.

"Look what the [Jews](gen-jew.html) sent me for my birthday!" he said to his servants, as he lifted a handful of sand from the box and let it fall back through his [fingers](body.html). "I'll [teach](teacher.html) them a lesson they will not forget, for making fun of the king!"

Then he ordered his guard to seize the [Jew](gen-jew.html) who had brought him this "gift," and throw him into prison, where he would await his execution that would be arranged publicly, with much pomp and fanfare.

Poor Nachum, what could he do? He was surprised as anyone else when he saw what the box contained. Of course, he realized that this was the work of thieves, but the king was in no mood to listen to an explanation. So Nachum Ish Gam-zu lifted his [eyes](body.html) heavenward and said, "Gam-zu l'tovah!"

II

Later that evening, as the king prepared to retire for the night, Elijah the Prophet appeared before him in the guise of [one](one.html) of the king's servants.

"Your Majesty,"' Elijah said, "you surely did not think the [Jews](gen-jew.html) would make fun of you and send you ordinary sand? Maybe it is the kind that their Father [Abraham](avraham.html) used to defeat his enemies in war? It has been told that [Abraham](avraham.html) threw handfuls of sand against his enemies that turned into swords; and straw that turned into deadly arrows. Would it not be advisable to test this sand the [Jews](gen-jew.html) sent you? Maybe it's that [secret](sod.html) weapon..."

"There's no harm in doing just that." the king agreed.

It so happened that the king was fighting a long and costly war against the Barbarians, and he was not able to defeat them. So he ordered his generals to try out the sand the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) sage had brought him. And wonder of wonders! The Barbarians fled in terror, and the war was over.

Now the king ordered that Nachum be freed and brought before him.

"I had no idea what a wonderful gift you had brought me," the king said to him. "You may ask any royal favor in return."

Nachum told the king what the purpose of his [mission](mission.html) was: to plead with the king to withdraw the decree that would hurt the [Jews](gen-jew.html) very much, and would be of no benefit to the king.

The king readily granted the request. In addition he ordered his royal treasurer to fill the box with gold and diamonds and rubies from the king's treasure chamber and give it to the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) sage to take back with him. Nachum was sent off on his way with much honor, fit for the greatest ambassador.

III

On his way home, Nachum Ish Gam-zu stopped at the same inn where thieves had stolen the contents of the box and filled it with sand.

The innkeeper had heard of the honor and wealth the king had bestowed upon the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) sage.

"What did you bring the king in the box that made him so happy?" the innkeeper asked.

"Only what I carried from here," Nachum replied, truthfully.

The innkeeper talked to his son, and the two of them - they were none other than the thieves that stole the contents of the box decided that they would do even better than the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) sage. They broke down the best wall of the inn and collected a good deal of broken pieces of [rock](rock.html), which they pounded into a fine sand. This they packed into large boxes which they loaded on donkeys. Tired after all this work, but happy at the thought of how much wealth they will bring back, they made their way to the king's palace.

When they appeared before the king, they told him: "This is the same kind of sand that the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) sage had brought to the king that made the king happy. We've brought a lot more to make the king even happier!"

"Indeed?" the king remarked wondering. "Well, we'll soon find out."

He ordered samples of the sand to be tested for the miraculous power it was supposed to have. But no miracles happened this [time](time.html). So the king ordered that the two thieves be hanged and buried and covered with their own sand.

When Nachum Ish Gam-zu heard what happened to the thieves, he shrugged his [shoulders](body.html) and said - you guessed it: "Gam zu l'tovah!"

Yehoshua commanded the [sun](hachama.html) and the [moon](chodesh.html) to stand still while [HaShem](hashem.html) threw stones at them from [heaven](heaven.html).

***Yehoshua (Joshua) 6:6-14*** *And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua to the* [*camp*](stages.html) *to Gilgal, saying: 'Slack not thy* [*hands*](fourteen.html) *from thy servants; come up to us quickly, and* [*save*](salvation.html) *us, and help us; for all the kings of the Amorites that* [*dwell*](dwelling.html) *in the hill-country are* [*gathered*](gather.html) *together against us.' 7 So Joshua went up from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valour. 8 And* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *said unto Joshua: '*[*Fear*](fear.html) *them not; for I have delivered them into thy* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*; there shall not a man of them stand against thee.' 9 Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly; for he went up from Gilgal all the night. 10 And* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *discomfited them before* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*, and slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon; and they chased them by the way of the ascent of Beth-horon, and smote them to Azekah, and unto Makkedah. 11 And it came to pass, as they fled from before* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*, while they were at the descent of Beth-horon, that* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *cast down great stones from* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *upon them unto Azekah, and they died; they were more who died with the hailstones than they whom the children of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html) *slew with the sword. 12 Then* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *Joshua to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *in the day when* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *delivered up the Amorites before the children of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*;* ***and he said in the sight of*** [***Israel***](gen-jew.html)***: '***[***Sun***](hachama.html)***, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou,*** [***Moon***](chodesh.html)***, in the valley of Aijalon.' 13 And the*** [***sun***](hachama.html) ***stood still, and the*** [***moon***](chodesh.html) ***stayed,*** *until the* [*nation*](nations.html) *had avenged themselves of their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jashar? And the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *stayed in the midst of* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. 14 And there was no day like that before it or after it, that* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *hearkened unto the* [*voice*](voice.html) *of a man; for* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *fought for* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*.*

**Sefer HaYashar Chapter LXXXVIII 64.**

*And the Lord hearkened to the* [*voice*](voice.html) *of Joshua, and the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *stood still in the midst of the* [*heavens*](heaven.html)*, and it stood still* [*six*](six.html) *and* [*thirty*](thirty.html) *moments,\* and the* [*moon*](chodesh.html) *also stood still and hastened not to go down a whole day.*

*(55. And there was no day like that, before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened to the* [*voice*](voice.html) *of a man, for the Lord fought for* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*.*

As the day waned and the [sun](hachama.html) began to drop towards the horizon, Yehoshua realized that the enemy forces would soon escape under cover of darkness. Seeking to secure more daylight hours for the Israelites to rout their foes, Yehoshua called upon the [sun](hachama.html) and the [moon](chodesh.html) to cease their inevitable course and to stand motionless, thus extending the radiance of the afternoon indefinitely. In a show of Divine intervention never before witnessed in the history of the [world](worlds.html), God acceded to his request and as a result, [Israel](gen-jew.html) inflicted a punishing blow on the Canaanite kings of the south.

Of course, the short passage raises many provocative questions. Did the [celestial](celestal.html) [bodies](body.html), whose immutable motion is the universal paradigm for permanence and predictability, the basis for our Newtonian conception of conventional [time](time.html) as consistent and unchanging, truly stop their motion and stand still?

The [Gemara](orallaw.html) goes on to provide significant details regarding this very unusual day:

[***Avodah Zarah***](idolatry.html) ***25a*** *The* [*Gemara*](orallaw.html) *cites a series of expositions with regard to what is called the book of Yashar. The verse states:* ***“And the*** [***sun***](hachama.html) ***stood still, and the*** [***moon***](chodesh.html) ***stayed, until the*** [***nation***](nations.html) ***had avenged themselves of their enemies. Is this not written in the book of Yashar”?****.[[223]](#footnote-223) The* [*Gemara*](orallaw.html) *asks:* ***What*** *is* ***the book of Yashar? Rabbi Ḥiyya bar Abba says*** *that* ***Rabbi Yoḥanan says: This*** *is Genesis, which is* ***the book of*** [***Abraham***](avraham.html)***,*** [***Isaac***](isaac.html)***, and*** [***Jacob***](israelja.html)***, who were called righteous [yesharim], as it is stated: “Let me die the death of the righteous [yesharim]”****.[[224]](#footnote-224)*

*The* [*Gemara*](orallaw.html) *asks:* ***And where is it alluded*** *to in Genesis that the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *would stand still for Joshua? The verse states in reference to Ephraim, who was Joshua’s ancestor:* ***“And his*** [***seed***](flower.html) ***shall become a multitude of*** [***nations***](nations.html)***”****.[[225]](#footnote-225) The* [*Gemara*](orallaw.html) *asks:* ***When will he become a multitude of*** [***nations***](nations.html)***?*** *He became a multitude of* [*nations*](nations.html)***at the*** [***time***](time.html) ***when the*** [***sun***](hachama.html) ***stood*** *in* [*place*](place.html)***for Joshua,*** *as it is written:* ***“And the*** [***sun***](hachama.html) ***stayed in the midst of*** [***heaven***](heaven.html)***, and hastened not to go down for an entire day”****.[[226]](#footnote-226)*

*The* [*Gemara*](orallaw.html) *inquires:* ***And how much***[*time*](time.html) *elapsed before the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *finally set?* ***Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said*** *that it took* [***twenty***](twenty.html)***-***[***four***](four.html) ***hours: It traveled*** *across the sky for* [***six***](six.html) *hours* ***and stood*** *still for* [***six***](six.html) *hours, and again* ***traveled*** [***six***](six.html) *hours* ***and stood*** *still for* [***six***](six.html) *hours, so that* ***the entire matter*** *lasted the duration* ***of an entire day.***

***Rabbi Elazar said*** *that it lasted* [***thirty-six***](thirtysix.html) *hours: The* [*sun*](hachama.html)***traveled*** *for* [***six***](six.html) *hours* ***and stood*** *for* [***twelve***](twelve.html) *hours, and again* ***traveled*** [***six***](six.html) *hours* ***and stood*** *for* [***twelve***](twelve.html) *hours, so that the accumulated* [*time*](time.html) *of* ***its suspension*** *was that* ***of an entire day. Rabbi Shmuel bar Naḥmani said:*** [***Forty***](forty.html)***-***[***eight***](eight.html) *hours elapsed before it set.* ***It traveled*** [***six***](six.html) *hours* ***and stood*** *for* [***twelve***](twelve.html) *hours, and then* ***traveled*** [***six***](six.html) *hours* ***and stood*** *for* [***twenty***](twenty.html)***-***[***four***](four.html) *hours,* ***as it is stated:*** *“And the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *stayed in the midst of* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*,” and then:* ***“And hastened not to go down for an entire day.” By inference,*** *it can be understood* ***that initially it was not*** *suspended* ***for an entire day.*** *Rather, at* [*first*](one.html) *it stood still for* [*twelve*](twelve.html) *hours, and was later suspended for an entire day.*

***There are*** *those* ***who say*** *that these Sages do not disagree over how much* [*time*](time.html) *had elapsed before the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *set. Rather,* ***they disagree with regard to the additional***[*time*](time.html) *by which the day was extended.* ***Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said:*** [***Twenty***](twenty.html)***-***[***four***](four.html) *hours were added to that day, because the* [*sun*](hachama.html)***traveled*** [***six***](six.html) *hours* ***and stood*** [***twelve***](twelve.html) *hours, and again* ***traveled*** [***six***](six.html) *hours* ***and stood*** *for another* [***twelve***](twelve.html) *hours, which meant that* ***its*** [***standing***](mashal.html)[*time*](time.html) *lasted* ***for an entire day. Rabbi Elazar said*** *that* [***thirty-six***](thirtysix.html) *hours were added:* ***It traveled*** [***six***](six.html) *hours* ***and stood*** *for* [***twelve***](twelve.html) *hours, and then* ***traveled*** [***six***](six.html) *hours* ***and stood*** *for* [***twenty***](twenty.html)***-***[***four***](four.html) *more hours. It is with regard to the second suspension that the verse states:* ***“And hastened not to go down for an entire day.”***

***Rabbi Shmuel bar Naḥmani said:*** *The* [*time*](time.html) *the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *stood in* [*place*](place.html) *was* [***forty***](forty.html)***-***[***eight***](eight.html) *hours in total. The* [*sun*](hachama.html)***traveled*** [***six***](six.html) *hours* ***and stood*** [***twenty***](twenty.html)***-***[***four***](four.html) *hours, and then* ***traveled*** *another* [***six***](six.html) *hours* ***and stood*** *for another* [***twenty***](twenty.html)***-***[***four***](four.html) *hours. His reasoning is that the verse* ***juxtaposes*** *the* [*sun*](hachama.html)*’s* ***suspension to its motion: Just as*** *the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *is in* ***motion for an entire day, so too, its suspension*** *was* ***for an entire day.***

***It is*** [***taught***](teacher.html)***: Just as the*** [***sun***](hachama.html) ***stood*** *still* ***for Joshua, so*** *too* ***the*** [***sun***](hachama.html) ***stood*** *still* ***for Moses and for Nakdimon ben Guryon.*** *It is* [*known*](daat.html) *that it stood still for* ***Joshua*** *from* ***a verse,*** *and it is* [*known*](daat.html) *that it stood still for* ***Nakdimon ben Guryon*** *by* ***tradition. From where do we*** *derive that it stood still* ***for Moses*** *as well? The* [*Gemara*](orallaw.html) *answers: It is* ***derived*** *by means of a verbal analogy between the terms* ***“I will begin”*** *and* ***“I will begin.”*** *The* [*Gemara*](orallaw.html) *elaborates:* ***It is written here,*** *with regard to Moses:* ***“I will begin to deliver the dread of you*** *and the* [*fear*](fear.html) *of you upon the peoples” (Deuteronomy 2:25),* ***and it is written there, with regard to Joshua: “I will begin to magnify you”****.[[227]](#footnote-227)*

***And Rabbi Yoḥanan says:*** *It is* ***derived*** *from a verbal analogy between the words* ***“delivered”*** *and* ***“delivered.” It is written here,*** *with regard to Moses:* ***“I will begin to deliver the dread of you,” and it is written*** *there,* ***with regard to Joshua: “In the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites*** *before the children of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*”.[[228]](#footnote-228)*

So, what kind of wonder is this? Is it a straight up miracle because we see no technology, or is there some [type](types.html) a magic that Yehoshua is deploying? Notice that Yehoshua is making the [command](cmds613.html) as opposed to beseeching [HaShem](hashem.html) to do this task.

# Magic Wand

Many times throughout the story of the [Exodus](exodus.html) [HaShem](hashem.html) tells Moses to take along his [staff](staff.html) and to use it to perform [one](one.html) of the miracles, such as to wave it at the water to make it part[[229]](#footnote-229) or to direct the locusts to invade.[[230]](#footnote-230) Why the emphasis on the [staff](staff.html)? Can’t [HaShem](hashem.html) do miracles just as easily without it? In fact, using his [staff](staff.html) might have given Pharaoh the false impression that the [plagues](plagues.html) were done via magic. Why didn’t [HaShem](hashem.html) reveal His strength directly?

A [staff](staff.html) / wand is called mateh - מַטֶּה in [Hebrew](hebrew.html).[[231]](#footnote-231) [[232]](#footnote-232)

We should think of Moshe’s [staff](staff.html) as a conductor’s baton or a magician’s magic wand. Owning and operating them produce music or magic, but only in the [hand](fourteen.html) of the right user. Is this just technology, or is it a ‘magig wand’?

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 3:16-4:5*** *Go, and* [*gather*](gather.html) *the elders of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html) *together, and say unto them,* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *God of your* [*fathers*](fathers.html)*, the God of* [*Abraham*](avraham.html)*, of* [*Isaac*](isaac.html)*, and of* [*Jacob*](israelja.html)*, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and [seen] that which is done to you in Egypt: And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey. And they shall hearken to thy* [*voice*](voice.html)*: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him,* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *God of the* [*Hebrews*](bereans.html) *hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee,* [*three*](three.html) *days’* [*journey*](stages.html) *into the wilderness, that we may* [*sacrifice*](korbanot.html) *to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *our God. And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*. And I will stretch out my* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go. And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty: But every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put [them] upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians. And Moshe answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my* [*voice*](voice.html)*: for they will say,* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *hath not appeared unto thee. And* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *said unto him, What [is] that in thine* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*? And he said,* ***A*** [***rod***](staff.html)***. And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent;*** *and Moshe fled from before it. And* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *said unto Moshe, Put forth thine* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*, and caught it, and it became a* [*rod*](staff.html) *in his* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*: That they may believe that* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *God of their* [*fathers*](fathers.html)*, the God of* [*Abraham*](avraham.html)*, the God of* [*Isaac*](isaac.html)*, and the God of* [*Jacob*](israelja.html)*, hath appeared unto thee.*

Pirke D’Rebbe Eliezer[[233]](#footnote-233) 40 gives the history of this amazing [staff](staff.html):

[*Created*](bara.html) *at twilight, before the* [*Sabbath*](sabbath.html)*, it was given to* [*Adam*](adam.html) *in the* [*Garden of Eden*](eden.html)*.* [*Adam*](adam.html) *gave it to Chanoch, who gave it to Metushelach; he in turn passed it on to* [*Noach*](noach.html)*.* [*Noach*](noach.html) *bequeathed it to his son Shem, who transmitted it to* [*Avraham*](avraham.html)*. From* [*Avraham*](avraham.html) *to* [*Yitzchak*](isaac.html)*, and then to* [*Yaaqov*](jacob.html)*, who took it with him to Egypt. Ya’aqov gave it to* [*Yosef*](joseph.html)*; upon* [*Yosef*](joseph.html)*‘s death all his possessions were removed to Pharaoh’s* [*place*](place.html)*. Yitro* [*one*](one.html) *of Pharaoh’s advisors desired it, whereupon he took it and stuck it in the ground in his garden in Midian. From then on no* [*one*](one.html) *could pull out the* [*staff*](staff.html) *until Moshe came. He read the* [*Hebrew*](hebrew.html)[*letters*](letters.html) *on the* [*staff*](staff.html)*,[[234]](#footnote-234) and pulled it out readily. Knowing then that Moshe was the redeemer of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*, Yitro gave him his daughter Tziporra in* [*marriage*](mashal.html)*.*

The [staff](staff.html) which Moshe pulled from the ground in Yitro’s garden had been fashioned by [HaShem](hashem.html) Himself who had then given it to [Adam](adam.html). It was passed down, after Moshe’s death, to King [David](fathers.html) and to the succeeding Kings of Judah.[[235]](#footnote-235) This was no ordinary wooden [staff](staff.html).

The [Mishna](orallaw.html)[[236]](#footnote-236) lists Moshe's [staff](staff.html) as [one](one.html) of the unique items [created](bara.html) on the twilight before the [first](one.html) [Shabbat](sabbath.html).

It’s possible that [HaShem](hashem.html) specifically wanted to trick Pharaoh into thinking the [plagues](plagues.html) were nothing other than ordinary magic, the [type](types.html) the Egyptians were quite familiar with already.

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 4:20*** *So Moses took his wife and his sons, mounted them upon the* [*donkey*](chamor.html)*, and he returned to the land of Egypt, and Moses took the* [*staff*](staff.html) *of God in his* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*.*

The Targum goes on to emphasize that it was Moshe’s [hand](fourteen.html) that would perform the miracle.

***Targum pseudo Yonatan to Shemot 4:20*** *And Moshe took his wife and his sons, and made them ride on the* [*ass*](chamor.html)*, and returned to the land of Mitzrayim. And Moshe took the* [*rod*](staff.html) *which he had brought away from the chamber of his father-in-*[*law*](law.html)*; and it was from the sapphire Throne of glory, in weight* [*forty*](forty.html) *sein; and upon it was engraved and set forth the Great and Glorious* [*Name*](name.html) *by which the* [*signs*](signs.html) *should be wrought before* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *by his* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*.*

Engraving always means that what is engraved is of the essence of the object - not applied onto the object as is writing but expressed in the very medium of the object itself.

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah -*** [***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***VIII:3*** *‘Go and exact a penalty of him.’ He said to him: ‘How shall I bring upon him the* [*ten*](ten.html)[*plagues*](plagues.html)*? ‘ The reply was: ‘And thou shalt take in thy* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *this* [*rod*](staff.html)*’ (IV, 17). R. Judah said: The* [*rod*](staff.html) *weighed* [*forty*](forty.html) *seah[[237]](#footnote-237) and was of* ***sapphire****[[238]](#footnote-238) and the* [*ten*](ten.html)[*plagues*](plagues.html) *were engraved thereon in an abbreviated form -De Za K, aDaSH, Be’aHa B.1 God said: ‘In this order shalt thou bring upon him the* [*plagues*](plagues.html)*.’ And Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet (VII, 1). ‘Just as the preacher sits and preaches whilst the interpreter[[239]](#footnote-239) sits before him, so shalt thou* [*speak*](mashal.html) *all that I shall* [*command*](cmds613.html) *thee, [to Aaron] and Aaron thy brother will* [*speak*](mashal.html) *unto Pharaoh.’ By means of both of them were all these things performed, as it is said: And Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh (XI, 10).*

So, now we discover that this fantastic [staff](staff.html) is made out of *sapphire*,not wood.

The [Zohar](orallaw.html) elaborates on this fantastic [staff](staff.html) ([rod](staff.html)):

***Soncino*** [***Zohar***](orallaw.html)***, Bereshit, Section 1, Page 9a*** *“And in the Egyptian’s* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *was a spear like a weaver’s beam” (I Chr. XI, 23). This alludes to the divine* [*rod*](staff.html) *which was in Moses’* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*, and on which there was engraved the divine ineffable* [*Name*](name.html) *radiating in various combinations of* [*letters*](letters.html)*. These same* [*letters*](letters.html) *were in possession of Bezalel, who was called “weaver”, and his school, as it is written: “Them hath he filled with wisdom of* [*heart*](body.html)*... of the craftsman and the skilled workman, and the weaver, etc.” (Exod. XXXV, 35). So that* [*rod*](staff.html) *had engraved on it the ineffable* [*Name*](name.html) *on every side, in* [*forty-two*](fortytwo.html) *various combinations, which were illumined in different colors.*

Thus we learn that this solid sapphire [staff](staff.html) was engraved with [forty-two](fortytwo.html) [letter](letters.html) combinations of [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [name](name.html), *each in a different* ***color***!

This sapphire [staff](staff.html) / wand will be used to initiate [six](six.html) of the [ten](ten.html) [plagues](plagues.html). If the miracles were miraculous, then why was the [staff](staff.html) needed? Is the [staff](staff.html) a piece of technology that it can come alive as a serpent and also fill the Nile with [blood](body.html), create hordes of frogs, irritate the people with clouds of lice, build hail that has a raging [fire](fire.html) inside, create a [plague](plagues.html) of locusts, and create darkness so thick that no [one](one.html) can move?

# Solid Water

Normally, when water is hard enough to [walk](walking.html) on or to be used as a wall, it must be frozen. Yet, there are examples of water walls and [walking](walking.html) on water that clearly was not frozen. How was this done?

*The Reed Sea*

In the case where the water became a sea wall, Moshe’s [staff](staff.html) was used.

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 14:15*** *And* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *said unto Moses: 'Wherefore criest thou unto Me?* [*speak*](mashal.html) *unto the children of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*, that they go forward. 16 And lift thou up* ***thy*** [***rod***](staff.html)*, and stretch out thy* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *over the sea, and divide it; and the children of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html) *shall go into the midst of the sea on dry ground.*

And the sea solidified for them. The Yam Suf split into 12 thoroughfares for the 12 [tribes](tribes.html).[[240]](#footnote-240) Targum Pseudo-Jonathan in its rendering of 14:22, it notes that there were solid walls to the right and to the left [*three*](three.html) *hundred miles high*.

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 14:22*** *Then the children of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html) *came into the midst of the sea on dry land, and the waters were to them as a wall from their right and from their left.*

Because Moshe’s [staff](staff.html) was used, [one](one.html) could imagine that the [staff](staff.html) was some sort of technology which caused the water to become rigid. Later Moshe used the same [staff](staff.html) to remove the walls and the sea collapsed in of the Egyptian army.[[241]](#footnote-241)

*The* [*Jordan*](stages.html) *River Split for Joshua*

The [Jordan](stages.html) River was split for Joshua. [HaShem](hashem.html) assures him in Joshua 3:7 that [HaShem](hashem.html) will cause the Israelites to see Joshua as a great person “so they will [know](daat.html) that just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you.” This promise could mean that [HaShem](hashem.html) will perform the same miracle for Joshua at the [Jordan](stages.html) that [HaShem](hashem.html) did for Moshe at the [Red Sea](stages.html). Yet, 3:13 states that the [Jordan](stages.html) waters split and “stood as a single heap,” using the description contained in [Exodus](exodus.html) 15.

***Yehoshua (Joshua) 3:13****And it shall come to pass, when the soles of the* [*feet*](heel.html) *of the* [*priests*](priests.html) *that bear the* [*ark*](ark.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the* [*Jordan*](stages.html)*, that the waters of the* [*Jordan*](stages.html) *shall be cut off, even the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand in* [*one*](one.html) *heap.'*

[*Jordan*](stages.html) *river divided by Elijah*

In II Kings 2, Elijah divides the [Jordan](stages.html) River so that he and his disciple Elisha can cross it, and later in the same chapter, after Elijah’s death, Elisha split it so that he could cross it himself. Were Elijah and Elisha’s actions miraculous?

***Melachim bet (II Kings) 2:8*** *And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground.*

Note that the division of the [Jordan](stages.html) river is accomplished with ‘technology’, i.e. Elijah’s cloak. Is this technology, or magic. (Why do miracles usually involve something [physical](physical.html)?)

[*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *walks on water*

In the Gospels, [Yeshua](yeshua.html) walks on water in

***Matitiyahu (Matthew) 14:23-32*** *And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to* [*pray*](prayer.html)*: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. 24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. 25 And in the* [*fourth*](four.html) *watch of the night* [***Yeshua***](yeshua.html) ***went unto them,*** [***walking***](walking.html) ***on the sea****. 26 And when the disciples saw him* [*walking*](walking.html) *on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for* [*fear*](fear.html)*. 27 But straightway* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. 28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. 29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)*. 30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord,* [*save*](salvation.html) *me. 31 And immediately* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *stretched forth his* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? 32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.*

***Mordechai (Mark) 6:47-48*** *And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land. 48 And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the* [*fourth*](four.html) *watch of the night he cometh unto them,* [***walking***](walking.html) ***upon the sea****, and would have passed by them.*

***Yochanan (John) 6:16-21*** *And when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea, 17 And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *was not come to them. 18 And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew. 19 So when they had rowed about* [*five*](five.html) *and* [*twenty*](twenty.html) *or* [*thirty*](thirty.html) *furlongs, they see* [***Yeshua***](yeshua.html)[***walking***](walking.html) ***on the sea****, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid. 20 But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid. 21 Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.*

Notice that there was no technology involved, nor does there seem to be any kind of magic involved. Was this a miracle?

# Burning and not consumed

[One](one.html) of the most other-worldly things that has ever been observed was the bush that Moshe encountered. It was cover with flames, yet it was not burning. Was this fake [fire](fire.html) like we see on video screen? (I don’t think so.)

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 3:1-5*** *Moses was pasturing the flocks of Jethro, his father-in-*[*law*](law.html)*, the chief of Midian, and he led the flocks after the free pastureland, and he came to the mountain of God, to Horeb. An* [*angel*](angels.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *appeared to him in a flame of* [*fire*](fire.html) *from within the thorn bush, and behold, the thorn bush was burning with* [*fire*](fire.html)*, but the thorn bush was not being consumed. So Moses said, "Let me turn now and see this great spectacle: why does the thorn bush not burn up?"* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *saw that he had turned to see, and God called to him from within the thorn bush, and He said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am!" And He said, "Do not draw near here. Take your shoes off your* [*feet*](heel.html)*, because the* [*place*](place.html) *upon which you stand is holy soil."*

There's a bush that's burning, burning for hours and it's not being consumed. Centuries later, there's [Chanukah](chanukah.html) oil burning, burning for hours, days, but it's not being consumed either. You [know](daat.html), if you consider [Chanukah](chanukah.html) the last great miracle in our national history that we commemorate by means of a [holiday](festival.html), what would be our frst great national miracle? It'll probably be the burning bush. That's the beginning of the [redemption](redemption.html) [from Egypt](thebirth.html) that gives rise to our [birth](birth.html) as a people. So, it's almost like we have these bookends in our history. Burning bush, [Chanukah](chanukah.html).

[Speaking](mashal.html) of never ending oil…

***Melachim bet (II Kings) 4:1-7*** *Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying: 'Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did* [*fear*](fear.html)[*HaShem*](hashem.html)*; and the creditor is come to take unto him my two children to be bondmen.'* ***2****And Elisha said unto her: 'What shall I do for thee? tell me; what hast thou in the house?' And she said: 'Thy handmaid hath not any thing in the house,* [*save*](salvation.html) *a pot of oil.'* ***3****Then he said: 'Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few.* ***4****And thou shalt go in, and shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and pour out into all those vessels; and thou shalt set aside that which is full.'* ***5****So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons; they brought the vessels to her, and she poured out.* ***6****And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son: 'Bring me yet a vessel.' And he said unto her: 'There is not a vessel more.' And the oil stayed.* ***7****Then she came and told the man of God. And he said: 'Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy sons of the rest.'*

The miracle involved a widow who was heavily in debt, and her creditors were threatening to take her two sons as slaves to satisfy the debt. When Elisha asked her what she had in her home, the widow responded that she had nothing but a vial of oil. Elisha told her to [gather](gather.html) as many empty containers as possible. She should then pour oil from her vial into the empty containers. She did as commanded, and miraculously the oil continued to flow until the last empty jug was filled. The woman would sell the oil for a handsome profit, and have enough money to repay her debts and live comfortably.

“Elisha said to her, ‘What shall I do for you? Tell me what you have in the house.’ And she said, “Your maidservant has nothing at all in the house except a vial of oil.’”

In this interesting exchange, Elisha was looking for something that the woman already had, upon which a miracle could take effect. This idea can be linked to a concept that constantly recurs in the Torah and [Jewish](gen-jew.html) life: If something [spiritual](physical.html) is to affect the [physical](physical.html), it [needs](needs.html) to be “anchored” in something [physical](physical.html).

A foundation of Kabbalistic [teaching](teacher.html) is that our [world](worlds.html) is a [physical](physical.html) expression of G‑dly realities (or “[worlds](worlds.html),” as they are referred to). Anything that exists or occurs in this [world](worlds.html) is because there is something within G‑dly reality that creates this existence or occurrence. A miracle in the [physical](physical.html) realm indicates that a G‑dly presence has come forth in an unlimited way, breaking through all limitations and the usual order in the supernal realm—thus breaking the order in the natural [world](worlds.html) as well.

Yet the converse is not true: not necessarily does everything in the [spiritual](physical.html) realms percolate down into the material [one](one.html). There can be a possibility that a divine revelation, such as a blessing, may remain in that realm and not take on a [physical](physical.html) manifestation.

This is the concept behind many biblical stories and [events](feasts.html) where the prophet was told, or sought on his own, to do something [physical](physical.html) to “carry” the [spiritual](physical.html) vision, blessing or miracle into the [physical](physical.html) [world](worlds.html), thus setting in motion the [physical](physical.html) play-out of this G‑dly reality.[[242]](#footnote-242)

It is well [known](daat.html) that magic can produce life. To produce oil would be child’s play by comparison. This does not rule out technology, but that is harder to see. In the end, it is quite miraculous.

# Weather Control

As told in the Tanach, Elijah's challenge is bold and direct. Baal was the Canaanite god responsible for rain, thunder, lightning, and dew. Elijah thus, when he initially announces the drought, not only challenges Baal on behalf of God himself, but he also challenges Jezebel, her [priests](priests.html), Ahab and the people of [Israel](gen-jew.html).

***Melachim alef (1 Kings) 17:1*** *And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *God of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html) *liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor* ***rain*** *these years, but according to my word.*

***Melachim alef (1 Kings) 18:1*** *And it came to pass after many days, that the word of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *came to Elijah in the* [*third*](three.html) *year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send* ***rain*** *upon the earth.*

Is [HaShem](hashem.html) commanding Eliyahu his loyal servant, to decree a drought, or is Eliyahu, more zealous than [HaShem](hashem.html) himself, issuing a decree that HaaShem agrees to? And if Eliyahu is performing this feat; how is he performing it. In our [world](worlds.html), there are goverments that control whether or not it rain using technology. Is Eliyahu using technology, or magic, or is this just a straight-up miracle?

There was another incident where [Yeshua](yeshua.html) calmed a raging storm:

***Matitiyahu (Matthew) 14:23-32*** *And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to* [*pray*](prayer.html)*: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. 24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. 25 And in the* [*fourth*](four.html) *watch of the night* [***Yeshua***](yeshua.html) ***went unto them,*** [***walking***](walking.html) ***on the sea****. 26 And when the disciples saw him* [*walking*](walking.html) *on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for* [*fear*](fear.html)*. 27 But straightway* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. 28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. 29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)*. 30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord,* [*save*](salvation.html) *me. 31 And immediately* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *stretched forth his* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? 32* ***And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased****.*

# Aligning the firmament

The [Mishkan](mikdash.html) was used to align the firmaments, the planets and the [stars](mazaroth.html) in a very unique way. The [Mishkan](mikdash.html) was a portal which allowed Moshe Rabbenu to communicate with [HaShem](hashem.html), and [dwell](dwelling.html) in His people.

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 40:34*** *Then a* [*cloud*](important.html) *covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *filled the* [*tabernacle*](mikdash.html)*. 35 And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the* [*cloud*](important.html) *abode thereon, and the glory of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *filled the* [*tabernacle*](mikdash.html)*.*

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 40:38*** *For the* [*cloud*](important.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *was upon the* [*tabernacle*](mikdash.html) *by day, and there was* [*fire*](fire.html) *therein by night, in the sight of all the house of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*, throughout all their* [*journeys*](stages.html)*.*

By Rabbi Eliezer Shore

According to [Midrash](orallaw.html),[[243]](#footnote-243) there was an interesting aspect to the [Mishkan](mikdash.html). The Sages describe it as a microcosm of the universe, with each of its vessels corresponding to another part of the [creation](bara.html): the tent of the [Mishkan](mikdash.html) paralleled the firmament, the menorah paralleled the [sun](hachama.html) and [moon](chodesh.html), the laver paralleled the oceans, and so on, through the days of [creation](bara.html).

By describing the [Mishkan](mikdash.html) as such, the [Midrash](orallaw.html) is suggesting that the structure was a model of a [redeemed](redemption.html) [creation](bara.html). It fulfilled God’s original intention of the [world](worlds.html) as a setting for revelation. This was the nature of the [Garden of Eden](eden.html), and it will be the nature of the [future](future.html) [world](worlds.html), when “the [knowledge](knowledge.html) of God will fill the earth as waters cover the sea”[[244]](#footnote-244) (Isaiah). In the interim, the [Mishkan](mikdash.html) and [Temple](temple.html) served as loci of God’s revelation in the [world](worlds.html).[[245]](#footnote-245)

According to the Ramban, the [Mishkan](mikdash.html) was the continuation of the Sinaitic revelation into history. Just as God [spoke](mashal.html) to Moshe from the top of the mountain, so He continued to address him from out of the [Mishkan](mikdash.html). The [Mishkan](mikdash.html), and the [Temple](temple.html) after it, was a “portable” Mount [Sinai](stages.html). It was a [place](place.html) of continual revelation, where the presence of God could be vividly felt and experienced.

Rav [Yitzchak](isaac.html) Levi

The entranceways in the [Mikdash](mikdash.html) are aligned from [east](east.html) to west: the screen of the gate of the courtyard is the easternmost, and from there [one](one.html) enters into the courtyard, and from there through the door of the Ohel [Moed](settimes.html) to the parochet that divides between the Holy and the Holy of Holies.

The ideal exemplification of this order was the encampment of the [twelve](twelve.html) [tribes](tribes.html) round the [Sanctuary](mikdash.html) in the desert. This in turn has its ultimate prototype in the Divine Throne itself, supported by the [four](four.html) Keruvim. This order has, therefore, timeless significance, and the scale of values revealed and reflected in it was adopted by our Sages when they set out to arrange the petition man makes in his [prayer](prayer.html), for the good and benefits he [needs](needs.html). As we now proceed to describe the arrangement in detail, we shall follow the course from [east](east.html) to west (as did the [priest](priests.html) on the altar) and encircle the [Sanctuary](mikdash.html). It is the same direction the firmament follows, traversing its daily course from [east](east.html) to west, paying homage in the immutability of its measured rhythm to its Creator.[[246]](#footnote-246)

The [Mishkan](mikdash.html) resembles technology.

# Quantum Tunnelling

Quantum tunnelling is the quantum mechanical phenomenon where a wave function can propagate through a potential barrier. I am using it here to describe where [one](one.html) [physical](physical.html) object can propagate through a potential barrier.

[**Jericho**](stages.html)**'s Wall sinks into the earth (1273 BCE)**

On the [seventh](seven.html) day of the encirclement of [Jericho](stages.html) (see [Jewish](gen-jew.html) History for the 22nd of Nissan), the [Jews](gen-jew.html), accompanied by the Holy [Ark](ark.html), circled the [city](city.html) [seven](seven.html) times. After the blowing of the [shofar](shofar.html), the walls miraculously sank into the ground, leaving the [city](city.html) open and unprotected. [Jericho](stages.html) was easily conquered, becoming the [first](one.html) fortified Canaanite [city](city.html) to fall to the Children of [Israel](gen-jew.html) in their conquest of the Promised Land.

The walls did not actually "come tumbling down" as the old [spiritual](physical.html) has it. Since they were as thick as they were high, such a tumble would have been meaningless. They sank into the ground, with only a small portion remaining above the ground to mark the miracle.

According to [Jewish](gen-jew.html) sources, the reason the walls sank deep into the ground (as opposed to tumbling down) was because they were so large that had they fallen above ground and the ruins would have remained a barrier to the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) army. Therefore, God caused them to sink deep into the ground.

***Berachoth 54a*** *Our Rabbis* [*taught*](teacher.html)*: If* [*one*](one.html) *sees the* [*place*](place.html) *of the crossing of the* [*Red Sea*](stages.html)*, or the fords of the* [*Jordan*](stages.html)*, or the fords of the streams of Arnon, or hail stones [abne elgabish] in the descent of Beth Horon, or the stone which Og king of Bashan wanted to throw at* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*, or the stone on which Moses sat when Joshua fought with* [*Amalek*](amalek.html)*, or [the pillar of salt of] Lot's wife,[[247]](#footnote-247)* ***or the wall of*** [***Jericho***](stages.html) ***which sank into the ground****,[[248]](#footnote-248) for all of these he should give thanksgiving and praise to the Almighty.*

***Berachoth 54b*** *‘And the wall of* [*Jericho*](stages.html) *which sank [into the ground]’. But did the wall of* [*Jericho*](stages.html) *sink [into the ground]? Surely it fell, as it says, And it came to pass when the people heard the sound of the* [*horn*](shofar.html)*, that the people shouted with a great shout and the wall fell down flat?[[249]](#footnote-249) — Since its breadth and its height were equal, it must have sunk [into the ground].[[250]](#footnote-250)*

**Peter is released from prison**

***II Luqas (Acts) 12:6-17*** *And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was* [*sleeping*](mashal.html) *between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison. 7 And, behold, the* [*angel*](angels.html) *of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his* [*hands*](fourteen.html)*. 8 And the* [*angel*](angels.html) *said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy* [*garment*](garment.html) *about thee, and follow me. 9 And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the* [*angel*](angels.html)*; but thought he saw a vision. 10 When they were past the* [*first*](one.html) *and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the* [*city*](city.html)*; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through* [*one*](one.html) *street; and forthwith the* [*angel*](angels.html) *departed from him. 11 And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I* [*know*](daat.html) *of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his* [*angel*](angels.html)*, and hath delivered me out of the* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*. 12 And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were* [*gathered*](gather.html) *together* [*praying*](prayer.html)*. 13 And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda. 14 And when she* [*knew*](daat.html) *Peter’s* [*voice*](voice.html)*, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate. 15 And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his* [*angel*](angels.html)*. 16 But Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished. 17 But he, beckoning unto them with the* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go shew these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another* [*place*](place.html)*.*

[**Yeshua**](yeshua.html) **passes through a wall.**

***Yochanan (John) 20:19-23*** *So when it was evening on that day, the* [*first*](one.html) *day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for* [*fear*](fear.html) *of the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*,* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *came and stood in their midst and said to them, “Peace be with you.” 20 And when He had said this, He showed them both His* [*hands*](fourteen.html) *and His side. The disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord.*

**The** [**resurrection**](techiyat.html) **of the dead**

At the [resurrection](techiyat.html) of the dead we will see countless people rising from their graves and [standing](mashal.html) on the earth breathing the air. They will, for the most part, have to pass through [six](six.html) [feet](heel.html) of dirt. Some will also have to pass through their coffins and concrete [burial](burial.html) liner.

**II Luqas (Acts) 24:15** "... there shall be a [resurrection](techiyat.html) of the dead, both of the just and unjust."

***Tehillim (***[***Psalms***](psalms1.html)***) 16:10*** *For Thou wilt not abandon my soul to the nether-*[*world*](worlds.html)*; neither wilt Thou suffer Thy godly* [*one*](one.html) *to see the pit.*

***Yehezchel (Ezekiel) 37:1-14*** *The* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *of the Lord was upon me, and the Lord carried me out in a spirit, and set me down in the midst of the valley, and it was full of bones; and He caused me to pass by them round about, and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And He said unto me: "Son of man, can these bones live?" And I answered: "0 Lord, God, Thou knowest. “Then He said unto me: "Prophesy over these bones, and say unto them: '0 ye dry bones,* [*hear*](mashal.html) *the word of the Lord: Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall* [*know*](daat.html) *that I am the Lord.” ‘So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a commotion, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. And I beheld, and, lo, there were sinews upon them and flesh came up, and skin covered them above; but there was no breath in them. Then said He unto me: "Prophesy unto the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath: 'Thus saith the Lord God: Come from the* [*four*](four.html) *winds, 0 breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their* [*feet*](heel.html)*, an exceeding great host. Then He said unto me: "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*; behold, they say: 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we can* [*clean*](purity.html) *cut off. ‘Therefore, prophesy, and say unto them: 'Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, 0 my people; and I will bring you into the land of* [*Israel*](city.html)*. And ye shall* [*know*](daat.html) *that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, and caused you to come up out of your graves, 0 My people. And I will put My spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I will* [*place*](place.html) *you in your own land; and ye shall* [*know*](daat.html) *that I the Lord have spoken, and performed it, saith the Lord."'*

How does quantum tunnelling work? Is technology involved? Is magic involved?

# The [Sun](hachama.html) and [Moon](chodesh.html) Stand Still

The ability to control astronomical forces is particularly amazing because these [bodies](body.html) are so far away. We have modified the orbit of an asteroid by using technology (a rocket), but the ability to halt a [celestial](celestal.html) [body](body.html) in its orbit is beyond our current technology. It is possible, however, that the antidiluvian scientists did have such technology.

Lets start by looking at Moshe’s control of [celestial](celestal.html) [bodies](body.html).

***Taanit 20a******The Sages*** [***taught***](teacher.html)***:*** *With regard to* [***three***](three.html) *people,* ***the*** [***sun***](hachama.html) ***broke through*** *and shone at an irregular* [*time*](time.html)***for their sake: Moses, Joshua, and Nakdimon ben Guryon.*** *The* [*Gemara*](orallaw.html) *asks:* ***Granted,*** *the case of* ***Nakdimon ben Guryon*** *is* [*known*](daat.html) *by the aforementioned* ***tradition. The case of Joshua too*** *is derived from* ***a verse, as it is written: “And the*** [***sun***](hachama.html) ***stood still, and the*** [***moon***](chodesh.html) ***stayed*** *until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies” (Joshua 10:13).* ***However, from where do we*** *derive that the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *shined in a supernatural way for* ***Moses?****…*

[***Avodah Zarah***](idolatry.html) ***25a*** *A Tanna* [*taught*](teacher.html)*:[[251]](#footnote-251) Just as the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *stood still for Joshua, so did the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *stand still for Moses and for Nakdimon b. Gorion. [As to the case of] Joshua, there are the scriptural verses; [that of] Nakdimon b. Gorion is a tradition;[[252]](#footnote-252) whence do we* [*know*](daat.html) *about Moses? — It may be derived from the identical [expression] I will begin [used in the two cases]. Here is written, I will begin to put the dread of thee,[[253]](#footnote-253) and there, referring to Joshua, it is written, I will begin to magnify thee.[[254]](#footnote-254) R. Johanan[[255]](#footnote-255) said: It may be derived from the use of the identical word teth[[256]](#footnote-256) [‘put’] [in both cases]. Here is written, I will begin to put the dread of thee,[[257]](#footnote-257) and there, concerning Joshua, it is written, In the day when the Lord put the Amorites.[[258]](#footnote-258) R. Samuel b. Nahmani said: You can detect it in the very wording of the verse itself, [The peoples that are under the whole* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*] who shall* [*hear*](mashal.html) *the report of thee, and shall tremble and be in anguish because of thee:[[259]](#footnote-259) When did they tremble and were in anguish because of Moses? When the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *stood still for him.*

***Targum Pseudo Jonathan******to Debarim (Deuteronomy) 2:25*** *Today I will begin to put your terror and* [*fear*](fear.html) *upon the faces of all the peoples which are under the whole* [*heavens*](heaven.html) *who will* [*hear*](mashal.html) *the report of your virtue, that the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *and* [*moon*](chodesh.html) *have stood still, and have ceased from* [*speaking*](mashal.html) *(their) song for the* [*space*](place.html) *of a day and a half,* [*standing*](mashal.html) *still in their habitation until you have done battle with Sihon; and they will shiver and tremble before you.*

**Rashi** **on Debarim (Deuteronomy) 2:25** under the entire [heaven](heaven.html) This [statement that [nations](nations.html) under the whole [heaven](heaven.html) will [fear](fear.html) the Israelites] [teaches](teacher.html) that the [sun](hachama.html) stood still for Moses on the day of the battle with Og, [Other editions: Sihon,] and the matter became [consequently] [known](daat.html) under the entire [heaven](heaven.html) [that is, to the whole [world](worlds.html)] ([Avodah Zarah](idolatry.html) 25a).

Now lets examine Yehoshua’s control of [celestial](celestal.html) [bodies](body.html).

***Yehoshua (Joshua) 10:12*** *Then Joshua* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *to the Lord on the day when the Lord delivered the Amorites before the children of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*; and he said in the sight of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*: ‘*[*Sun*](hachama.html)*, stand still [dom] upon Gibeon; and you,* [*Moon*](chodesh.html)*, in the valley of Ayalon.’. 13 And the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *stood still, and the* [*moon*](chodesh.html) *stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is this not written in the book of Yashar? (which is the Torah)? So the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *stood still in the midst of the* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*, and it did not hasten to go down exactly a whole day.*

[***Avodah Zarah***](idolatry.html) ***25a*** *[The same Rabbis also discuss the following:] And the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *stood still, and the* [*moon*](chodesh.html) *stayed until the* [*nation*](nations.html) *had avenged themselves of their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Yashar. What is the book of Yashar? — Said R. Hiyya b. Abba in the* [*name*](name.html) *of R. Johanan: It is the book of* [*Abraham*](avraham.html)*,* [*Isaac*](isaac.html) *and* [*Jacob*](israelja.html)*,[[260]](#footnote-260) who are designated as righteous,[[261]](#footnote-261) as it is said, Let me die the death of the righteous:[[262]](#footnote-262) And where is this incident hinted at [in Genesis]? — And his* [*seed*](flower.html) *shall fill the* [*nations*](nations.html)*:[[263]](#footnote-263) When shall [Ephraim's fame] reach the* [*nations*](nations.html)*? When the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *shall stand still for Joshua. And the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *stayed in the midst of the* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *and hasted not to go down about a whole day.[[264]](#footnote-264) How long [is day-*[*time*](time.html) *said to have lasted]? — Said R. Joshua b. Levi:* [*Twenty*](twenty.html)[*four*](four.html) *hours: [The* [*sun*](hachama.html)*] moved for* [*six*](six.html) *hours and stood still for* [*six*](six.html)*, then it moved for* [*six*](six.html) *and stood still for* [*six*](six.html)*, then it moved for* [*six*](six.html) *and stood still for* [*six*](six.html)*; the whole incident equaled a whole day.*

*R. Eleazar said:* [*Thirty-six*](thirtysix.html) *hours; it moved for* [*six*](six.html) *hours and stood still for* [*twelve*](twelve.html)*, it then moved for* [*six*](six.html) *and stood still for* [*twelve*](twelve.html) *so that the halt alone equaled a whole day. R. Samuel b. Nahmani said:* [*Forty*](forty.html)*-*[*eight*](eight.html)*; it moved for* [*six*](six.html) *and stood for* [*twelve*](twelve.html)*, it then moved for* [*six*](six.html) *and stood still for* [*twenty*](twenty.html)*-*[*four*](four.html)*, for Scripture says, and hasted not to go down about a whole day, which implies that the previous halt did not equal a whole day. Some report that it is the additional hours of daytime which are disputed. R. Joshua b. Levi said: They were* [*twenty*](twenty.html)*-*[*four*](four.html)*; it moved for* [*six*](six.html) *and stood for* [*twelve*](twelve.html)*, then moved for* [*six*](six.html) *and stood for* [*twelve*](twelve.html) *— its halt thus equaled a whole day; while R. Eleazar said:* [*Thirty-six*](thirtysix.html)*; it moved for* [*six*](six.html) *and stood for* [*twelve*](twelve.html)*, then moved for* [*six*](six.html) *and stood for* [*twenty*](twenty.html)*-*[*four*](four.html) *[which is meant by] and hasted not to go down about a whole day. R. Samuel b. Nahmani said:* [*Forty*](forty.html)*-*[*eight*](eight.html)*; it moved for* [*six*](six.html) *and stood for* [*twenty*](twenty.html)*-*[*four*](four.html)*, then moved for* [*six*](six.html) *and again stood for* [*twenty*](twenty.html)*-*[*four*](four.html)*; the* [*standing*](mashal.html) *still [at noon] equaled that of setting* [*time*](time.html)*; as the* [*one*](one.html) *at setting* [*time*](time.html) *equaled a whole day, so the* [*standing*](mashal.html) *still [in the midst of the* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*] equaled a whole day.*

Cambridge researchers announced Monday that they have pinpointed the date of the biblical account of Joshua stopping the [sun](hachama.html) — which they claim is the day of the oldest eclipse ever recorded — to October 30, 1207 BCE, exactly 3,224 years ago.

In a paper published in the “Royal Astronomical Society journal Astronomy & Geophysics,” researchers explained that they were consequently also able to refine the dates of the reigns of two Egyptian pharaohs of that era, Ramesses the Great and his son Merneptah.

The paper reinforces research published earlier this year by Israeli scientists, which also interpreted the biblical story as referring to an eclipse on the same date.

The researchers rejected earlier Chinese and Ugaritic records of eclipses as unreliable, concluding that the Bible contains the only record of a solar eclipse prior to 1000 BCE.

Chapter 10 of the Book of Joshua relates that soon after Joshua and the Israelites entered the Promised Land, they waged battle against [five](five.html) armies which laid siege to the Gibeonites. Joshua had promised to protect the Gibeonites, so he led an army and defeated the [five](five.html) kings. Joshua [prayed](prayer.html) that God help the Israelites in their battle by stopping the [sun](hachama.html):

“If these words are describing a real observation, then a major astronomical [event](feasts.html) was taking [place](place.html) — the question for us to figure out is what the text actually means,” said paper co-author Colin Humphreys from the University of Cambridge’s Department of Materials Science & Metallurgy.

“Modern English translations, which follow the King James translation of 1611, usually interpret this text to mean that the [sun](hachama.html) and [moon](chodesh.html) stopped moving,” Humphreys explained. “But going back to the original [Hebrew](hebrew.html) text, we determined that an alternative meaning could be that the [sun](hachama.html) and [moon](chodesh.html) just stopped doing what they normally do: they stopped shining.”

Humphreys said that if the biblical account means that the light from the [sun](hachama.html) appeared to stop shining, it may refer to an eclipse.

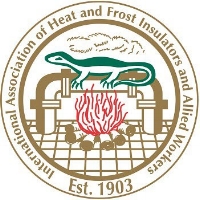
“This interpretation is supported by the fact that the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word translated ‘stand still’ has the same root as a [Babylonian](bavel.html) word used in ancient astronomical texts to describe eclipses,” he said

# [Fire](fire.html) Proof

The burning bush.

The fires of hell do not burn Torah scholars, and this is learned a fortiori. Consider the salamander which is [created](bara.html) from [fire](fire.html) and its [blood](body.html) protects from [fire](fire.html). How much more so is a Torah scholar protected, for his entire [body](body.html) is [fire](fire.html), as it is written "for my words are not as [fire](fire.html), says God".[[265]](#footnote-265)

Take a look at the logo of the *International Association of Heat and Frost Workers* below.



It's a salamander over a [fire](fire.html), and insulating some pipes. This is pretty amazing. How does the salamander do it?

The most famous story of fireproff men involved Chanaya, Mishael and Azarya – AKA Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednigo.

Chanaya: [Exiled](galuyot.html) to [Babylon](bavel.html) together with Daniel, Mishael, and Azariah, where they were trained to be chamberlains in the royal court. Despite the personal risk involved, they refused to [eat](eating.html) the royal non-[kosher](eating.html) cuisine. They were later [appointed](settimes.html) to government positions. They were thrown into a [furnace](furnace.html) after refusing to bow to an [idol](idolatry.html) erected by Nebuchadnezzar. Miraculously, they emerged unscathed, as described in the Book of Daniel.

Nimrod, most famously, threw [Avraham](avraham.html) into a pyre or a [furnace](furnace.html) (depending on which version of the [midrash](orallaw.html)).[[266]](#footnote-266) Fragments of [Midrash](orallaw.html) [Avraham](avraham.html) and Nimrod.[[267]](#footnote-267) There are some of the more secular scholars who see this act, together with Nimrod's title "gibor", as a [sign](signs.html) of Nimrod being the forebear of Zoroastrianism, an ancient Persian religion in which [fire](fire.html) is a central motif and whose worshippers were called "gabrs" or "gabers".

The Malbim notes: “This punishment is for the embitterment of the King's [command](cmds613.html) (i.e. for failing to bow down to this graven image), and also to burn and destroy anyone who rebels from the [world](worlds.html) and make it as if it had never been, and to not do any form of rebellion that makes an impression in [spiritual](physical.html) matters since (he viewed it as threatening what he thought of as) the eternal kingdom.”

Therefore, this Malbim would seem to suggest that he wanted to employ burning as a means to completely eradicate and leave no trace of any would-be rebel that threatened his kingship and that is why he specifically chose the punishment of burning.

Indeed such was his anger that the [Midrash](orallaw.html) Shochar Tov 28:2 relates that he raged, "If the [furnace](furnace.html) is usually heated with [one](one.html) bundle, let it now be filled with [seven](seven.html), and if usually lit with [seven](seven.html), let it now be lit with [forty](forty.html)-[nine](nine.html)!" - So it is clear that he was incredibly annoyed by these [three](three.html) men who stood in his way and he wanted to completely decimate them!

It is worth noting parenthetically the flip-side that it is clear from a [number](nchart.html) of sources that they reasoned that they had to specifically go through this [furnace](furnace.html) for a [number](nchart.html) of reasons.

Firstly, it is worth noting the [Gemara](orallaw.html), in Pesachim 53b, where they learnt out a kal vachomer[[268]](#footnote-268) from the Frogs in the second [plague](plagues.html) who jumped into the ovens:

They drew an a fortiori inference on their own from the [plague](plagues.html) of frogs in Egypt. With regard to frogs, which are not commanded concerning the sanctification of the [name](name.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html), it is written: “And the river shall swarm with frogs, which shall go up and come into your house, and into your bedchamber, and onto your bed, and into the houses of your servants, and upon your people, and into their ovens and kneading bowls”.[[269]](#footnote-269) When are kneading bowls found near the oven? You must say that it is when the oven is hot. If in fulfilling the [command](cmds613.html) to harass the Egyptians, the frogs entered burning ovens, all the more so, we, who are commanded concerning the sanctification of the [name](name.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html), should deliver ourselves to be killed in the fiery [furnace](furnace.html) for that purpose.

***Chagigah 27a*** *R. Abbahu said that R. Eleazar said: The* [*fire*](fire.html) *of Gehinnom has no power over the Scholars. It is an ad majus conclusion [to be drawn] from the salamander.[[270]](#footnote-270) If now [in the case of] the salamander, which is [only] an offspring of* [*fire*](fire.html)*, he who anoints himself with its* [*blood*](body.html) *is not affected by* [*fire*](fire.html)*, how much more so the Scholars, whose whole* [*body*](body.html) *is* [*fire*](fire.html)*, for it is written: Is not My word like as* [*fire*](fire.html)*? saith the Lord.[[271]](#footnote-271) Resh Lakish said. The* [*fire*](fire.html) *of Gehinnom has no power over the transgressors of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*. It is an ad majus conclusion [to be drawn] from the altar of gold. If the altar of gold, on which there is only a denar thickness of gold, is not affected through so many years by the* [*fire*](fire.html)*, how much less so the transgressors of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*, who are full of good deeds as a pomegranate [is of* [*seeds*](flower.html)*]; for it is written, Thy temples are like a pomegranate split open.[[272]](#footnote-272) Read not ‘thy temples’ [rakkathek] but ‘thy worthless ones’ [rekanim shebak].[[273]](#footnote-273)*

Among the [Temple](temple.html) vessels mentioned in the [Mishna](orallaw.html) were the altars, which were made of wood encased in metal. The outer mizbeach was covered in copper, while the inner [one](one.html) was covered in gold. Masechet Hagigah concludes on our daf with Reish Lakish using the golden altar as a metaphor that [teaches](teacher.html) how [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people, even if they are sinners, are protected from the [fire](fire.html) of Gehinom. He argues that just as the altar, whose gold plate is no thicker than the thickness of a dinar (a [type](types.html) of coin), was not affected by the continuous [fire](fire.html) that was on it, similarly [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people are protected, since even the sinners among them are full of [mitzvot](cmds613.html). To support this idea, he points to a passage in Shir HaShirim[[274]](#footnote-274) for which he offers an alternative, Midrashic reading. Instead of rakatekh (which would mean “your temples are like a pomegranate split open”), he suggests we read reikanim shebakh (meaning that even those [Jews](gen-jew.html) who appear to be empty of [mitzvot](cmds613.html) are filled with them like a pomegranate is full of [seeds](flower.html)).

The Sefat Emet explains Reish Lakish’s statement by reminding us that the Torah is referred to as gold,[[275]](#footnote-275) which protects the individual as it does the altar. He also ties this in with statements made earlier in the Masechet that emphasize how all [Jews](gen-jew.html) are seen as righteous and reliable during the period of the pilgrimage holidays.

In a similar vein, the [Gemara](orallaw.html) quotes Rabbi Abbahu in the [name](name.html) of Rabbi Elazar who [teaches](teacher.html) that Torah scholars will not be affected by the fires of Gehinom. Just as the salamander, as a creature of [fire](fire.html) whose [blood](body.html) can be used to protect an individual from [fire](fire.html), is safe from being burned, similarly Torah scholars, who are seen as creatures of [fire](fire.html), are protected. The idea that Torah scholars are made up of [fire](fire.html) comes from Sefer Yirmiyahu,[[276]](#footnote-276) where the word of God is compared to [fire](fire.html).

Firemen have technology which enables them to move through an extremely hot [fire](fire.html) and remain unscathed. It is possible that there has been technology in the past which performed a similar function. Science fiction is replete with srories of force fields which would protect us from hot [fire](fire.html). From where we are, protection from [fire](fire.html) seems quite miraculous.

# Men becoming Animals ([Amalek](amalek.html))

We [know](daat.html) that King Saul killed all of the [Amalekites](amalek.html) except Agag, and the Prophet Shmuel killed Agag the following day.[[277]](#footnote-277) Thus, it appears that all of the [Amalekites](amalek.html) have been killed. This presents a small problem:

***Shmuel Alef (1 Samuel) 27:8*** *And* [*David*](fathers.html) *and his men went up, and invaded the Geshurites, and the Gezrites, and the* [*Amalekites*](amalek.html)*: for those of old the inhabitants of the land, as thou goest to Shur, even unto the land of Egypt.*

If all of the [Amalekites](amalek.html) were killed by King Saul and Shmuel the Prophet, where did the [Amalekites](amalek.html) come from, who battled against King [David](fathers.html) later in history?

Rashi,[[278]](#footnote-278) in Shmuel Alef, comments on the [command](cmds613.html) to kill every living being, including all of the animals. He asks why the oxen and sheep must be killed, and answers that the [Amalekites](amalek.html) [knew](daat.html) magical arts and could transform themselves into animals, and thus, might disguise themselves and escape.

**Rashi to Shmuel alef (I Samuel) 15:3** - **ox and sheep:** for they were sorcerers, and they would change themselves to resemble animals.

"And why did he connect this to a witch, to [teach](teacher.html) that the sorcerers sometimes cast spells on themselves and change into animals, like Agag, King of [Amalek](amalek.html), who turned himself into a bull and his wife a cow, and in that night she became pregnant and escaped..."[[279]](#footnote-279)

"And in an ancient [midrash](orallaw.html)[[280]](#footnote-280) that Agag turned himself into a bull and his wife into a cow through sorcery, and he went and cohabited with his wife before he was killed and from him was born [Haman](esther.html), and for this he [[Haman](esther.html)] was named after him."[[281]](#footnote-281)

"...and there are some that say that he connected lying with an animal to a sorcerer because they sometimes cast spells on themselves and become animals, like Agag who turned himself into a bull and his wife into a cow and she became pregnant that night and gave [birth](birth.html) to Medata, and he begot [Haman](esther.html)."[[282]](#footnote-282)

"...The [Midrash](orallaw.html) also claims that the [Amalekites](amalek.html) made for themselves animals by means of sorcery, changing their genes to different species. This is why Samuel did not content himself with a general description fitting all animals. He used divinely inspired wisdom in order to outsmart them."[[283]](#footnote-283)

Thus, a possible answer to our question is that some [Amalekites](amalek.html) escaped, disguised as animals.[[284]](#footnote-284) It could also be, however, that the story of [David](fathers.html) took [place](place.html) before the story of Saul. Never the less, [one](one.html) of the things we learn from the fact that the [Amalekites](amalek.html) could disguise themselves, is that this use of a disguise is a trait of the [Amalekites](amalek.html) that will help us identify them. Rashi shows us that they have used disguises many times and points to the following pasuk:

***Bamidbar 21:1*** *“And the Canaanite heard... And he fought against* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*.”*

The *Canaanite* was [Amalek](amalek.html). Upon [hearing](mashal.html) that Aharon had died and that the Clouds of Glory had departed, he thought that permission was granted to battle with [Israel](gen-jew.html).[[285]](#footnote-285)

The text of the Rashi says plainly that the [Amalekites](amalek.html) used magic to transform themselves into animals AKA therianthropy. Can people still do this today? This ability to shapeshift seems miraculous.

# [Creating](bara.html) Life

The greatest wealth a person can have, are his children. The Shulchan and the Lechem Hapanim represent the סוד הנוקבא, which, in the Sifrei haKabbalah, refers to the process of [creating](bara.html) life, not like the animals, but life with a Divine neshama.

In the 18th century, in the [city](city.html) of Lithuania, lived a smart rabbi of [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people, who [created](bara.html) Golem. Out of clay, he [created](bara.html) a figure. As he was a scholar of great [knowledge](knowledge.html), who [knew](daat.html) the [five](five.html) Books of Moses by [heart](body.html) and the [secrets](sod.html) of the Cabala, he also [knew](daat.html) the words to put on a piece of paper and attach it to Golem’s ear. This way giving life to Golem in order to help his people with providing fish for the [Sabbath](sabbath.html).

“Golem, I need you to go to the river and trap the fish into a net. Once out of the water, distribute the fish to the [Jews](gen-jew.html),” commanded the Rabbi. And that’s what golem did.

There were times, when [Jews](gen-jew.html) were not allowed to observe their holidays in peace and for such occasions, the Rabbi would use golem for different reasons.

“Defend the [Jews](gen-jew.html),” the Rabbi would [command](cmds613.html).

Golem was of great strength, but as he was not a creature of God, he could not think. With his strong [arms](body.html) he would defend his people by breaking the bones and skulls of the opponents. Nobody in its way would escape him and nobody would escape him alive. Such news reached the governor, who demanded the Rabbi to appear in front of him at once.

“Once the Golem is gone, will we be allowed to celebrate our holidays in peace? asked the Rabbi.

“You have my word,” promised the governor.

Since all the buckets were filled with fish and the Rabbi had the governor’s word, he removed the piece of paper from Golem’s ear. Golem turned into a pile of clay at which the Rabbi looked and said, “I hope there is not another day, when another Golem has to be [created](bara.html) to protect its people.”

In Masechet Sanhedrin (daf 65:), it is mentioned that Rava [created](bara.html) a 'person' by using [Hashem](hashem.html)'s names according to the kabbalistic book 'Sefer Yetzirah'. The 'person' in the [Gemara](orallaw.html) did not [speak](mashal.html). In the [Gemara](orallaw.html) this creature was not called a golem. The word 'golem' is only a few hundred years old , and means dummy, or clay automaton.

The Vilna Gaon wanted to make a golem, even before he was a bar [mitzvah](cmds613.html). He did not finish the job because he saw some sight which he interpreted to mean to stop [creating](bara.html) the golem because he was too young. This is mentioned by his student Rav Chaim of Volozhin who heard the story from the Gra (the Vilna Gaon). He wrote it in the introduction to the Gra's commentary on the kabalistic book 'Safra D'tzniuta'.

There were other golem stories in the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) history, such as the golem [created](bara.html) by Rabbi Eliyahu of Chelm and was told by his grandson the Chacham Tzvi, and his great-grandson Rav [Yaakov](israelja.html) Emden (see Sheilat Yaavetz 93).

***Sanhedrin 65b*** *“Rava said, ‘If* [*one*](one.html) *is righteous, he could create* [*worlds*](worlds.html) *[like God].’ As it says, ‘For your* [*sins*](sin.html) *separate you from your God.' Rava thereby* [*created*](bara.html) *a man, and sent him to Rav Zeira. He* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *to him but he did not answer. Rav Zeira said, ‘You are from the chavrei [sorcerers], return to your* [*dust*](rock.html)*’. On each Friday evening Rav Chanina and Rav Oshiah would indulge in Sefer Yetzirah [book of* [*Creation*](bara.html)*] and would create a* [*third*](three.html)*-grown calf and* [*eat*](eating.html) *it.”*

In [Jewish](gen-jew.html) folklore, a golem (/ˈɡoʊləm/ goh-ləm; [Hebrew](hebrew.html): גולם‎) is an animated anthropomorphic being, magically [created](bara.html) entirely from inanimate matter...

The most famous golem narrative involves Judah Loew ben Bezalel, the late 16th century rabbi of Prague, also [known](daat.html) as the Maharal, who reportedly [created](bara.html) a golem to defend the Prague ghetto from antisemitic [attacks](attacks.html) and pogroms. Depending on the version of the legend, the [Jews](gen-jew.html) in Prague were to be either expelled or killed under the rule of Rudolf II, the Holy Roman Emperor. To protect the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [community](community.html), the rabbi constructed the Golem out of clay from the banks of the Vltava river, and brought it to life through rituals and [Hebrew](hebrew.html) incantations. The Golem was called Josef and was [known](daat.html) as Yosele. It was said that he could make himself invisible and summon spirits from the dead. The only care required of the Golem was that he couldn't be active on the day of [Sabbath](sabbath.html) (Saturday). Rabbi Loew deactivated the Golem on Friday evenings by removing the shem before the [Sabbath](sabbath.html) began, so as to let it rest on [Sabbath](sabbath.html). [One](one.html) Friday evening Rabbi Loew forgot to remove the shem, and feared that the Golem would desecrate the [Sabbath](sabbath.html). A different story tells of a golem that fell in love, and when rejected, became the violent monster seen in most accounts. Some versions have the golem eventually going on a murderous rampage. The rabbi then managed to pull the shem from his [mouth](body.html) and immobilize him in front of the [synagogue](synagog.html), whereupon the golem fell in pieces. The Golem's [body](body.html) was stored in the attic genizah of the Old [New](new.html) [Synagogue](synagog.html), where it would be restored to life again if needed. According to legend, the [body](body.html) of Rabbi Loew's Golem still lies in the [synagogue](synagog.html)'s attic.

*The Golden Calf*

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 32:22-24*** *And Aaron said: 'Let not the anger of my lord wax hot; thou knowest the people, that they are set on evil.* ***23*** *So they said unto me: Make us a god, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we* [*know*](daat.html) *not what is become of him.* ***24*** *And I said unto them: Whosoever hath any gold, let them break it off; so they gave it me; and I cast it into the* [*fire*](fire.html)*, and there came out this calf.'*

So, the calf[[286]](#footnote-286) formed itself and was alive enough to come out of the pot by itself!

***Rashi to Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 32:4*** *-* ***a molten calf*** *-: As soon as they had cast it into the* [*fire*](fire.html) *of the crucible, the sorcerers of the mixed multitude who had gone up with them* [*from Egypt*](thebirth.html) *came and made it with sorcery. [See commentary on Exod. 12:38.] Others say that Micah was there, who had emerged from the layer of the building where he had been crushed in Egypt. (Sanh. 101b). In his* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *was a plate upon which Moses had inscribed “Ascend, O ox; ascend, O ox,” to [miraculously] bring up* [*Joseph*](joseph.html)*’s coffin from the Nile. They cast it [the plate] into the crucible, and the calf emerged. -[from* [*Midrash*](orallaw.html) *Tanchuma 19]*

***Rashi to Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 32:4 -these are your gods****: But it does not say, “These are our gods.” -[from here [we learn] that the mixed multitude who had come up* [*from Egypt*](thebirth.html) *were the ones who* [*gathered*](gather.html) *against Aaron, and they were the ones who made it [the calf]. Afterwards, they caused the Israelites to stray after it. -[from* [*Midrash*](orallaw.html) *Tanchuma 19]*

As to who actually formed the calf, there are [three](three.html) opinions:

1. Aaron formed it by molding the form of a calf from the molten gold.[[287]](#footnote-287)
2. Sorcerers from the [erev rav](erevrav.html) formed it using magic.[[288]](#footnote-288)
3. Micah, a member of the [erev rav](erevrav.html) whose life had been [saved](salvation.html) by Moses, [created](bara.html) the calf. When the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people were [leaving Egypt](thebirth.html), Moses went to collect [Joseph](joseph.html)’s coffin to fulfill his request that his remains be [redeemed](redemption.html) together with the [Jews](gen-jew.html). However, in an attempt to stop the [Jews](gen-jew.html) from leaving, the Egyptians had sunk [Joseph](joseph.html)’s coffin in the Nile. Moses took a plaque, wrote on it the words “alei shor” (“rise ox”), and threw it in the river, causing the coffin of [Joseph](joseph.html) (who is compared to an ox) to rise to the surface. Micah had stolen this plaque and now used it to create the calf by throwing it into the blaze.[[289]](#footnote-289)

***Pirke DeRebbi Eliezer 45:4-5*** *Aaron argued with himself, saying: If I say to* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*, Give ye to me gold and silver, they will bring it immediately; but behold I will say to them, Give ye to me the earrings of your wives, and of your sons, and forthwith the matter will fail, as it is said, "And Aaron said to them, Break off the golden rings" (Ex. 32:2). The women heard (this), but they were unwilling to give their earrings to their husbands; but they said to them: Ye* [*desire*](needs.html) *to make a graven image and a molten image without any power in it to deliver. The Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, gave the women their reward in this* [*world*](worlds.html) *and in the* [*world*](futures.html) *to come. What reward did He give them in this* [*world*](worlds.html)*? That they should observe the* [*New*](new.html) *Moons more stringently than the men, and what reward will He give them in the* [*world*](futures.html) *to come? They are destined to be renewed like the* [*New*](new.html) *Moons, as it is said, "Who satisfieth thy years with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle" (Ps. 103:5).*

*(5) The men saw that the women would not consent to give their earrings to their husbands. What did they do? Until that hour the earrings were (also) in their own* [*ears*](body.html)*, after the fashion of the Egyptians, and after the fashion of the Arabs. They broke off their earrings which were in their own* [*ears*](body.html)*, and they gave (them) to Aaron, as it is said, "And all the people brake off || the golden rings which were in their* [*ears*](body.html)*" (Ex. 32:3). "Which were in the* [*ears*](body.html) *of their wives" is not written here, but "which were in their* [*ears*](body.html)*." Aaron found among the earrings* [*one*](one.html) *plate of gold upon which the Holy* [*Name*](name.html) *was written, and engraven thereon was the figure of a calf, and that (plate) alone did he cast into the fiery* [*furnace*](furnace.html)*, as it is said, "So they gave it me: and I cast it into the* [*fire*](fire.html)*, and there came out this calf" (Ex. 32:24). It is not written here, "And I cast them in," but "And I cast it in the* [*fire*](fire.html)*, and there came out this calf." The calf came out lowing, and the Israelites saw it, and they went astray after it.*

The [Gemara](orallaw.html) speaks of great Rabbis who could create life:

***Sanhedrin 65b*** *R. Hanina and R. Oshaia spent every* [*Sabbath*](sabbath.html) *eve in studying the ‘Book of* [*Creation*](bara.html)*’,[[290]](#footnote-290) by means of which they* [*created*](bara.html) *a* [*third*](three.html)*-grown calf[[291]](#footnote-291) and* [*ate*](eating.html) *it.*

Magic is when you evoke a spirit and ask it do the work for you, it is completely permissible. Sometimes even encouraged, as in the example of the Rabbis using [angels](angels.html) and holy names from the Sefer Yetzira to conjure a cow for the [shabbat](sabbath.html) meal, rather than going hungry on [shabbat](sabbath.html).

***Sanhedrin 65b*** *Raba said: If the righteous desired it, they could [by living a life of absolute* [*purity*](purity.html)*] be creators, for it is written, But your iniquities have distinguished between etc.[[292]](#footnote-292) Rabbah* [*created*](bara.html) *a man,[[293]](#footnote-293) and sent him to R. Zera. R. Zera* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *to him, but received no answer. Thereupon he said unto him: ‘Thou art a creature of the magicians. Return to thy* [*dust*](rock.html)*.’*

***Sanhedrin 67b*** *Abaye said: The* [*laws*](law.html) *of sorcerers are like those of the* [*Sabbath*](sabbath.html)*: certain actions are punished by stoning, some are exempt from punishment, yet forbidden, whilst others are entirely permitted. Thus: if* [*one*](one.html) *actually performs magic, he is stoned; if he merely creates an illusion, he is exempt, yet it is forbidden; whilst what is entirely permitted? — Such as was performed by R. Hanina and R. Oshaia, who spent every* [*Sabbath*](sabbath.html) *eve in studying the* [*Laws*](law.html) *of* [*Creation*](bara.html)*, by means of which they* [*created*](bara.html) *a* [*third*](three.html)*-grown calf and* [*ate*](eating.html) *it.[[294]](#footnote-294)*

Sorcey, per se, is forbidden, but what about the permitted practiceof using Sefer Yetzirah? The Beit [Yosef](joseph.html) cites Rabbeinu Yerucham, who claims that this is a form of ma'asei sheidim.[[295]](#footnote-295) The Beit [Yosef](joseph.html) immediately notes that this is a mistake, and the Darchei Moshe says that it may be forbidden to say such a thing, although he does mention that the wording of the [gemara](orallaw.html) implies that some magic is involved. The general view is that Sefer Yetzirah is a book that uses the various names of [HaShem](hashem.html) and their mystical connotations, and through them allows [one](one.html) to create things and perform other "magical" acts.

Modern-day magicians, and prestidigitators:[[296]](#footnote-296) Most people recognize that while they may be unable to catch the sleight of [hand](fourteen.html) of the magician or to understand exactly how he does his tricks, the tricks performed are all merely illusion and no [demons](demons.html) or dark forces are being summoned. The *Pitchei Teshuva* claims that this makes no difference. He mentions the view of the *Chochmat* [*Adam*](adam.html), who states that such magicians as perform at weddings act in violation of a Torah [law](law.html), those who hire them act in violation of the injunction not to put a stumbling block before a blind man, and that it is forbidden for [one](one.html) to watch such performances. Rav Ovadia [Yosef](joseph.html)[[297]](#footnote-297) attempts to find a source that allows such practices. He [first](one.html) claims that people who encourage such forms of entertainment likely rely on the view of the *Yavin Da'at*, who states that since the magician does not actually do anything substantive, but merely tricks his audience, there is no real prohibition involved. Second, Rav [Yosef](joseph.html) notes the opinion of the Mahari Mintz, who says that on [Purim](purim.html) a man is allowed to wear women's clothes and students may steal [food](food.html) off of each others' plates, assuming that everything is done in a jesting manner and is done merely due to the happiness of the day. Rav [Yosef](joseph.html) claims that there are those who extend this leniency to magic, and further extend it to allow magic to be performed at any happy occasion (weddings, bar mitzvahs, etc.), provided that it is done in the spirit of happiness that pervades the [event](feasts.html). However, Rav [Yosef](joseph.html) states that [one](one.html) should certainly try to be strict in these matters, especially since there are several opinions who claim that the prohibition involved here is [one](one.html) that comes directly from the Torah.

In this section we have seen great, righteous men create life. Was this magic or technology? How do men learn such things?

# Raising the Dead

Today most folks do not believe that the dead can be [resurrected](techiyat.html) except in the [end of days](lastdays.html). Never the less, we [know](daat.html) from the Tanach and Nazarean Codicil that some men have had the ability to raise the dead. The following examples reveal that this ability has been seen for several thousand years. How it was accomplished is unknown. That it could be displayed when needed suggests either magic or technology.

***Avodah Zara 10b*** *Antoninus tells the Tanna Rabbi* [*Yehuda*](fathers.html) *HaNassi: “I* [*know*](daat.html) *that even the smallest of you can make the dead live”.*

So it is clear that this [gentile](gen-jew.html) nobleman, Antoninus*,* understood as a simple matter of fact that even the smallest Tanna can perform [Techiyat](techiyat.html) HaMeitim, [resurrection](techiyat.html) of the dead.

The prophet Elisha, as recorded in Melachim bet (II Kings) 4, was able to raise the dead.

Elisha had told a Shunammite woman who had treated him very kindly that she would have a son. She did, and then the boy died. She cried to Elisha, who ran to her house, closed himself in the room with the dead boy, [prayed](prayer.html) to God, and brought the boy back to life. It is clear that it is God who did the reviving, through Elisha. The prophet did not "have the ability" to bring the dead back to life; it wasn't his decision or his action. It was his [prayer](prayer.html)/plea.

***Melachim bet (2 Kings) 4:32-37*** *And when Elisha came into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed. He went in therefore, and closed the door upon the two of them, and* [*prayed*](prayer.html) *to the God. And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his* [*mouth*](body.html) *upon his* [*mouth*](body.html)*, and his* [*eyes*](body.html) *upon his* [*eyes*](body.html)*, and his* [*hands*](fourteen.html) *upon his* [*hands*](fourteen.html)*; and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child became warm.[[298]](#footnote-298) Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him; and the child sneezed* [*seven*](seven.html) *times, and the child opened his* [*eyes*](body.html)*. And he called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunemmite. And he called her. And when she came to him, he said, Take up your son. Then she went in, and fell at his* [*feet*](heel.html)*, and bowed to the ground, and took up her son, and went out.*

Similarly, in Yehezchel 37 the prophet Yehezchel (Ezekiel) prophesies, at God's [command](cmds613.html), to the dry bones, and they are reanimated and brought to life[[299]](#footnote-299) -- but it is God doing the reanimating. Yehezchel doesn't have the power to do this independently; God used him as His vehicle for producing the miracle.

***Megilla 7b*** *The* [*Gemara*](orallaw.html) *relates that Rabba and Rabbi Zeira prepared a* [*Purim*](purim.html) *feast with each other, and they became intoxicated to the point that Rabba arose and slaughtered Rabbi Zeira. The next day, when he became sober and realized what he had done, Rabba asked God for mercy, and revived him. The next year, Rabba said to Rabbi Zeira: Let the Master come and let us prepare the* [*Purim*](purim.html) *feast with each other. He said to him: Miracles do not happen each and every hour, and I do not want to undergo that* [*experience*](experience.html) *again.*

*Lazarus*

***Yochanan (John) 11:33-44*** *When* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *therefore saw her* [*weeping*](mashal.html)*, and the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *also* [*weeping*](mashal.html) *which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, 34 And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. 35* [*Jesus*](yeshua.html) *wept. 36 Then said the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*, Behold how he loved him! 37 And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the* [*eyes*](body.html) *of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died? 38* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. 39* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this* [*time*](time.html) *he stinketh: for he hath been dead* [*four*](four.html) *days. 40* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? 41 Then they took away the stone from the* [*place*](place.html) *where the dead was laid. And* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *lifted up his* [*eyes*](body.html)*, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. 42 And I* [*knew*](daat.html) *that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. 43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud* [*voice*](voice.html)*, Lazarus, come forth. 44 And* ***he that was dead came forth,*** *bound* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *and* [*foot*](heel.html) *with graveclothes: and his* [*face*](body.html) *was bound about with a napkin.* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.*

Here we see that [Yeshua](yeshua.html) is doing the resurrecting and seemingly doing it with just His [voice](voice.html). Is this magic? Is this like the [resurrection](techiyat.html) performed by the Tannaim?

The apostles were commanded to raise the dead as though it were qite common and of no great consequence. This suggests that, like magic or technology, it could be reliably deployed along with healing, cleansing, and casting out devils. Can you say WOW!?

***Matitiyahu (Matthew) 10:5-8*** *These* [*twelve*](twelve.html)[*Jesus*](yeshua.html) *sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the* [*Gentiles*](gen-jew.html)*, and into any* [*city*](city.html) *of the Samaritans enter ye not: 6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*. 7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *is at* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*. 8 Heal the* [*sick*](illness.html)*, cleanse the lepers,* ***raise the dead****, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.*

[*Yitzchak*](isaac.html) *at the* [*Akeida*](human.html)*.*

In Rabbinic literature there are two basic approaches to [Yitzchak](isaac.html)'s whereabouts during the textual "blackout." The [first](one.html) approach is that [Yitzchak](isaac.html) is busy learning[[300]](#footnote-300) in Yeshiva.[[301]](#footnote-301) A second approach, found in other midrashim, describes [Yitzchak](isaac.html) as having died or almost died, or died in a metaphorical sense, depending on nuance. [Yitzchak](isaac.html) has temporarily retired to the [Garden of Eden](eden.html).

Even though [Yitzchak](isaac.html) did not die it is deemed as if he died, and his ashes are on the altar... Where was [Yitzchak](isaac.html)? God took him to the [Garden of Eden](eden.html) where he remained for 3 years.[[302]](#footnote-302)

Many midrashim see [Yitzchak](isaac.html) as having died, and [Jewish](gen-jew.html) liturgy abounds with references to the [Akeida](human.html) as if it had actually been performed to completion.

***Pirke D'Rebbi Eliezer, Chapter 30*** *Rav* [*Yehuda*](fathers.html) *said, 'When the sword reached his throat, his soul ascended and* [*Yitzchak*](isaac.html) *died. When He made his* [*voice*](voice.html) *heard from between the keruvim saying "Do not raise a* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *to the boy," (*[*Yitzchak*](isaac.html)*'s) soul returned to his* [*body*](body.html)*,* [*Yitzchak*](isaac.html) *arose and stood on his* [*feet*](heel.html)*.* [*Yitzchak*](isaac.html)[*knew*](daat.html) *that this is how the dead would be* [*resurrected*](techiyat.html) *in the* [*future*](future.html)*, and he said, "Blessed are You who resurrects the dead".[[303]](#footnote-303)*

The scenario described in this [midrash](orallaw.html) is radically different than what we have come to visualize: Although [Avraham](avraham.html) does not actively kill him, [Yitzchak](isaac.html) dies on the altar. His soul ascends to [heaven](heaven.html), but is returned to his [body](body.html) when the [Voice](voice.html) of God rings out from between the keruvim, and [Yitzchak](isaac.html) experiences and comprehends [resurrection](techiyat.html).

The midrashic insistence that [Yitzchak](isaac.html) died at the [*akeida*](human.html) is no mere quirk: Mount Moriah is the [place](place.html) of [sacrifice](korbanot.html), and [Yitzchak](isaac.html) was sacrificed.

We say during [Rosh Hashana](teruah.html) that [HaShem](hashem.html) should remember the ashes of [Yitzchak](isaac.html) which are [gathered](gather.html) under the Keesay Hakavod.[[304]](#footnote-304) Secondly, he didn’t come to his mother’s funeral, because [angels](angels.html) brought him to the [Gan Eden](eden.html) to be healed there. That is why, when [Yaaqov](jacob.html) came in dressed in [Esav](edom.html)’s clothing, [Yitzchak](isaac.html) declared that he recognized the smell of the clothes as that of [Gan Eden](eden.html). He [knew](daat.html) that smell because he was there.

[Yeshua](yeshua.html)’s death was like the death of [Yitzchak](isaac.html) where He died but no [one](one.html) killed Him.

We are left wondering who [resurrected](techiyat.html) [Yitzchak](isaac.html). Was it [Avraham](avraham.html), the [angel](angels.html), or [HaShem](hashem.html)?

# Talking to the Dead - Necromancy

Necromancy, talking to the dead, is strictly forbidden in the Torah.

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 19:31*** *Do not turn to ghosts and do not inquire of familiar spirits, to be defiled by them: I,* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, am your God.*

Yet, the practice was used by King Saul. The witch of En-dor facilitated this conversation. How did she do this?

***Shmuel alef (I Samuel) 18:4-20*** *And the Philistines* [*gathered*](gather.html) *themselves together, and came and pitched in Shunem; and Saul* [*gathered*](gather.html) *all* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html) *together, and they pitched in Gilboa. 5 And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his* [*heart*](body.html) *trembled greatly. 6 And when Saul inquired of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*,* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *answered him not, neither by* [*dreams*](dreams.html)*, nor by Urim, nor by prophets. 7 Then said Saul unto his servants: 'Seek me a woman that divineth by a ghost, that I may go to her, and inquire of her.' And his servants said to him: 'Behold, there is a woman that divineth by a ghost at En-dor.' 8 And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and went, he and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night; and he said: 'Divine unto me, I* [*pray*](prayer.html) *thee, by a ghost, and bring me up whomsoever I shall* [*name*](name.html) *unto thee.' 9 And the woman said unto him: 'Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that divine by a ghost or a familiar spirit out of the land; wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die?' 10 And Saul swore to her by* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, saying: 'As* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing.' 11 Then said the woman: 'Whom shall I bring up unto thee?' And he said: 'Bring me up Samuel.' 12 And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud* [*voice*](voice.html)*; and the woman* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *to Saul, saying: 'Why hast thou* [*deceived*](garment.html) *me? for thou art Saul.' 13 And the king said unto her: 'Be not afraid; for what seest thou?' And the woman said unto Saul: 'I see a godlike being* [*coming*](coming.html) *up out of the earth.' 4 And he said unto her: 'What form is he of?' And she said: 'An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a robe.' And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he bowed with his* [*face*](body.html) *to the ground, and prostrated himself. {S} 15 And Samuel said to Saul: 'Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up?' And Saul answered: 'I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by* [*dreams*](dreams.html)*; therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make* [*known*](daat.html) *unto me what I shall do.' {S}* ***16*** *And Samuel said: 'Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *is departed from thee, and is become thine adversary?* ***17*** *And* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *hath wrought for Himself; as He* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *by me; and* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *hath rent the kingdom out of thy* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*, and given it to thy neighbour, even to* [*David*](fathers.html)*.* ***18*** *Because thou didst not hearken to the* [*voice*](voice.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, and didst not execute His fierce wrath upon* [*Amalek*](amalek.html)*, therefore hath* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *done this thing unto thee this day.* ***19*** *Moreover* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *will deliver* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html) *also with thee into the* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *of the Philistines; and to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me;* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *will deliver the host of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html) *also into the* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *of the Philistines.'* ***20*** *Then Saul fell straightway his full length upon the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel; and there was no strength in him; for he had* [*eaten*](eating.html) *no bread all the day, nor all the night.*

THE WOMAN SAW: There are many commentaries on this….Ralbag says that usually the witch excites the imagination of the person to believe they saw something, meaning it is fake magic. This explains why she shrieks, because it was usually fake, except for this [time](time.html).[[305]](#footnote-305)

The pasuk seems to be saying that the magic of Ov is real, how is this possible?

This section by [Tamar](fathers.html) Kadari.

When the woman performs her rites and chants her incantations, Samuel’s ghost appears. Upon seeing this apparition of the prophet, the woman is terrified: “Then the woman recognized Samuel, and she shrieked loudly, and said to Saul, ‘Why have you [deceived](garment.html) me? You are Saul!’”.[[306]](#footnote-306) The Rabbis ask: How did this woman suddenly realize that the man [sitting](mashal.html) before her was Saul? They answer that when a commoner seeks to raise a ghost, the spirit rises upside down, with his [head](body.html) below and his [feet](heel.html) above; but when a king requests the same thing, the spirit emerges with his [head](body.html) up and his [feet](heel.html) down below. Since Samuel appeared right side up, the woman realized that the man [sitting](mashal.html) before her was none other than King Saul.

The monarch asks the woman what she sees, and she tells him: “I see a divine being [elohim] [coming](coming.html) up from the earth”.[[307]](#footnote-307) The Rabbis deduced from the plural “elohim” that Samuel did not emerge alone, but together with many elders.[[308]](#footnote-308) According to another midrashic tradition, the least plural is two, and Moses rose together with Samuel.[[309]](#footnote-309)

The Rabbis ask why Saul questioned the necromancer as to Samuel’s appearance: did he not recognize the prophet when he arose? They answer that [three](three.html) things were said about the raising of a spirit: the [one](one.html) who raises him, sees the ghost but does not [hear](mashal.html) his [voice](voice.html); the [one](one.html) who [needs](needs.html) him, hears his [voice](voice.html), but does not see him; and the [one](one.html) who does not need him, neither hears nor sees the spirit. Accordingly, the necromancer saw Samuel, but did not [hear](mashal.html) his [voice](voice.html), while Saul, who requested him, heard Samuel’s [voice](voice.html), but could not see him; and the king’s two courtiers, Abner and Amasa, did not need Samuel, and therefore neither heard his [voice](voice.html) nor saw him.

***Yochanan (John) 11:14-44*** *Then said* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. 15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him. 16 Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him. 17 ¶ Then when* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *came, he found that he had [lain] in the grave* [*four*](four.html) *days already. 18 Now Bethany was nigh unto* [*Jerusalem*](city.html)*, about* [*fifteen*](fifteen.html) *furlongs off: 19 And many of the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. 20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *was* [*coming*](coming.html)*, went and met him: but Mary sat [still] in the house. 21 Then said Martha unto* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)*, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. 22 But I* [*know*](daat.html)*, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give [it] thee. 23* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. 24 Martha saith unto him, I* [*know*](daat.html) *that he shall rise again in the* [*resurrection*](techiyat.html) *at the last day. 25* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *said unto her, I am the* [*resurrection*](techiyat.html)*, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: 26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? 27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the* [*world*](worlds.html)*. 28 And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee. 29 As soon as she heard [that], she arose quickly, and came unto him. 30 Now* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *was not yet come into the town, but was in that* [*place*](place.html) *where Martha met him. 31 The* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to* [*weep*](mashal.html) *there. 32 Then when Mary was come where* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *was, and saw him, she fell down at his* [*feet*](heel.html)*, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. 33 ¶ When* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *therefore saw her* [*weeping*](mashal.html)*, and the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *also* [*weeping*](mashal.html) *which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, 34 And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. 35* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *wept. 36 Then said the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*, Behold how he loved him! 37 And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the* [*eyes*](body.html) *of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died? 38* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. 39* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this* [*time*](time.html) *he stinketh: for he hath been [dead]* [*four*](four.html) *days. 40* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? 41 Then they took away the stone [from the* [*place*](place.html)*] where the dead was laid. And* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *lifted up [his]* [*eyes*](body.html)*, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. 42 And I* [*knew*](daat.html) *that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said [it], that they may believe that thou hast sent me. 43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud* [*voice*](voice.html)*, Lazarus, come forth. 44 And he that was dead came forth, bound* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *and* [*foot*](heel.html) *with graveclothes: and his* [*face*](body.html) *was bound about with a napkin.* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.*

# [Walking](walking.html) on Water

*A rabbi,* [*priest*](priests.html)*, and a minister are out fishing in a boat on a big lake when the* [*priest*](priests.html) *realizes that he has to go to the bathroom. Not wanting to disturb the fishing of the others in the boat by having them take him to shore, he gets out of the boat and walks across the water to do his business and then returns to the boat. A little while later the minister has to go also and he does the same. He walks across the water, does his business and returns across the water to the boat. Finally the rabbi feels the urge to go to the bathroom too, so he climbs out of the boat. But instead of* [*walking*](walking.html) *across the water, he falls into the water and starts to wildly splash around. The* [*priest*](priests.html) *and the minister finally drag the rabbi back into the boat and the* [*priest*](priests.html) *turns to the minister and says, "Maybe we should have told him where the rocks were."*

Most folks [know](daat.html) that [Yeshua](yeshua.html) was able to [walk](walking.html) on water.

***Matityahu (Matthew) 14: 22-33*** *And straightway* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. 23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to* [*pray*](prayer.html)*: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. 24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. 25 And in the* [*fourth*](four.html) *watch of the night* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *went unto them,* [*walking*](walking.html) *on the sea. 26 And when the disciples saw him* [*walking*](walking.html) *on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for* [*fear*](fear.html)*. 27 But straightway* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. 28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. 29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)*. 30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord,* [*save*](salvation.html) *me. 31 And immediately* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *stretched forth his* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? 32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. 33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.*

We can see from the above pasuk that not only did [Yeshua](yeshua.html) [walk](walking.html) on water, but Peter also walked on water. How did they do this? Miracle, magic, or technology?

**Shemot (**[**Exodus**](exodus.html)**) 14:22**

"And the children of [Israel](gen-jew.html) went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground”

**Shemot (**[**Exodus**](exodus.html)**) 14:29**

" But the children of [Israel](gen-jew.html) walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea."

The order of "sea" and "dry ground" is reversed. Many explanations are given for this. The Holy K'dushas Levi explains that once the Bne [Israel](gen-jew.html) experienced the miracle of [walking](walking.html) on terra firma in the middle of a [body](body.html) of water, a miraculous happening, they came to the realization that all depends upon [HaShem](hashem.html), and if not for His constant involvement [one](one.html) would be unable to [walk](walking.html) on the dry earth as well. Thus once the Bne [Israel](gen-jew.html) walked "midst of the sea on dry ground," - they came to the realization that [walking](walking.html) in a [body](body.html) of water as if it were terra firma is a miracle, so too from that point when they walked on the ground they recognized that [walking](walking.html) on the earth is no less a miracle than, [walking](walking.html) on water.

# Foretelling the [Future](future.html)

By Rabbi Jack Abramowitz

Prophecy is the ability to receive and decode Divine emanations. It is the highest [spiritual](physical.html) level to which a person can aspire as it requires a highly-developed imaginative prowess (by which we mean the ability to conceive of things not perceived through the usual [five](five.html) senses.[[310]](#footnote-310) No matter how much [one](one.html) hones himself morally and intellectually, he cannot take for granted that he will necessarily be able to develop his "prophecy receptors". If he doesn't have the capacity for imaging, the gift of prophecy is simply never going to take.[[311]](#footnote-311)

Some of the functions of [one](one.html)'s imaginative ability are to retain the impressions of things [one](one.html) has seen or heard, to combine these impressions, and to form [new](new.html) images. The highest function of this faculty occurs when [one](one.html)'s other senses are [asleep](mashal.html) and it can potentially tap into the Divine. This is when [one](one.html) could potentially receive [dreams](dreams.html) that come true, or even prophecy, provided that he has the aptitude for such things.

[Dreams](dreams.html) that come true and prophecy are essentially the same phenomenon, as they both entail receiving impressions using our "spirituality receptors". The difference is really [one](one.html) of intensity, as the [Talmud](orallaw.html)[[312]](#footnote-312) tells us, "[Dreams](dreams.html) are [one](one.html)-sixtieth of prophecy". Similarly, the [Midrash](orallaw.html)[[313]](#footnote-313) says that [dreams](dreams.html) are the "unripened" form of prophecy. The Rambam finds this metaphor to be particularly apt: unripened fruits are indeed fruits, they've just been plucked from the tree prematurely. Similarly, true [dreams](dreams.html) are indeed a form of prophecy, it's just that the individual's receptors are not finely-tuned enough to receive it in its full form.

It is evident that [dreams](dreams.html) can be a form of prophecy from [Numbers](nchart.html) 12:6: "If there is a prophet among you, I (God) make Myself [known](daat.html) to him in a vision; I [speak](mashal.html) to him in a [dream](dreams.html)." These two forms of perception constitute the entirety of prophecy in its various degrees.

A prophet is an individual who receives a message from [HaShem](hashem.html) to transmit to the people. Maimonides counts it as [one](one.html) of the 13 foundations of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) faith that [HaShem](hashem.html) communicates to mankind through prophecy".[[314]](#footnote-314)

The purpose of prophecy is to make course corrections in the direction of [Jewish](gen-jew.html) society, or in the direction of society at large. Sometimes a prophet comes to foretell the [future](future.html), when [HaShem](hashem.html) deems it necessary that we should [know](daat.html) what's to come in order to encourage us in our [mission](mission.html) in life. Other times it's to remind us that we're slacking off on what He expects from us, and warn us of the dire [consequences](conseq.html) this will bring if we don't get our act together. Sometimes, [HaShem](hashem.html) used a prophet to deliver private messages to an individual (particularly to an important individual whose actions would have a widespread effect, such as a king). A prophet may also convey a specific instruction that is not contained in the Torah as a "[one](one.html)-[time](time.html)-only" [command](cmds613.html) from on high; in such cases, [one](one.html) must follow that instruction even if it runs contrary to a universal Torah [command](cmds613.html). A prophecy, however, will never contain a [new](new.html) [mitzvah](cmds613.html), nor the annulment of a [mitzvah](cmds613.html); a prophet claiming such a communication from [HaShem](hashem.html) proves himself a false prophet.[[315]](#footnote-315)

**How does** [**one**](one.html) **become a prophet?**

[First](one.html), [one](one.html) has to make oneself worthy. Maimonides lists the following criteria: [one](one.html) must be wise, and of a clear and lucid mind; of impeccable character, and utterly in control of [one](one.html)'s passions and [desires](needs.html); of a calm and joyous constitution; [one](one.html) must shun materiality and the frivolities of life, devoting oneself entirely to knowing and serving [HaShem](hashem.html).

All this, however, does not bring on prophecy, it only makes [one](one.html) worthy to receive it. The actual reception of prophecy comes from Above, by Divine election. While "prophecy schools" in ancient [Israel](gen-jew.html) would train aspiring prophets to become conducive to receiving a prophecy, via extensive meditation and a rigorous [spiritual](physical.html) lifestyle, the student-prophet could not cause a prophecy to come to him through specific actions. Much like uncontrolled ESP or psychic powers, prophecy would manifest itself suddenly, without any warning signals or preparation on the part of the prophet. What happened was that [HaShem](hashem.html) chose a person to [speak](mashal.html) to and through, not the other way around.

**Who were the prophets?**

There were thousands of prophets in [Jewish](gen-jew.html) history (we also [know](daat.html) of at least [one](one.html) non-[Jewish](gen-jew.html) prophet, Balaam). The overwhelming majority of them, however, conveyed messages that were specific to the [time](time.html) and circumstances they were sent to address. Their prophecies, therefore, were not recorded for posterity, and even their names are unknown to us. Many of these prophets were ordinary citizens, students, craftsmen, farmers, who, by virtue of their righteousness and heightened sensitivity to spirituality, were selected by [HaShem](hashem.html) to receive a prophecy. Often they didn't [know](daat.html) what hit them, only to realize later they'd been hit by prophecy. Some, like [Jonah](jonah.html), [knew](daat.html) what it was, but tried to run from it (a Torah prohibition, as per above).

The [Talmud](orallaw.html) counts 55 "historical" prophets whose prophecies were recorded in the Tanach because they contain a message relevant to all [generations](toldot.html). Most of these were public figures who prophesied frequently and became lifetime leaders of their people. These include the 15 prophets whose words were recorded in individual books that bear their names: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and [twelve](twelve.html) lesser ones including Amos, Hosea, Nahum and others. The other 40, who may or may not have been in prophecy full-[time](time.html), are mentioned in various places throughout Tanach, such as Nathan (the Books of Samuel) and Ido (Chronicles). Outside of these there were the uncharted [number](nchart.html) of unrecorded prophetic experiences. King Saul dabbled in prophecy for a [time](time.html), but what he was told is unknown.

The 18th-century Italian master kabbalist Moshe Chaim Luzzatto (based on a [Talmudic](orallaw.html) [teaching](teacher.html)) penned a [nine](nine.html)-step system for training oneself in prophecy, called Path of the Just. Absent from its pages are meditations, dietary practices, desert seclusion and other real or imagined efforts of enlightenment. Its only advice involves unceasing striving for moral and ethical perfection.

How does prophecy work?

# [Secrets](sod.html) - סוֹדוֹת‎

What is a [secret](sod.html)? A [secret](sod.html) is something for which there are no words. When a [teacher](teacher.html) wishes to convey a [secret](sod.html) he may wrap many words around the idea, but he can never convey the matter. This is analogous to a coach [teaching](teacher.html) baseball. He says many words and demonstrates the best he can, but he can never [teach](teacher.html) a man how to hit a home run, or bowl a perfect game.

These things we fall into. After we have fallen into the understanding of a [secret](sod.html), then we cannot convey this [secret](sod.html) to another.

A few [secret](sod.html) teachings, such as the meaning of the [priest](priests.html)-king Malchizedek or the symbolism of Boaz and Yachin, the two pillars in front of Solomon's [temple](temple.html), remain concealed from us. Today, we have only hints of what these things signify.

# Polyglots

In Acts the apostles [spoke](mashal.html) to the [seventy](seventy.html) [nations](nations.html) in their own language.

Yehoseph [spoke](mashal.html) 70 languages to Paro.

[***Sotah***](hair.html) ***36b*** *Rabbi Hiyya ben Abba said in the* [*name*](name.html) *of Rabbi Johanan: "At the moment when Pharaoh said to* [*Joseph*](joseph.html)*, And without thee shall no man lift up his* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*, Pharaoh's astrologers exclaimed: 'Wilt thou set in power over us a slave whom his master bought for* [*twenty*](twenty.html) *pieces of silver!' He replied to them, 'discern in him royal characteristics.' They said to him, 'in that case he must be acquainted with the* [*seventy*](seventy.html) *languages.'* [*Angel*](angels.html)[*Gabriel*](angels.html) *came and* [*taught*](teacher.html) *[*[*Joseph*](joseph.html)*] the* [*seventy*](seventy.html) *languages, but he could not learn them. Thereupon [*[*Gabriel*](angels.html)*] added to his* [*name*](name.html) *a* [*letter*](letters.html) *from the* [*Name*](name.html) *of the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, and he learnt [the languages]..."*

According to the [Talmudic](orallaw.html) passage, [Joseph](joseph.html) received two things from the [angel](angels.html) [Gabriel](angels.html): Mastery over [seventy](seventy.html) languages, and an additional [letter](letters.html) to his [name](name.html). Both of these ideas are based on exegesis of a verse in [Psalms](psalms1.html):

***Tehillim (***[***Psalms***](psalms1.html)***) 81*** *1 For the Leader; upon the Gittith. [A* [*Psalm*](psalms1.html)*] of Asaph. 2 Sing aloud unto God our strength; shout unto the God of* [*Jacob*](israelja.html)*. 3 Take up the melody, and sound the timbrel, the sweet harp with the psaltery. 4 Blow the* [*horn*](shofar.html) *at the* [*new*](new.html)[*moon*](chodesh.html)*, at the full* [*moon*](chodesh.html) *for our feast-day. 5 For it is a statute for* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*, an ordinance of the God of* [*Jacob*](israelja.html)***. 6 He*** [***appointed***](settimes.html) ***it in Yehoseph* בִּיהוֹסֵף*for a testimony, when He went forth against the land of Egypt. The*** [***speech***](voice.html) ***of*** [***one***](one.html) ***that I*** [***knew***](daat.html) ***not did I*** [***hear***](mashal.html)***:*** *7 'I removed his shoulder from the burden; his* [*hands*](fourteen.html) *were freed from the basket. 8 Thou didst call in trouble, and I rescued thee; I answered thee in the* [*secret*](sod.html)[*place*](place.html) *of thunder; I proved thee at the waters of Meribah. Selah 9* [*Hear*](mashal.html)*, O My people, and I will admonish thee: O* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*, if thou wouldest hearken unto Me! 10 There shall no strange god be in thee; neither shalt thou worship any foreign god. 11 I am* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *thy God, who brought thee up out of the land of Egypt; open thy* [*mouth*](body.html) *wide, and I will fill it. 12 But My people hearkened not to My* [*voice*](voice.html)*; and* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html) *would none of Me. 13 So I let them go after the stubbornness of their* [*heart*](body.html)*, that they might* [*walk*](walking.html) *in their own counsels. 14 Oh that My people would hearken unto Me, that* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html) *would* [*walk*](walking.html) *in My ways! 15 I would soon subdue their enemies, and turn My* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *against their adversaries. 16 The haters of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *should dwindle away before Him; and their punishment should endure for ever. 17 They should also be fed with the fat of wheat; and with honey out of the* [*rock*](rock.html) *would I satisfy thee.'*

The verse refers to Yehosef, that is, [Yosef](joseph.html) with an extra heh. Furthermore, the verse refers to his having heard a language I had not [known](daat.html). These two ideas are combined in the [Talmud](orallaw.html), producing the concept of [Joseph](joseph.html) being [taught](teacher.html) this information by the [angel](angels.html) [Gabriel](angels.html).

**Everyone** [**spoke**](mashal.html)[**Hebrew**](hebrew.html)

**before the Tower of** [**Babel**](bavel.html)

The Bible says that once upon a [time](time.html), everyone [spoke](mashal.html) the same language. And the Bible is written in [Hebrew](hebrew.html). So, [one](one.html) might presume, that *was* the language that everyone [spoke](mashal.html). And since no other language had been mentioned before this, [Hebrew](hebrew.html) must have been the only language on earth from the [time](time.html) of [Adam](adam.html) and Eve on, until God came down, after the Tower of [Babel](bavel.html) had been built, and “scrambled their language” and scattered them throughout the [world](worlds.html).

***Shabbath 88b*** *R. Johanan said: What is meant by the verse, The Lord giveth the word: They that publish the tidings are a great host?[[316]](#footnote-316) Every single word that went forth from the Omnipotent was split up into* [*seventy*](seventy.html) *languages.[[317]](#footnote-317) The School of R. Ishmael* [*taught*](teacher.html)*: And like a hammer that breaketh the* [*rock*](rock.html) *in pieces,[[318]](#footnote-318) just as a hammer is divided into many sparks,[[319]](#footnote-319) so every single word that went forth from the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, split up into* [*seventy*](seventy.html) *languages.[[320]](#footnote-320)*

At Mt. [Sinai](stages.html) language was out of this [world](worlds.html):

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah -*** [***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***V:9*** *It says: And all the people perceived the thunderings.[[321]](#footnote-321) Note that it does not say ‘the thunder’,[[322]](#footnote-322) but ‘the thunderings’; wherefore R. Johanan said that God’s* [*voice*](voice.html)*, as it was uttered, split up into* [*seventy*](seventy.html) *voices, in* [*seventy*](seventy.html) *languages, so that all the* [*nations*](nations.html) *should understand.[[323]](#footnote-323) When each* [*nation*](nations.html) *heard the* [*Voice*](voice.html) *in their own vernacular their souls departed,[[324]](#footnote-324)* [*save*](salvation.html)[*Israel*](gen-jew.html) *who heard but who were not hurt.[[325]](#footnote-325)*

# Endless [food](food.html)

The manna (in [Hebrew](hebrew.html), מן, which is more accurately transliterated as mon[[326]](#footnote-326)) was the miraculous edible substance that fell each day from [heaven](heaven.html) during the 40-year period between the [Exodus](exodus.html) and the conquest of [Israel](gen-jew.html), providing our ancestors with sustenance throughout their travels in the desert.

In order that the manna remain [clean](purity.html), a north wind would blow, sweeping the ground, and then rain would wash it. The ground would then be covered with a layer of dew, and the manna would fall upon it, after which the manna was covered with another layer of dew, as if it were packaged in a box.[[327]](#footnote-327)

Being a heavenly [food](food.html), the manna contained nutritious matter only and was fully absorbed by the [body](body.html), so after consuming it the Israelites didn’t need to expel any waste products.[[328]](#footnote-328)

**Feeding the 4000**

I have never heard of any technology, [save](salvation.html) [Star](star.html) Trek, which was able to create [food](food.html), Yet [Yeshua](yeshua.html) was able to do it easily on a couple of occasions:

***Mark 8:1-9****1  In those days there was again a large crowd, and they had nothing to* [*eat*](eating.html)*. He called the disciples and said to them, 2  "I have* [*compassion*](jonah.html) *on the crowd, because they've already stayed with me* [*three*](three.html) *days and have nothing to* [*eat*](eating.html)*. 3  If I send them home hungry, they will collapse on the way, and some of them have come a long distance." … 5 "How many loaves do you have?" he asked them. "*[*Seven*](seven.html)*," they said. 6  He commanded the crowd to sit down on the ground. Taking the* [*seven*](seven.html) *loaves, he gave thanks, broke them, and gave them to his disciples to set before the people. So they served them to the crowd. 7  They also had a few small fish, and after he had blessed them, he said these were to be served as well. 8  They* [*ate*](eating.html) *and were satisfied. Then they collected* [*seven*](seven.html) *large baskets of leftover pieces. 9  About* [*four*](four.html) *thousand were there.* --

Elijah was able to create [food](food.html) at will:

***Melachim alef (1 Kings) 17:13-14*** *And Elijah said unto her: '*[*Fear*](fear.html) *not; go and do as thou hast said; but make me thereof a little cake* [*first*](one.html)*, and bring it forth unto me, and afterward make for thee and for thy son.* ***14*** *For thus saith* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, the God of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*: The jar of meal shall not be spent, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *sendeth rain upon the land.'*

***Melachim bet (II Kings) 4:1-7*** *Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying: 'Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did* [*fear*](fear.html) *the LORD; and the creditor is come to take unto him my two children to be bondmen.'* ***2*** *And Elisha said unto her: 'What shall I do for thee? tell me; what hast thou in the house?' And she said: 'Thy handmaid hath not any thing in the house,* [*save*](salvation.html) *a pot of oil.'* ***3*** *Then he said: 'Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few.* ***4*** *And thou shalt go in, and shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and pour out into all those vessels; and thou shalt set aside that which is full.'* ***5*** *So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons; they brought the vessels to her, and she poured out.* ***6*** *And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son: 'Bring me yet a vessel.' And he said unto her: 'There is not a vessel more.' And the oil stayed.* ***7*** *Then she came and told the man of God. And he said: 'Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy sons of the rest.'*

How did he do it?

Here is another instance where [HaShem](hashem.html) produced [food](food.html) from an unusual source for many years:

[***Sotah***](hair.html) ***11b*** *And they would then take what they prepared to their husbands, to the* [*field*](field.html)*, and would bathe their husbands and anoint them with oil and feed them the fish and give them to drink and bond with them in sexual* [*intercourse*](marriageact.html) *between the sheepfolds, i.e., between the borders and fences of the fields, as it is stated: “When you lie among the sheepfolds, the wings of the dove are covered with silver, and her pinions with the shimmer of gold” (*[*Psalms*](psalms1.html) *68:14), which is interpreted to mean that as a reward for “when you lie among the sheepfolds,” the* [*Jewish*](gen-jew.html) *people* [*merited*](merit.html) *to receive the plunder of Egypt, as it is stated in the continuation of the verse, as a reference to the* [*Jewish*](gen-jew.html) *people: “The wings of the dove are covered with silver, and her pinions with the shimmer of gold” (*[*Psalms*](psalms1.html) *68:14).*

*And when these women would become pregnant, they would come back to their homes, and when the* [*time*](time.html) *for them to give* [*birth*](birth.html) *would arrive they would go and give* [*birth*](birth.html) *in the* [*field*](field.html) *under the apple tree, as it is stated: “Under the apple tree I awakened you; there your mother was in travail with you; there was she in travail and brought you forth”.[[329]](#footnote-329)*

*And the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, Blessed be He, would send from the* [*heavens*](heaven.html) *above an* [*angel*](angels.html) *who would* [*clean*](purity.html) *and prepare the newborns, just as a midwife prepares the newborn, as it is stated: “And as for your* [*birth*](birth.html)*, on the day you were born, your navel was not cut nor were you washed with water for cleansing; you were not salted at all, nor swaddled at all” (Ezekiel 16:4). This indicates that there were no midwives to take care of the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *born in Egypt. And then, the* [*angel*](angels.html) *would* [*gather*](gather.html) *for them two round stones from the* [*field*](field.html) *and the babies would nurse from that which would flow out of them.* [*One*](one.html) *of the stones flowed with oil and* [*one*](one.html) *of the stones flowed with honey, as it is stated: “****And He would suckle them with honey from a crag and oil from a flinty*** [***rock***](rock.html)*”.[[330]](#footnote-330)*

# Limitless [space](place.html) and [Time](time.html)

In the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html), [space](place.html) was **not subject to ordinary limitations**, as reflected in the miracle, “the [space](place.html) of the [Ark](ark.html) was not subject to measurement”.[[331]](#footnote-331)

Within the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html), by contrast, [space](place.html) was significant. Thus, the Holy of Holies was of a clearly delineated size, [twenty](twenty.html) cubits by [twenty](twenty.html) cubits, and the [Ark](ark.html) as well had a specific size of two and a half cubits in length and [one](one.html) and a half cubits in breadth, nevertheless the “[space](place.html) of the [Ark](ark.html) was not subject to measurement” in that *it did not take up any* [*space*](place.html) *in the room*.

The [Talmud](orallaw.html) relates that the [Ark](ark.html) in the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html)[[332]](#footnote-332) in [Jerusalem](city.html), which held the Two Tablets inscribed with the [Ten](ten.html) [Commandments](cmds613.html), possessed the most unusual [physical](physical.html) qualities. The Torah specifies the [Ark](ark.html)’s dimensions: “Two cubits and a half should be its length, a cubit and a half its breadth, and a cubit and a half its height”.[[333]](#footnote-333) Nevertheless, says the [Talmud](orallaw.html), the [Ark](ark.html) did not occupy any of the [space](place.html) of the chamber that housed it. Miraculously, “the area of the [Ark](ark.html) was not part of the measurement”.[[334]](#footnote-334)

The [Cherubim](angels.html) which Solomon made stood on the floor next to the [ark](ark.html), on the right and left, The spread of their wings was [twenty](twenty.html) cubits, Since the whole room had no more than [twenty](twenty.html) cubits, the [body](body.html) of the Cherubs, as separate from the wings, was in the room by miraculous provision.[[335]](#footnote-335)

[One](one.html) of the miracles that took [place](place.html) in the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html) was the expansion of [space](place.html). When [Jews](gen-jew.html) came there on the [festivals](festivals.html) they were so crowded in the [Temple](temple.html) courtyard that many of them did not even have room to put their [feet](heel.html) on the floor, so that they gave the appearance of floating in the air. But when the [time](time.html) came to prostrate themselves the floor [space](place.html) miraculously expanded, so that there was a separation of [four](four.html) cubits between each of them.[[336]](#footnote-336) Thus no [one](one.html) would [hear](mashal.html) the confessions of [sin](sin.html) made by his neighbor and cause him embarrassment.

***Avot 5:7*** *“No man has ever said to me that I have no* [*place*](place.html) *in* [*Jerusalem*](city.html)*”.*

Most [Jews](gen-jew.html) in [Israel](gen-jew.html) came to [Yerushalayim](city.html) for [Pesach](passover.html). How many people were there? Several million!

By **Harav** [**Avraham**](avraham.html) **Rosenthal**

“It was not just people from all over [Eretz Israel](gen-jew.html), but large groups came from [Babylon](bavel.html) as well. As to how many people there were, the [Gemara](orallaw.html)[[337]](#footnote-337) relates that King Agrippas[[338]](#footnote-338) took a census by asking the [priest](priests.html) Gadol to take a kidney from each [Korban](korbanot.html) [Pesach](passover.html). They counted 1,200,000 [kidneys](body.html)! The [Gemara](orallaw.html) continues to relate that there was a maximum of [ten](ten.html) people [eating](eating.html) each [korban](korbanot.html). Although there are other opinions[[339]](#footnote-339) that up to a hundred people [ate](eating.html) from each [korban](korbanot.html), let us suffice with the smallest [number](nchart.html). According to this, there were 12,000,000 people in [Yerushalayim](city.html) who were [eating](eating.html) the [korban](korbanot.html)! This does not include all the people who could not [eat](eating.html) the [korban](korbanot.html), such as those who were unclean, [sick](illness.html), or old.

“But, the walled [city](city.html) of [Yerushalayim](city.html) is so small! How was it possible for all those people to find [place](place.html)?”

“Wait, there is more! Not only did every person have to find a [place](place.html) to [eat](eating.html) the [korban](korbanot.html), he had to find a [place](place.html) on the ground floor! The [Gemara](orallaw.html) says that although the [korban](korbanot.html) had to be [eaten](eating.html) within the walled [city](city.html), it could only be [eaten](eating.html) on the ground floor, since upper levels and rooftops were not awarded the unique sanctity of the walled [city](city.html). Also, [one](one.html) must take into consideration that when [eating](eating.html) the [korban](korbanot.html), they were reclining on couches which necessitated even more room!”[[340]](#footnote-340)

“How was it possible?”

“I want to point out that the present walls of the Old [City](city.html) of [Jerusalem](city.html) are for the most part not the walls that define the [halachic](walking.html) boundaries of the [city](city.html). Rather, they were built at a later date. During the [time](time.html) of the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html), the walled [city](city.html) was slightly larger than it is now. Even so, it does not make much of a difference, because [physically](physical.html) there still was not enough room.

The real answer is that [one](one.html) must keep in mind the [Mishna](orallaw.html)[[341]](#footnote-341) that lists [ten](ten.html) miracles that occurred in the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html). The last of which is, ‘A person never said to his fellow, the [space](place.html) is insufficient for me to stay overnight in [Yerushalayim](city.html).’ Although the [Mishna](orallaw.html) refers specifically to the fact that there was always room for people to spend the night, and they could [sleep](mashal.html) on the upper floors, it is obvious that the miracle extended to other areas as well. For example, a person never had a problem finding an oven to roast his [Korban](korbanot.html) [Pesach](passover.html).[[342]](#footnote-342)

“According to Agrippas’ census, there were 1,200,000 korbanot. Each group sent at least [one](one.html) person with their [korban](korbanot.html). The [Gemara](orallaw.html) tells us that the [third](three.html) group was the smallest of the [three](three.html). Therefore, let us assume that in the [first](one.html) two groups 500,000 people and an equal [number](nchart.html) of lambs and goats, entered the Ezrat [Israel](gen-jew.html)[[343]](#footnote-343) and Ezrat [Priests](priests.html),[[344]](#footnote-344) and the remaining 200,000 entered as the [third](three.html) group.”

“That’s impossible! You said that the area of Ezrat [Israel](gen-jew.html) and Ezrat [Priests](priests.html) was only 39,600 square [feet](heel.html). That means that more than [twelve](twelve.html) people, not counting animals, stood in each square [foot](heel.html)!”

“Technically, you are correct. But, we are dealing with the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html). The same [Mishna](orallaw.html) which I quoted earlier that there was always room to [sleep](mashal.html) in [Yerushalayim](city.html), also says that in the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html) they would stand packed together and bow down on the floor with ample room.”

“In order to facilitate the process, the [Gemara](orallaw.html) tells us that there were rows of [priests](priests.html) leading from where the [korban](korbanot.html) was slaughtered up to the altar. A [priest](priests.html) would catch the [blood](body.html) in a vessel and pass it to his friend, who would pass it along until it reached the altar. The [priest](priests.html) closest to the altar would pour it on the wall of the altar above the foundation.”

“What was the foundation?”

“At the base of the altar there was a ‘step’ [one](one.html) amah high and [one](one.html) amah wide, specifically on the northern and western sides. The [blood](body.html) had to be poured above the yesod; otherwise the [korban](korbanot.html) was invalid.

“Each row of [priests](priests.html) had either silver or gold vessels. These vessels were [traveling](mashal.html) in two directions: the full vessels towards the altar and the empty ones back towards the slaughtering area. Each [priest](priests.html) in the row would pass a full vessel and then receive an empty [one](one.html). According to the testimony of the Roman non-[Jew](gen-jew.html) from that [time](time.html), the [priests](priests.html) were passing the vessels with such speed that they appeared like flying arrows.”

“The thought just occurred to me, that the slaughtering also bordered on the miraculous. You told me that they started the Shechita [three](three.html) and a half hours before sunset. That means that they only had [three](three.html) and a half hours to slaughter 1,200,000 lambs and goats. Even assuming that there were [one](one.html) hundred people slaughtering at the same [time](time.html), that still worked out to be approximately [one](one.html) animal per second!” (And some say 95 were slaughtered per second!)

Let me point out an interesting tidbit based on our earlier calculations of the [number](nchart.html) of korbanot. It is very possible that every group had its own oven for roasting. This is especially true when Erev [Pesach](passover.html) was on [Shabbat](sabbath.html), and everyone was roasting the [korban](korbanot.html) at the same [time](time.html) when [Shabbat](sabbath.html) was over. If each oven was [three](three.html) [feet](heel.html) square, the ovens alone would cover an area of almost [four](four.html)-square miles!”

Rabbi Greenman, however suggests in his article a novel concept and the consideration of another factor or dimension, that of holiness. He demonstrates in his article, based on a discrepancy in the measurements of articles in the [Temple](temple.html), that there was a *relativity effect* occurring. The closer [one](one.html) got to the epicenter of the Holy of Holies (in this case the [spiritual](physical.html) equivalent of the speed of light) the shorter dimensions in the [Temple](temple.html) become. His proof is that the same utensils that are closer to the Holy of Holies are indeed recorded as being shorter. The jackpot of his proof is that in the Holy of Holies itself, there is a tradition that the [Ark](ark.html) took up no [space](place.html) whatsoever, in exact agreement with his interpretation of Einstein’s equations.

In the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html), on [Yom Kippur](kippur.html)im, they stood shoulder to shoulder, yet when the ineffable [Name](name.html) was pronounced they all laid on the ground spread-eagle and there was plenty of [space](place.html).

[Israel](gen-jew.html) is call “the land of the deer”[[345]](#footnote-345) because the borders will always contain the residents, no matter how many they are.

**Gittin 57a** A certain heretic said to Rabbi Ḥanina: You lie with your exorbitant exaggerations. Rabbi Ḥanina said to him: With regard to Eretz Yisrael it is written: Land of the deer (see Jeremiah 3:19). Just as the skin of a deer cannot hold its flesh, for after the animal is skinned, its hide shrinks, so too, with regard to Eretz Yisrael, when it is settled, it expands, but when it is not settled, it contracts. This explains how a [place](place.html) that is so small today could have been so highly populated prior to the [Temple](temple.html)’s destruction.

The description given by the Prophet Yirmiyahu of Eretz Yisrael as "the land of the deer." Why is it compared to a deer? When the skin of a deer is removed from its carcass it is impossible to once again have it envelop the deer's flesh, because it has contracted. In similar fashion, when [Jews](gen-jew.html) live in Eretz Yisrael the Land expands to absorb them but when they do not live in the Land it contracts.

The [Ark](ark.html) of [covenant](covenant.html) did not take up any [space](place.html) in the Holy of Holies.

\* \* \*

[One](one.html) of the 365 prohibitions of the Torah is to leave the meat of a [korban](korbanot.html) ([sacrifice](korbanot.html)) beyond the [time](time.html) which was specified for [eating](eating.html) it or its being consumed in flames on the holy altar (notar) i.e., the meat of a [korban](korbanot.html) oleh ([burnt offering](korbanot.html)) must be burnt on the altar before sunrise of the day following the animal’s shechita. However, this prohibition is not in affect when the meat is brought up to the [head](body.html) of the altar even if it is not burnt for an extended period of [time](time.html); the reason being that [time](time.html) stops at the [head](body.html) of the altar; there is no today and no tomorrow.

# Perfect Physician

# [Demon](demons.html) Control

# [Eyes](body.html) that can See

# Incredible Longevity

Chazal [teach](teacher.html) that Bilaam’s [donkey](chamor.html), the [one](one.html) that [spoke](mashal.html) to Bilaam, was no ordinary [donkey](chamor.html). It had an incredible pedigree. In fact, according to the Tanna in Pirke Avot 5:6, it was [one](one.html) of the [ten](ten.html) things that were [created](bara.html) on Erev [Shabbat](sabbath.html), at twilight, on the [sixth](six.html) day of [Creation](bara.html).

The [Mishna](orallaw.html) (Avot 5:8) reads: [Ten](ten.html) things were [created](bara.html) at twilight:

1. the [mouth](body.html) of the earth [that swallowed [Korach](qorach.html)]
2. the [mouth](body.html) of the well [that provided water for the Israelites in the wilderness]
3. the [mouth](body.html) of the [donkey](chamor.html) [that [spoke](mashal.html) to Balaam]
4. and the rainbow
5. and the manna
6. and the [staff](staff.html)
7. and the *shamir*
8. and the writing
9. and the inscription
10. and the tablets.

This suggests that there is something special about [one](one.html) particular [donkey](chamor.html). It was [created](bara.html) at a special [time](time.html) which was the [sixth](six.html) day of [creation](bara.html), yet is was not the [sixth](six.html) day. It was [created](bara.html) on the [seventh](seven.html) day, yet it was not the [seventh](seven.html) day. Twilight is a special transition period between days which has some of the characteristics of both days. To put it another way: The [mouth](body.html) of Bilaam’s [donkey](chamor.html) was [created](bara.html) during the messianic age!

The meaning of this is debated by the commentators. The Rav, R' Ovadiah m'Bartenura, writes that on Erev [Shabbat](sabbath.html), the decree was issued that the [donkey](chamor.html) would [speak](mashal.html) to Bilaam.

Pirke D’Rav Eliezer, chapter 31*,* notes that the [Chamor](chamor.html) used by [Avraham](avraham.html) is the same [Chamor](chamor.html) mentioned by Moses, and will be the same [Chamor](chamor.html) ridden by [Mashiach](mashiach.html)!

**Pirke D’Rabbi Eliezer**: This [donkey](chamor.html) was born to the famous [donkey](chamor.html) formed on the [first](one.html) Friday of [creation](bara.html), after sunset.[[346]](#footnote-346) It is the [donkey](chamor.html) on which Moshe rode when [coming](coming.html) to Egypt. And it is the [donkey](chamor.html) which the son of [David](fathers.html)[[347]](#footnote-347) will ride upon.

Pirke D’Rabbi Eliezer [teaches](teacher.html) us that the [donkey](chamor.html) which accompanied [Avraham](avraham.html) Abinu to the Aleida was none other than the son of the original [donkey](chamor.html) that was [created](bara.html) on the Erev [Shabbat](sabbath.html) of [creation](bara.html). This [donkey](chamor.html) later served Moshe Rabbenu, his wife and sons, when they returned to Egypt to take part in [Hashem](hashem.html)'s plan for liberating the [Jews](gen-jew.html) [from Egypt](thebirth.html). This is the [donkey](chamor.html) that [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [David](fathers.html) will ride as he heralds the [future](future.html) [Redemption](redemption.html). We see from here that the she-[donkey](chamor.html) that [spoke](mashal.html) with Bilaam was [created](bara.html) on the Erev [Shabbat](sabbath.html) of [creation](bara.html).

Hmmm, our [chamor](chamor.html) is the offspring of the MOST famous [donkey](chamor.html) ever [created](bara.html):

***Ethics of the*** [***Fathers***](fathers.html) ***5:6***[*Ten*](ten.html) *things were* [*created*](bara.html) *on the eve of* [*Shabbat*](sabbath.html) *at twilight. These are: the* [*mouth*](body.html) *of the earth (where it swallowed* [*Korach*](qorach.html)*) the* [*mouth*](body.html) *of the well (of Miriam, that provided water for the Israelites in the desert);* ***the*** [***mouth***](body.html) ***of the (Bilaam’s)***[***ass***](chamor.html)*; the rainbow; the manna; (Moses’)* [*staff*](staff.html)*; the shamir (that cut the stones of the Altar in the Holy* [*Temple*](temple.html)*); and the writing, the inscription, and the tablets [of the* [*Ten*](ten.html)[*Commandments*](cmds613.html)*].*

[Mashiach](mashiach.html)’s [donkey](chamor.html) makes its [first](one.html) appears in the year 2084 from [creation](bara.html) (1677 BCE):

***Bereshit (Genesis) 22:3*** *And* [*Abraham*](avraham.html) *rose up early in the morning, and saddled his* [*ass*](chamor.html)*, and took two of his young men with him, and* [*Isaac*](isaac.html) *his son, and clave the wood for the* [*burnt offering*](korbanot.html)*, and rose up, and went unto the* [*place*](place.html) *of which God had told him.*

The [Chamor](chamor.html) is used for many things involving the carrying of burdens. What did [Avraham](avraham.html) use his [Chamor](chamor.html) for? [Avraham](avraham.html) used the [Chamor](chamor.html) to carry the bundles of wood and the knife. In other words, the [Chamor](chamor.html) didn’t carry [Avraham](avraham.html) or [Yitzchak](isaac.html). It carried only the items which [Avraham](avraham.html) was planning to use for the Aleida.

[Avraham](avraham.html)’s [journey](stages.html) was only the [first](one.html) [time](time.html) in history that this [type](types.html) of service was performed. That’s why so very little was put on top of the [Chamor](chamor.html), only the items he needed for the Aleida.

What was [Avraham](avraham.html)’s [Chamor](chamor.html) trip for? [Avraham](avraham.html) was going to [redeem](redemption.html) his son, and by redeeming his son he would be redeeming all of the Children of [Israel](gen-jew.html), because, at that [time](time.html), all of the Children of [Israel](gen-jew.html) were in the loins of [Yitzchak](isaac.html). This was a [redemption](redemption.html) [journey](stages.html) using the [Chamor](chamor.html) for transportation.

In Shemot***,*** we see a pasuk that describes how Moshe used THE [Chamor](chamor.html) to carry his wife and children to their destination:

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 4:20*** *And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon the* [*ass*](chamor.html)*, and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the* [*rod*](staff.html) *of God in his* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*.*

Rashi says the following about this [ass](chamor.html) ([donkey](chamor.html)):

**mounted them upon the** [**donkey**](chamor.html) **-** The designated [donkey](chamor.html). That is the [donkey](chamor.html) that [Abraham](avraham.html) saddled for the binding of [Isaac](isaac.html), and that is the [one](one.html) upon whom the King [Messiah](mashiach.html) is destined to appear, as it is said: “humble, and riding a [donkey](chamor.html)”.[[348]](#footnote-348)

Rabbi Yechiel Michel of Zlotchov in ***Be’er Mayim Chayim*** said:

Rashi is troubled why the verse says that he “mounted them upon *the* [*donkey*](chamor.html)” rather than merely “a [donkey](chamor.html)”. Therefore, he concluded that the Torah must be hinting that it is a famous [donkey](chamor.html).

Moshe placed his wife and children atop the [Chamor](chamor.html). People who are close to you are much more important than tools. This shows that in the many years that had passed since [Avraham](avraham.html), a lot had been accomplished in the task of using [physicality](physical.html) to serve [HaShem](hashem.html). By then, it was people who were on the [Chamor](chamor.html), not items. Still, we were talking about Moshe’s family, not Moshe himself.

What was Moshe’s [Chamor](chamor.html) trip for? Moshe was going to [redeem](redemption.html) all of the Children of [Israel](gen-jew.html). This was a [redemption](redemption.html) [journey](stages.html) using the [Chamor](chamor.html) for transportation.

In describing the advent of [Mashiach](mashiach.html), the Prophet states,

***Zechariah 9:9*** *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of* [*Jerusalem*](city.html)*: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he [is] just, and having* [*salvation*](salvation.html)*; lowly, and riding upon an* [*ass*](chamor.html)*, and upon a colt the foal of an* [*ass*](chamor.html)*.*

This is the [Chamor](chamor.html) who carries not the belongings or the wife and children, but the person himself, this is the [Chamor](chamor.html) of [Mashiach](mashiach.html)![[349]](#footnote-349)

When describing the [exile](galuyot.html), our sages tell us that [Mashiach](mashiach.html) himself will ride atop the [Chamor](chamor.html). Then the [physicality](physical.html) of our [world](worlds.html) will be fully used for spirituality.

[Mashiach](mashiach.html) will ride the same [Chamor](chamor.html) that was used by [Avraham](avraham.html) and by Moshe. The [Mashiach](mashiach.html) will be [one](one.html) who has conquered the material aspects of Himself, and he will ride them, and it will be a [Chamor](chamor.html), because it will provide him with the material as a means to His ends.

What was [Mashiach](mashiach.html)’s [Chamor](chamor.html) trip for? [Mashiach](mashiach.html) was going to [redeem](redemption.html) the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html). This was a [redemption](redemption.html) [journey](stages.html) using the [Chamor](chamor.html) for transportation. Matityahu tells us the Midrashic perspective of this [Chamor](chamor.html) and the carrying of [Mashiach](mashiach.html):

***Matityahu (Matthew) 21:1-9*** *And when they drew nigh unto* [*Jerusalem*](city.html)*, and were come to* [*Bethphage*](bethphag.html)*, unto the* [*mount of Olives*](east.html)*, then sent* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *two disciples, Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an* [*ass*](chamor.html) *tied, and a colt with her: loose [them], and bring [them] unto me. And if any [man] say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and* [*sitting*](mashal.html) *upon an* [*ass*](chamor.html)*, and a colt the foal of an* [*ass*](chamor.html)*. And the disciples went, and did as* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *commanded them, And brought the* [*ass*](chamor.html)*, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set [him] thereon. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed [them] in the way. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of* [*David*](fathers.html)*: Blessed [is] he that cometh in the* [*name*](name.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*; Hosanna in the highest.*

Yochanan tells us the [Sod](sod.html) level perspective of this [Chamor](chamor.html) and the carrying of [Mashiach](mashiach.html):

***Yochanan (John) 12:12-16*** *On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *was* [*coming*](coming.html) *to* [*Jerusalem*](city.html)*, Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed [is] the King of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html) *that cometh in the* [*name*](name.html) *of the Lord. And* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)*, when he had found a young* [*ass*](chamor.html)*, sat thereon; as it is written,* [*Fear*](fear.html) *not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh,* [*sitting*](mashal.html) *on an* [*ass*](chamor.html)*’s colt. These things understood not his disciples at the* [*first*](one.html)*: but when* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and [that] they had done these things unto him.*

Apparently, this [donkey](chamor.html) alludes to a higher [spiritual](physical.html) dimension than the simple animal itself. The purpose of using and riding a [donkey](chamor.html) is to enable the person and his belongings to reach such a [place](place.html) which, due to its height or distance, would be unreachable without the [donkey](chamor.html).

The same is true in the [spiritual](physical.html) act of “riding on a [donkey](chamor.html).” [Chamor](chamor.html) is linked with chomer*,* materialism. The purpose of a [Jew](gen-jew.html), and every human being, is to refine the coarseness of this materialistic [world](worlds.html), [one](one.html)’s [body](body.html), [household](househld.html), etc. through the [study](study.html) of Torah and observance of [mitzvot](cmds613.html). In so doing [one](one.html) is elevated to such a level that the soul, in and by itself, is unable to attain. Only when the soul enters the corporeal, [physical](physical.html) [body](body.html) (at [birth](birth.html)) does it have the challenge - and [HaShem](hashem.html) given ability to refine the [body](body.html) and all materialistic aspects through a life devoted to [HaShem](hashem.html) and His Torah.

Why do our Sages go to such great lengths to [teach](teacher.html) us that [Avraham](avraham.html), Moshe, and [Mashiach](mashiach.html) all rode the same [Chamor](chamor.html)? What difference does it make?

***Sanhedrin 98a*** *Rebi Alexandri said: Rebi Yehoshua ben Levi raised the following contradiction: It says, “Behold like the clouds of* [*Heaven*](heaven.html) *came* [*one*](one.html) *like the son of man” (Daniel 7:13). It is also written, “Lowly and riding upon a* [*donkey*](chamor.html)*” (Zechariah 9:9). If they* [*merit*](merit.html) *it, he will come with the clouds of* [*Heaven*](heaven.html)*, but if they do not* [*merit*](merit.html) *it, he will come upon a* [*donkey*](chamor.html)*.*

The great and holy scholar, Rabbi Chiam Midini, in his work Sdei Chemed,[[350]](#footnote-350) [connects](connection.html) this [Talmudic](orallaw.html) statement referring to the prophecy of Daniel: “If the [generation](toldot.html) is fortunate the [Mashiach](mashiach.html) will come from the dead, i.e. on “clouds of [heaven](heaven.html),” and then everyone will accept him with no reservations. But if not, he will come from the living, i.e. riding on a [Chamor](chamor.html).

And so agrees the Holy Hakham [Yosef](joseph.html) Chaim[[351]](#footnote-351) in his commentary on Sanhedrin 98, in his book “Ben Yehoyada”, that the [Mashiach](mashiach.html) can come from the dead. (He also explains the topic there of [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [Yosef](joseph.html) and how he can also be [Mashiach](mashiach.html).)

Sirach bat Asher

According to the Rabbis, not only was Serah among those who came to Egypt and [one](one.html) of those who left it, she also entered The Land of [Israel](city.html); they use as a proof text for the latter claim [Numbers](nchart.html) 26:46, that includes Serah among the names of those entering the land ([Seder](haggada.html) Olam Rabbah 9).

The traditions of Serah’s extreme longevity apparently have their basis in the fact that she is mentioned both in the count of those who went to Egypt and in the list of those who entered The Land of [Israel](city.html). This evolved into the tradition that Serah lived for hundreds of years, was in the presence of both [Joseph](joseph.html) and Moses and was even [one](one.html) of those who entered the land of Canaan.

In the development of this tradition her lifetime extended to the period of King [David](fathers.html) and the later traditions claimed that she never died at all, but entered the [Garden of Eden](eden.html) while still alive. In the late [midrash](orallaw.html), [Jacob](israelja.html) is the [one](one.html) who blessed Serah that she would [live forever](eternal.html), telling her: “My daughter, because you revived my spirit, death shall never rule you” (Sefer ha-Yashar , Vayigash, chapter 14).

The character of Serah, who accompanies the Israelites to Egypt and enters the land of Canaan with them, embodies the history of the people of [Israel](gen-jew.html). Her character is linked with those of the people’s leaders, and she expedites the realization of the Divine plan. This is her role when she convinces [Jacob](israelja.html) that [Joseph](joseph.html) still lives, thus resulting in his going [down to Egypt](thebirth.html); she continues in this task when she identifies Moses as the true redeemer of [Israel](gen-jew.html), thus leading the people to heed him; and thus, when she helps Moses to find [Joseph](joseph.html)’s bones, so as not to delay the [Exodus](exodus.html) [from Egypt](thebirth.html). Serah’s appearance seemingly confirms that God’s promises will be fulfilled and that the people of [Israel](gen-jew.html) will leave Egypt and come to and take possession of the Promised Land.[[352]](#footnote-352)

Genesis 46:17

(17) Asher’s sons: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, and Beriah, and their sister Serah. Beriah’s sons: Heber and Malchiel.

[Numbers](nchart.html) 26:44-47

(44) Descendants of Asher by their clans: Of Imnah, the clan of the Imnites; of Ishvi, the clan of the Ishvites; of Beriah, the clan of the Beriites. (45) Of the descendants of Beriah: Of Heber, the clan of the Heberites; of Malchiel, the clan of the Malchielites.— (46) The [name](name.html) of Asher’s daughter was Serah.— (47) These are the clans of Asher’s descendants; persons enrolled: 53,400.

Rashi on [Numbers](nchart.html) 26:46:1

AND THE [NAME](name.html) OF THE DAUGHTER OF ASHER WAS SERAH — Because she still remained alive after all these long years ([Sotah](hair.html) 13a) it exceptionally mentions her here ([Seder](haggada.html) Olam 89).

[Sotah](hair.html) 13a:14

The [Gemara](orallaw.html) asks: **And from where did Moses our** [**teacher**](teacher.html)[**know**](daat.html) **where** [**Joseph**](joseph.html) **was buried?** The Sages **said: Serah, the daughter of Asher, remained from that** [**generation**](toldot.html) that initially descended to Egypt with [Jacob](israelja.html). **Moses went to her** and **said to her: Do you** [**know**](daat.html) **anything** about **where** [**Joseph**](joseph.html) **is buried? She said to him: The Egyptians fashioned a metal casket for him and set it in the Nile [*Nilus*] River** as an augury **so that its water would be blessed. Moses went and stood on the bank of the Nile.** He **said to** [Joseph](joseph.html): [**Joseph**](joseph.html)**,** [**Joseph**](joseph.html)**, the** [**time**](time.html) **has arrived** about **which the Holy** [**One**](one.html)**, Blessed be He, took an oath** saying **that I,** i.e., God, **will** [**redeem**](redemption.html) **you. And** the [time](time.html) for fulfillment of **the oath that you administered to the** [**Jewish**](gen-jew.html) **people** that they will bury you in Eretz Yisrael **has arrived. If you show yourself,** it is **good,** but **if not, we are clear from your oath. Immediately, the casket of** [**Joseph**](joseph.html) **floated** to the top of the water.

Sefer HaYashar ([midrash](orallaw.html)), Book of Genesis, Vayigash 9

(9) And when [Joseph](joseph.html) had finished giving them his orders, he turned: and went back [into Egypt](thebirth.html), ‎and the sons of [Jacob](israelja.html) went to the land of Canaan, in joy and happiness to their father. And ‎when they came to the boundaries of the land, they said to [one](one.html) another: What shall we do in ‎bringing this matter before our father? For if we impart it to him suddenly, and tell him all ‎about it, he will be greatly astounded at our words and he will refuse to listen to us. And when ‎they went on until they approached their houses they met Serach [coming](coming.html) towards them, and ‎the damsel was exceedingly beautiful and wise, and a skilled player on the harp; and they ‎called her and she came unto them and she kissed them. And they took her and gave her a ‎harp saying unto her: Go, we [pray](prayer.html) thee, before our father and sit down before him and strike ‎this harp and [speak](mashal.html) unto him according to these words. And they instructed her concerning ‎what she had to say, and she hastened unto [Jacob](israelja.html) and she sat down before him. And she sang ‎and she played beautifully upon the harp, and she sang in the sweetness of her [voice](voice.html): [Joseph](joseph.html) ‎my uncle is alive and he reigneth over all the land of Egypt; he is not dead. And she often ‎repeated these words. And [Jacob](israelja.html) heard her words and it pleased him greatly, and when he ‎heard her sing it twice and [three](three.html) times, the [heart](body.html) of [Jacob](israelja.html) was possessed by joy, through the ‎sweetness of her [voice](voice.html), and the spirit of God came over him, and he [knew](daat.html) that all her words ‎were true. And [Jacob](israelja.html) blessed Serach for singing these words before him, and he said: My ‎daughter, may death never prevail against thee forever, for thou hast revived my spirit, only ‎repeat thou this song once more before me, for thou hast caused me gladness with thy words. ‎And she sang once more the same words and [Jacob](israelja.html) listened, and he was pleased and he ‎rejoiced, and the spirit of God came over him. And while he was yet [speaking](mashal.html) with her, his ‎sons came before him with horses and [chariots](merkava.html) and royal garments and servants running ‎before them. And [Jacob](israelja.html) arose and went to meet them, and he saw his sons dressed in royal ‎garments and all the good things that [Joseph](joseph.html) sent unto them. And they said unto him: Be thou ‎informed that our brother [Joseph](joseph.html) liveth, and that he ruleth over the whole land of Egypt, and ‎it is he who hath spoken unto us all we have told unto thee. And [Jacob](israelja.html) heard all the words of ‎his sons and his [heart](body.html) fainted, for he believed them not, until he saw all that [Joseph](joseph.html) had given ‎unto them and all that [Joseph](joseph.html) had sent along with them, and all the [signs](signs.html) he had spoken of ‎unto them. And they unpacked all the things before him, and they displayed all that [Joseph](joseph.html) ‎had sent, and they gave to every [one](one.html) of them what [Joseph](joseph.html) had sent him. And [Jacob](israelja.html) [knew](daat.html) ‎that they had spoken the truth, and rejoiced greatly on account of his son.

[**Midrash**](orallaw.html)[**HaGadol**](hagadol.html)**, Genesis 45:26**

[The brothers said:]If we tell him right away, "[Joseph](joseph.html) is alive!" perhaps he will have a stroke [lit., his soul will fly away]. What did they do? They said to Serah, daughter of Asher, "Tell our father [Jacob](israelja.html) that [Joseph](joseph.html) is alive, and he is in Egypt." What did she do? She waited till he was [standing](mashal.html) in [prayer](prayer.html), and then said in a tone of wonder, "[Joseph](joseph.html) is in Egypt/ There have been born on his knees/ Menasseh and Ephraim" [[three](three.html) rhyming lines]. His [heart](body.html) failed, while he was [standing](mashal.html) in [prayer](prayer.html). When he finished his [prayer](prayer.html), he saw the wagons: immediately the spirit of [Jacob](israelja.html) came back to life.

Pirke DeRebbi Eliezer 48:17

(17) Rabbi Eliezer said: The [five](five.html) [letters](letters.html) of the Torah, which alone of all the [letters](letters.html) in the Torah are of double (shape), all appertain to the mystery of the [Redemption](redemption.html). ... With "Pê" "Pê" [Israel](gen-jew.html) was [redeemed](redemption.html) [from Egypt](thebirth.html), as it is said, "I have surely visited you, (*P*aḳôd *P*aḳadti) and (seen) that which is done to you in Egypt, and I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt" (Ex. iii. 16, 17). ... These [letters](letters.html) were delivered only to our father [Abraham](avraham.html). Our father [Abraham](avraham.html) delivered them to [Isaac](isaac.html), and [Isaac](isaac.html) (delivered them) to [Jacob](israelja.html), and [Jacob](israelja.html) delivered the mystery of the [Redemption](redemption.html) to [Joseph](joseph.html), as it is said, "But God will surely visit (*P*aḳôd yi*p*hḳôd) you" (Gen. 1. 24). [Joseph](joseph.html) his son delivered the [secret](sod.html) of the [Redemption](redemption.html) to his brethren. Asher, the son of [Jacob](israelja.html), delivered the mystery of the [Redemption](redemption.html) to Serach his daughter. When Moses and Aaron came to the elders of [Israel](gen-jew.html) and performed the [signs](signs.html) in their sight, the elders of [Israel](gen-jew.html) went to Serach, the daughter of Asher, and they said to her: A certain man has come, and he has performed [signs](signs.html) in our sight, thus and thus. She said to them: There is no reality in the [signs](signs.html). They said to her: He said "*P*aḳôd yi*p*hḳôd"—"God will surely visit you" (*ibid.*). She said to them: He is the man who will [redeem](redemption.html) [Israel](gen-jew.html) in the [future](future.html) [from Egypt](thebirth.html), for thus did I [hear](mashal.html), ("*P*aḳôd *P*aḳadti") "I have surely visited you" (Ex. iii. 16). Forthwith the people believed in their God and in His messenger, as it is said, "And the people believed, and when they heard that the Lord *had visited* the children of [Israel](gen-jew.html)" (*ibid.* iv. 31).

Tractate Derekh Eretz Zuta 1:18

[Nine](nine.html) people entered [Gan Eden](eden.html) alive, namely: Enoch son of Jared, Elijah, the [Messiah](mashiach.html), Eliezer the servant of [Abraham](avraham.html), Hiram king of Tyre and Eved-Melech the Ethiopian, Jabez the [grand]son of <Rabbi> Judah <HaNasi> (see I Chronicles 4:9-10), Batya the daughter of Pharaoh, and Serach bat Asher, and some say also Rabbi Joshua ben Levi.

Rashi on II Samuel 20:19:1

(1) **I am [of the] loyal and trustworthy in** [**Israel**](gen-jew.html)**.** I am from the people of the [city](city.html) that are loyal and faithful to [Israel](gen-jew.html) and to the king. An Aggadic [Midrash](orallaw.html) [states:] this was Serach, the daughter of Asher. I delivered the faithful to the faithful: Through me, the location of [Joseph](joseph.html)'s coffin was revealed to Moses. I told [Jacob](israelja.html) that [Joseph](joseph.html) was alive.

The Persian [Jews](gen-jew.html) of the [city](city.html) of Isfahan believed that Serah bat Asher actually lived among them until she died in a great [fire](fire.html) in their [synagogue](synagog.html) in the [twelfth](twelve.html) century CE. This [synagogue](synagog.html) and its successors were subsequently [known](daat.html) as the [Synagogue](synagog.html) of Serah Bat Asher. In the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) cemetery of Isfahan, there was to be found, at least until the end of the nineteenth century, a tombstone marking the final resting [place](place.html) of "Serah the daughter of Asher the son of our Patriarch [Jacob](israelja.html)" who died in the year equivalent to 1133 CE. This alleged gravesite was marked by a small mausoleum [known](daat.html) as heder Serah ("Serah's Room"), which remained for centuries [one](one.html) of the best [known](daat.html) pilgrimage sites for the [Jews](gen-jew.html) of Persia. In the Iranian [exile](galuyot.html), [Jews](gen-jew.html) were accustomed to prostrate themselves at the gravestone of Serah, as they now customarily [pray](prayer.html) here in [Israel](gen-jew.html) at the Tomb of our Matriarch [Rachel](rachel.html) near [Bethlehem](bethlehem.html). Like the tomb of [Rachel](rachel.html), that of Serah is also located in a "room" (i.e., a mausoleum). This room is believed to have wondrous doorposts and only people of good character and deeds may enter; but the way in shrinks before anyone else and prevents them from entering.[[353]](#footnote-353)

How did Sirach bat Asher achieve such longevity postdiluvian? Did she have some magical potion, or perhaps some medical technology, or was this a miracle of [HaShem](hashem.html)? Our sources are silent on this issue, but her extreme longevity is facinating, especially given her role in [redemption](redemption.html).

Methusela

Elijah

# Astral Projection[[354]](#footnote-354)

***2 Corinthians 12:2–4*** *I* [*know*](daat.html) *a man in Christ who* [*fourteen*](fourteen.html) *years ago was caught up to the* [*third*](three.html)[*heaven*](heaven.html)*—whether in the* [*body*](body.html) *or out of the* [*body*](body.html) *I do not* [*know*](daat.html)*, God knows.* ***3*** *And I* [*know*](daat.html) *that this man was caught up into paradise—whether in the* [*body*](body.html) *or out of the* [*body*](body.html) *I do not* [*know*](daat.html)*, God knows—* ***4*** *and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter.*

***Chagiga 14b*** *Our Rabbis* [*taught*](teacher.html)*:* [*Four*](four.html) *men entered the ‘Garden’,[[355]](#footnote-355) namely, Ben ‘Azzai and Ben Zoma, Aher,[[356]](#footnote-356) and R. Akiba. R. Akiba said to them: When ye arrive at the stones of pure marble,[[357]](#footnote-357) say not, water, water![[358]](#footnote-358) For it is said: He that speaketh falsehood shall not be established before mine* [*eyes*](body.html)*.[[359]](#footnote-359) Ben ‘Azzai cast a look and died. Of him Scripture says: Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.[[360]](#footnote-360) Ben Zoma looked and became demented.[[361]](#footnote-361) Of him Scripture says: Hast thou found honey?* [*Eat*](eating.html) *so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it.[[362]](#footnote-362) Aher mutilated the shoots.[[363]](#footnote-363) R. Akiba departed unhurt.*

The [Talmud](orallaw.html) (Chagiga 14b, [Zohar](orallaw.html) I, 26b and Tikunei [Zohar](orallaw.html), Tikun 40) reports the following incident regarding [four](four.html) Mishnaic Sages:

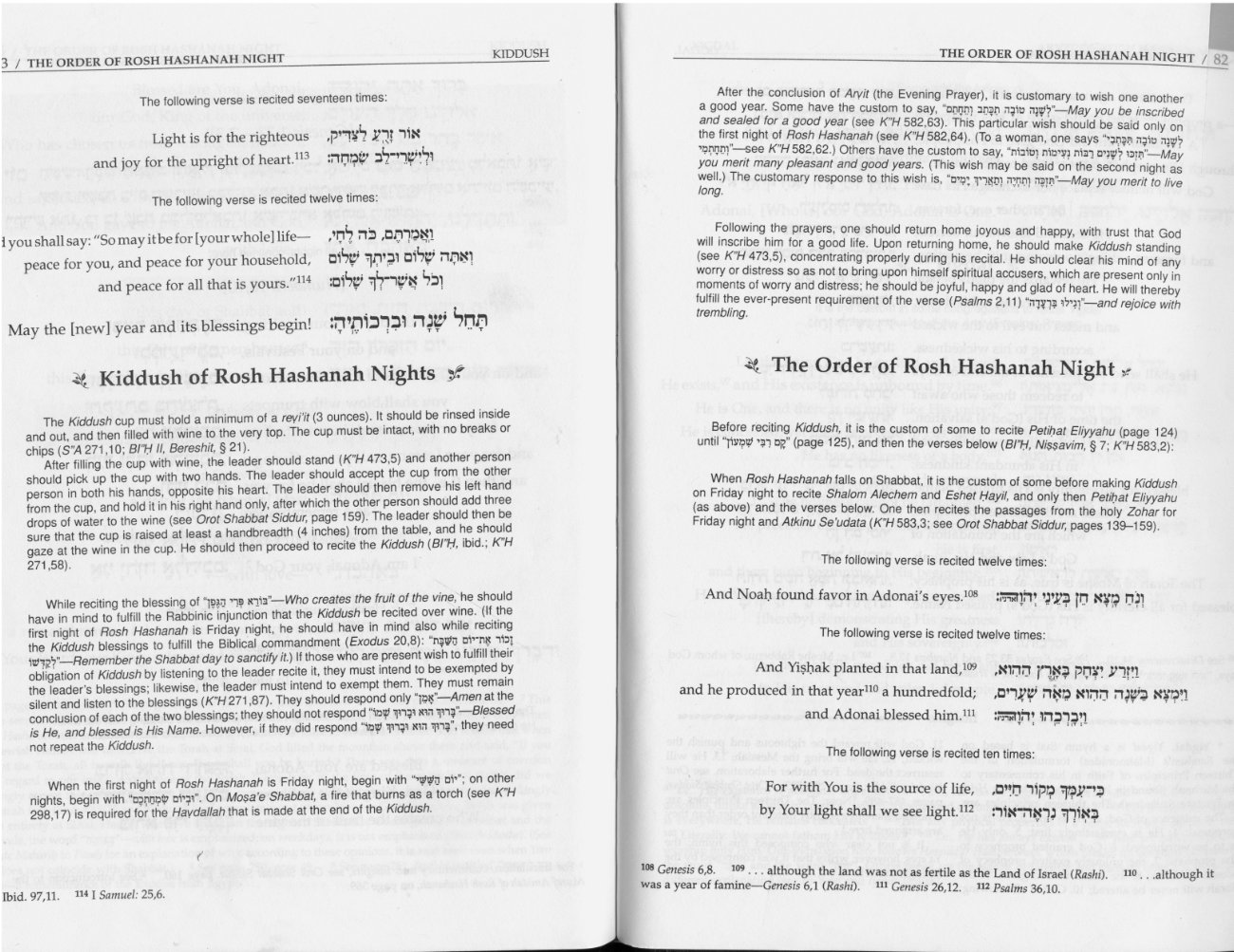
The Rabbis [taught](teacher.html): [Four](four.html) [Sages] entered the [Pardes](remez.html) [literally "the orchard."]. Rashi explains that they ascended to [heaven](heaven.html) by utilizing the [Divine] [Name](name.html) [i.e., they achieved a [spiritual](physical.html) elevation through intense meditation on G‑d's [Name](name.html)] (Tosafot, ad loc). They were Ben Azzai, Ben Zoma, Acher [Elisha ben Avuya, called Acher— the other [one](one.html) — because of what happened to him after he entered the [Pardes](remez.html)] and Rabbi Akiva. Rabbi Akiva said to them [prior to their ascension]: "When you come to the [place](place.html) of pure marble stones, do not say, 'Water! Water!' for it is said, 'He who speaks untruths shall not stand before My [eyes](body.html)' ([Psalms](psalms1.html) 101:7)." Ben Azzai gazed [at the Divine Presence - Rashi] and died. Regarding him the verse states, "Precious in the [eyes](body.html) of G‑d is the death of His pious ones" ([Psalms](psalms1.html) 116:15). Ben Zoma gazed and was harmed [he lost his sanity — Rashi]. Regarding him the verse states, "Did you find honey? [Eat](eating.html) only as much as you need, lest you be overfilled and vomit it up" (Proverbs 25:16). Acher cut down the plantings [he became a heretic]. Rabbi Akiva entered in peace and left in peace.

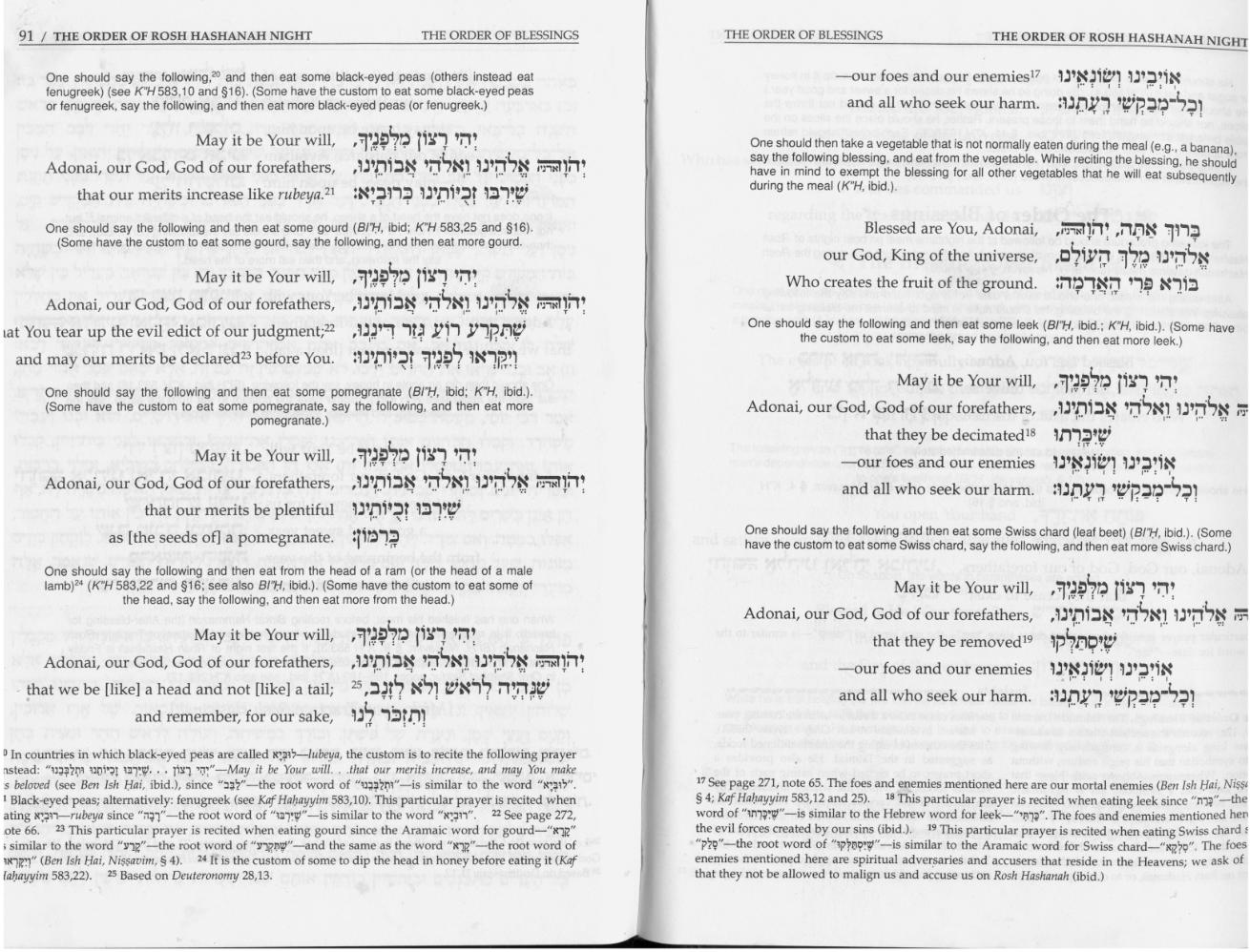
# [Prayers](prayer.html) vs. Incantations (spells)

What is the difference between [prayers](prayer.html), or saying [Psalms](psalms1.html), that are said to accomplish some purpose, and the spells or incantations that are used by the [wicked](wicked.html)?

Consider the following examples:

1. [Psalm](psalms1.html) 9, 13, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22, etc. are recited for the well-being of an ill person.[[364]](#footnote-364)
2. I Chronicles 12:18 [Seder](haggada.html) Hatavat Chalom (Order of making good a bad [dream](dreams.html)).[[365]](#footnote-365)
3. On [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html), the machzor has phrases that are said multiple times in order to bring us a good year.[[366]](#footnote-366) [[367]](#footnote-367) We also [eat](eating.html) auspicious [foods](food.html) with their appropriate blessings. Here are a couple of examples:





Magical incantations that appear in the [Talmud](orallaw.html) (and are therefore presumably sanctioned by at least some sages) mostly serve the functions of healing and protection. In Tractate [Shabbat](sabbath.html) 67a-b, [one](one.html) sage gives explicit sanction to the use of magic if it is done solely for the purposes of healing. Outside the [talmudic](orallaw.html)/midrashic tradition proper, there are spells for summoning [angels](angels.html), love spells, and ”binding” spells intended to curse or thwart a rival in love,business, or other personal matters.

While rabbinic authorities have never endorsed the latter forms of incantations, they are more tolerant of spells that enhance goals the sages endorse, such as healing, or spells meant to enhance the learning of Torah. These latter two types are perhaps the most common in [Jewish](gen-jew.html) literature.

Tolerance for the use of spells can also be regional. The [Babylonian](bavel.html) [Talmud](orallaw.html) preserves several examples of spells (see especially tractates Pesahim, [Shabbat](sabbath.html), and Berakhot), while the Palestinian [Talmud](orallaw.html) has virtually none. We [know](daat.html) that at least some [Jews](gen-jew.html) in Palestine engaged in spell-casting, because we have magical texts from that region and period.

Evidently, the difference between the two Talmuds reflects something of the respective”official” attitude among the sages of those regions toward spell-craft.[[368]](#footnote-368)

The [Gemara](orallaw.html) contains several places, e.g. [Shabbat](sabbath.html) 66b and 67a-b, Pesachim 112a-b, [Sotah](hair.html) 22a, etc.,[[369]](#footnote-369) where it discusses the ways that a person can use words and ceratin items to effect changes or cures. Here is an example:

[***Shabbat***](sabbath.html)***67a*** *[As a remedy] for a tertian fever* [*one*](one.html) *should procure* [*seven*](seven.html) *prickles from* [*seven*](seven.html) *palm trees,* [*seven*](seven.html) *chips from* [*seven*](seven.html) *beams,* [*seven*](seven.html) *pegs from* [*seven*](seven.html) *bridges,* [*seven*](seven.html) *[heaps of] ashes from* [*seven*](seven.html) *ovens,* [*seven*](seven.html) *[mounds of] earth from under* [*seven*](seven.html) *door-sockets,* [*seven*](seven.html) *specimens of pitch from* [*seven*](seven.html) *ships,* [*seven*](seven.html) *handfuls of cummin, and* [*seven*](seven.html)[*hairs*](hair.html) *from the* [*beard*](hair.html) *of an old dog, and tie them, in the nape of the* [*neck*](body.html) *with a white twisted thread.[[370]](#footnote-370)*

*R. Johanan said: For an inflammatory fever let* [*one*](one.html) *take an all-iron knife, go whither thorn-hedges[[371]](#footnote-371) are to be found, and tie a white twisted thread thereto.[[372]](#footnote-372) On the* [*first*](one.html) *day he must slightly notch it, and say, 'and the* [*angel*](angels.html) *of the Lord appeared unto him, etc.'[[373]](#footnote-373) On the following day he [again] makes a small notch and says, 'And Moses said, I will turn aside now, and see, etc.' The next day he makes [another] small notch and says, 'And when the Lord saw that he turned aside [sar] to see.'[[374]](#footnote-374) R. Aha son of Raba said to R. Ashi, Then let him say, 'Draw not nigh hither?'[[375]](#footnote-375) Rather on the* [*first*](one.html) *day he should say. 'And the* [*angel*](angels.html) *of the Lord appeared unto him, etc. … And Moses said, I will, etc.'; the next day he says, 'And when, the Lord saw that he turned aside to see'; on the* [*third*](three.html)*, 'And he said, Draw not nigh.' And when he has recited his verses he pulls it down [sc. the bush] and says thus: 'O thorn, O thorn, not because thou art higher than all other trees did the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, cause His Shechinah to rest upon thee, but because thou art lower than all other trees did He cause His Shechinah to rest upon thee. And even as thou sawest the* [*fire*](fire.html) *[kindled] for Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah and didst flee from before them, so look upon the* [*fire*](fire.html) *[i.e., fever.] of So-and-so[[376]](#footnote-376) and flee from him.'*

*For an abscess* [*one*](one.html) *should say thus: 'Let it indeed be cut down, let it indeed be healed, let it indeed be overthrown; Sharlai and Amarlai are those* [*angels*](angels.html) *who were sent from the land of Sodom[[377]](#footnote-377) to heal boils and aches: bazak, bazik, bizbazik, mismasik, kamun kamik,[[378]](#footnote-378) thy colour [be confined] within thee, thy colour [be confined] within thee,[[379]](#footnote-379) thy seat be within thee,[[380]](#footnote-380) thy* [*seed*](flower.html) *be like a kalut[[381]](#footnote-381) and like a mule that is not fruitful and does not increase; so be thou not fruitful nor increase in the* [*body*](body.html) *of So-and-so.'[[382]](#footnote-382) Against ulcers[[383]](#footnote-383)* [*one*](one.html) *should say thus: 'A drawn sword and a prepared sling, its* [*name*](name.html) *is not Joheb, sickness and pains.' Against a* [*demon*](demons.html)[*one*](one.html) *should say thus: 'Thou wast closed up; closed up wast thou. Cursed, broken, and destroyed be Bar Tit, Bar Tame, Bar Tina[[384]](#footnote-384) as Shamgez, Mezigaz and Istamai.' For a* [*demon*](demons.html) *of the privy* [*one*](one.html) *should say thus: 'On the* [*head*](body.html) *of a lion and on the snout of a lioness did we find the* [*demon*](demons.html) *Bar Shirika Panda; with a bed of leeks I hurled him down, [and] with the jawbone of an* [*ass*](chamor.html) *I smote him.'*

We read in a passage in the [Babylonian](bavel.html) [Talmud](orallaw.html) that in order to sit as a judge on the Sanhedrin [one](one.html) [needs](needs.html) to be a person of stature, wisdom and indeed a "master of magic" (Ba'al Keshafim).

***Menachot 65a*** *We don't seat any* [*one*](one.html) *on the Sanhedrin unless they are wise men, men of vision, men of stature, elders, masters of magic, and* [*know*](daat.html) *ledgeable in* [*seventy*](seventy.html) *languages.*

Rabbi [Isaac](isaac.html) ben Yedaiah of Provence, in his Com-mentary on the Aggadot of the [Talmud](orallaw.html),[[385]](#footnote-385) claims that keshafim, in this passage, means [knowledge](knowledge.html) of science and the true nature of the universe. Compare the discussion of magician practice and [teaching](teacher.html) magic in the following selection from

[***Shabbat***](sabbath.html) ***75a*** *As for magian practice: Rav and Shmuel (disagree about what it is).* [*One*](one.html) *believes it should be considered sorcery, the other that it should be considered blasphemy. It can be proven that it was Rav who maintained (that magic should be considered blasphemy) since R. Zutra b. Tuviah said in Rav's* [*name*](name.html)*, 'He who learns a single thing from a magician deserves the death penalty.' Should you suppose that refers to sorcery, scripture reads, 'When you come into the land which the Lord your God is giving to you, you shall not learn to do the abhorrent practices of those* [*nations*](nations.html)*,' meaning that you do not learn it in order to practice but in order to understand and* [*teach*](teacher.html)*. It is proven!*

While medieval commentators may have felt that knowing "magic" was important in order to refute those who believed in it, earlier [Talmudic](orallaw.html) rabbis considered it vital in order to understand praxis.[[386]](#footnote-386)

[Jewish](gen-jew.html) belief in the efficacy of spells, or “constructive language,” is premised on [three](three.html) assumptions:

1) There is special power inherent in the names of God.

2) There is special power in the words and phrases that God speaks, i.e., the words of the Torah and the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) Bible.

3) The [Hebrew](hebrew.html) alphabet itself is supernatural in origin, which means that using [Hebrew](hebrew.html) [letters](letters.html) in certain combinations is a source of special power, even when it has no semantic value to the adept.

The magic conjured up by J.K. Rowling in her “Harry Potter” series and the magic revealed in Maggie Anton’s [new](new.html) book, “Enchantress,” are two very different kinds of magic, according to the author best [known](daat.html) for her popular “Rashi’s Daughters” trilogy.

“I didn’t make up the spells, like in ‘Harry Potter,’” Anton explained.

Rather, she said, the spells that appear in “Enchantress,” her fictional account of the life of Rav Hisda’s daughter — a character described in the [Talmud](orallaw.html), were all derived from actual incantations inscribed on [Jewish](gen-jew.html) archaeological artifacts dating from [fourth](four.html)-century [Babylon](bavel.html).

References to magic, Anton said, recur throughout the [Talmud](orallaw.html), and many remnants of that magic are still ubiquitous in [Jewish](gen-jew.html) practice today.

[Yeshua](yeshua.html) also did some ‘magical’ things to effect cures. Consider the following example:

***Yochanan (John) 9:1-7*** *As he went along, he saw a man blind from* [*birth*](birth.html)*.* ***2*** *His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”* ***3*** *“Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” said* [*Jesus*](yeshua.html)*, “but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him.* ***4*** *As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is* [*coming*](coming.html)*, when no* [*one*](one.html) *can work.* ***5*** *While I am in the* [*world*](worlds.html)*, I am the light of the* [*world*](worlds.html)*.”* ***6*** *After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man’s* [*eyes*](body.html)*.* ***7*** *“Go,” he told him, “wash in the Pool of Siloam” (this word means “Sent”). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.*

# Seeing [Angels](angels.html)

[Talmud](orallaw.html) (Bava Kama 60b) asserts that dogs sense and react to the presence of the [angel](angels.html) of death.

# Burning Vinegar

The ability of oil to burn is not a [law](law.html) of nature, per say, but an expression of [HaShem](hashem.html)'s will. This is conveyed in a [Talmudic](orallaw.html) story about Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa.

**Taanit 25a**: [One](one.html) evening, Rabbi Chanina's daughter said, "We have no oil to light candles."

"Do we have vinegar?" he asked.

"Yes."

"So let He who tells oil to burn, now tell vinegar to burn."

She lit the vinegar and it burned.

Why does oil burn, but not vinegar? Is it really the "nature" of oil to burn and the "nature" of vinegar not to burn? From Rabbi Chanina's perspective, oil burns not because of any "[law](law.html) of nature," but because God determines that it do so, each and every [time](time.html) a person ignites it.

# Conclusion

***Yochanan (John) 14:12*** *Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.*

In common English parlance and as a matter of general intuition, we think of a miracle as an [event](feasts.html) that violates the [laws](law.html) of nature. However, this idea would not have made sense for [Jews](gen-jew.html) in antiquity who did not conceive of God, The Creator, as outside nature. The Tanach’s word for miracle, nes, means something like “banner” or “[sign](signs.html)” — a miracle was something [HaShem](hashem.html) wrought in order to make a statement, to change the course of human affairs.

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 4:35*** *Unto thee it was shown, that thou mightest* [*know*](daat.html) *that* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, He is God; there is nothing besides Him -* אֵיןעוֹד, מִלְּבַדּוֹ*.*

According to the Slonimer Rebbe, the word *"echad"* ([one](one.html)), of the [shema](shema.html), carries the same implication as the verse *"Ein od mil'vado"* - There is nothing besides Him. This [three](three.html)-word phrase, "ein od milvado," ("There is nothing other than Him") is actually a profound philosophical and existential statement: There is nothing outside of God. Nothing else truly exists. Reality is God; God is the only reality. While we may "see" many false gods, sense and [experience](experience.html) many illusionary realities, there is in fact only [one](one.html) reality - the infinite God who cleared away a small corner of His infinite existence in order to allow our finite universe to coexist. Everything that exists within the finite universe does so at the will of the Infinite God. Should He cease to allow this to be so, our finite universe would be subsumed into God's infinite reality.

The Torah accepts that magic and sorcery do exist. Along with nature's normal way of functioning, [HaShem](hashem.html) also [created](bara.html) a way for humans to manipulate it - by the means of magic. Although [HaShem](hashem.html) does not permit mankind to use sorcery, He had to allow this deviant path to exist in order to give mankind an element of choice. Otherwise we would lack the unique [spiritual](physical.html) trait of free will.

There is no intrinsic difference between a rabbi’s magic and that of the non-rabbi.

The distinction between miracles and magic is purely [one](one.html) of perspective: what distinguishes the two is the ultimate source of the power that makes the deed possible. Yet, in some way [HaShem](hashem.html) creates both the magic and the miracle.

Reports of magic performed by rabbis, common [Jews](gen-jew.html), and non-[Jews](gen-jew.html) suggest that despite biblical and rabbinic prohibitions against sorcery, the use of magic within the general culture of the [talmudic](orallaw.html) period had a significant impact upon [Jewish](gen-jew.html) society. Such practices were largely accepted as real and, when performed by sages who used the power of Torah, were deemed appropriate methods of protecting people from harm or of accomplishing other [legitimate](legitimate.html) purposes.

[Jewish](gen-jew.html) mysticism [teaches](teacher.html) that the desired outcome is that the miraculous should become included within the [physical](physical.html).

\* \* \*

Is acupuncture magic or technology?

Is traditional Chinese medicine magic or technology?

# Books

[Jewish](gen-jew.html) Magic Before the Rise of Kabbalah, by Yuval Harari.

[Jewish](gen-jew.html) Magic and Superstition: A [Study](study.html) in Folk Religion, by Joshua Trachtenberg.

Sefer ha-Razim (The Book of Mysteries).

Harba de-Moshe (The Sword of Moses).

Ritual Practices to Gain Power: [Angels](angels.html), Incantations, and Revelation in Early [Jewish](gen-jew.html) Mysticism, by Rebecca Macy Lesses.

Although the author of the *Key of Solomon[[387]](#footnote-387)* was absolutely a [gentile](gen-jew.html), a Judaized, [Hebrew](hebrew.html) version was quite popular among Ashkenazi Rabbis (ספר מפתח שלמה *Sefer Mafteach Shlomo*).

*Sefer Razi’el ha-malakh.*

Moshe Idel, *Golem:* [*Jewish*](gen-jew.html) *Magical and Mystical Traditions on the Artificial Anthropoid* (Albany, N.Y., 1990), pp. 207–241

Moshe Idel, “An Anonymous Kabbalistic Commentary on *Shir ha-Yihud,*” in *Mysticism, Magic and Kabbalah in Ashkenazi Judaism,* ed. Karl Erich Grözinger and [Joseph](joseph.html) Dan, pp. 139–154 (Berlin, 1995)

[Known](daat.html) as the Pulsa deNura (“Lashes of [Fire](fire.html)”), this ancient Aramaic ritual was [first](one.html) mentioned in the [Talmud](orallaw.html) and then described in greater detail in ancient [Hebrew](hebrew.html) manuals of magic. When performed correctly, the curse was purported to inflict divine wrath on its victims within a year.



**\* \* \***

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1. In 1962, in his book “Profiles of the Future: An Inquiry into the Limits of the Possible”, science fiction writer Arthur C. Clarke formulated his famous Three Laws, of which the third law is the best-known and most widely cited: “Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic”. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “Magic” is notoriously impossible to define, not least because the meaning of this term changes from one culture to another and from one period to the next. Moreover, the distinction between “magic” and “religion” is equally problematic, and in some cultural contexts utterly nonexistent. In the ancient Jewish world, one repeatedly sees a condemnation of magic and divination side by side with their actual practice in every level of Jewish society. In some cases, we find magical practices that are deeply embedded in the Jewish religious system—including the *sotah* ordeal of Numbers 5:11–31, or the many magical spells and recipes found in the Babylonian Talmud. In others, we find numerous magical practices that did not become part of “normative Judaism” (as canonized in the Hebrew Bible or in the Babylonian Talmud) yet were widely practiced by many Jews. Such practices—including the exorcizing of demons, the production of a wide array of amulets, the recurrent use of medical magic, and even the recourse to aggressive and erotic magic—usually were either only mildly condemned or not condemned at all by the Jewish religious leadership, and in some cases were actively adopted by it. In the past, the study of such practices and practitioners was hampered by scholars’ preference for more rational forms of Judaism, which made those scholars ignore the extensive evidence for ancient Jewish magic. However, as more such evidence came to light, and as scholars began to focus on Judaism as it was and not as we might have wished it to have been, the study of ancient Jewish magic started growing, and it now keeps on growing at full pace. Today, more ancient Jewish magical texts are identified, published, and analyzed, and more attempts are made to offer broad syntheses of the entire field. – Gideon Bohak [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. 1660-1718 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Rabbi Shmary Brownstein, Ask the Rabbi @ The Judaism Website – Chabad.org [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Debarim (Deuteronomy) 6:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Bamidbar (Numbers) 23:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Iyov (Job) 21:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. 1760 to 1840 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. by Rabbi Noson Weiszprint article, The Point of Soul [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. The First Crowdfunding Campaign, An Essay on Parshat Terumah, By Adin Even-Israel (Steinsaltz) [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Shemot (Exodus ) 5:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. What would you do if you knew you could not fail?, by David Sheyman [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Mezuzah Maven, by Rabbi Ze'ev Kraines [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Chagiga 13a-b translate chashmal as some kind of angel [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Ezekiel 1:4, 1:27, 8:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. A significant portion of this section I learned from: https://www.mayimachronim.com/the-torahs-greatest-secret-revealed/ [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. 1830-1892 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Yesodei HaTorah 2:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Chagiga 13b [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Part III, Gate 6 [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. *Pardes Rimonim*, Gate 12, Ch. 4 [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Rabbi Yakov ben Asher, 1269-1343 [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Bamidbar (Numbers) 10:35 [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Rabbi Moshe Cordovero, 1522-1570 [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. see *Pardes Rimonim*, Gate 1, Ch. 7 [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. I, 100b, *Sitrei Torah* [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. *Yesodei HaTorah*, By Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon ("Maimonides"); translated by Eliyahu Touger [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Moses ben Nachman, "Moses son of Nachman"; (1194–1270), commonly known as Nachmanides and also referred to by the acronym Ramban (רמב״ן‎), was a leading medieval Jewish scholar, Sephardic rabbi, philosopher, physician, kabbalist, and biblical commentator. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 35:5-6 [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Bereshit (Genesis) 1:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Bereshit Rabbah 12:6, Chagigah 12a [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. I.e., the generation which built the Tower of Babel, and in consequence God confounded their language and scattered them over the earth. V. Bereshit (Genesis) 11:9. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Iyov (Job) 38: 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. I.e., the Messianic era; cf. Aboth 2:16. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Bereshit (Genesis) 1:4. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 3:10. E.V. ‘that it shall be well with him. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Shlomo Yitzchaki, February 22, 1040 – July 13, 1105), today generally known by the acronym Rashi, was a medieval French rabbi and author of a comprehensive commentary on the Talmud and commentary on the Hebrew Bible (the Tanakh). [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. The first Adam [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Chagigah 12a [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. see Rashi on Shemot (Exodus) 3:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. See S’fat Emet, Chanuka 5661 and Vayera 5663 [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Sifrei Mattoth 34, Numbers Rabbah 22:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Midrash Aggadah [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. verse 8 [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Yehoshua (Joshua) 13:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Midrash Tanchuma Mattoth 4 [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Bamidbar (Numbers) 31:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Tanchuma Matot 4 [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Malachi 2:5-6 [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. 2:4; Tanchuma quoted by Rashi [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Likutey Moharan I, 234 [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. see, for instance, Zohar I, 76a [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Bereshit (Genesis) 11:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Zohar 1:126B [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:2, 4 [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Bereshit (Genesis) 11:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:1-7 [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 11:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. See Bereshit Rabbah 34:11. Midrash Tanchuma, Bereshit 12. Seforno to Bereshit (Genesis) 8:22. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Ramban says that all antediluvian (pre-Mabul) people lived much longer. After the Mabul there was a very negative change in the atmosphere which shortened people's lives. Noach's sons who were born before the Mabul, lived longer than most, as they were strengthened by living during the very healthy antediluvian era, but a bit shorter than those who lived their whole lives pre-Mabul, because they were also subject to the negative atmospheric post-Mabul effects. Along came the Dor Haflogoh and the dispersion to new climates had a further negative affect, cutting down the average lifespan by fifty per cent to below two hundred years. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Ibn Ezra [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Abarbanel [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Radal [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Abarbanel: Bereishit 9:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Meam Loez, Genesis I, page 377 [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Meam Loez, Genesis I, page 377 [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Meam Loez, Genesis I, page 379 [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Meam Loez, Genesis I, page 379 [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Soncino Zohar, Bereshith, Section 1, Page 56a [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Rashi to Bereshit (Genesis) 6:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. from Tanchuma Noach 12 [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Those that mated with their kind, and did not corrupt their way, and came by themselves, and all that the ark accepted, [i.e., the ark repulsed the unfit animals and did not let them enter], he brought into it. — [Sanh. 108b, Tan. ad loc., Zev. 116a, Gen. Rabbah 32:8 from 7:16; Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer ch. 23 from ibid. 15; only Mid. Hagadol from this verse] [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Tanchuma Noach 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. As reported by Josh Waxman [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Yochanan (John) 3:13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man which is in heaven. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. see Bereshit (Genesis) 5:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. See for example Talmud Brachot 4b that he flies more slowly than other angels – presumably because he is part physical. Maharsha there. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. see Talmud Baba Batra 121b, Mo’ed Katan 26a [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Radak to Melachim bet (II Kings) 2:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Malbim there [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. See e.g. Talmud Brachot 3a, 29b, Shabbat 33b, Yoma 19b, Ta’anit 22a, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Baba Metziah 85b, 114a [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. e.g. Mishna Bava Metziah 1:8, 2:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Melachim bet (II Kings) 2:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Yehezchel (Ezekiel) 1:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Yehezchel (Ezekiel) 1:19 [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Yehezchel (Ezekiel) 3:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. as well as Deuteronomy 33:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. see Pirkei D’Rabbi Eliezer, ch. 41 [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Shoftim (Judges) 5:20, 23 [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. See, for example, Zohar II, 126b, which states: ואתעביד עלמא חדא, דנהיר לכל עלמין, עלמא סתימא דלא ידיע כלל, ובגויה דיירין שית רבוא אלף, דאינון דיורין וחילין ומשיריין עלאין [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Avodah Zarah 3a [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. This idea was explained and supported fully in Mayim Achronim Chova – Secrets of the Last Waters. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. Bava Batra 75a [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 54:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. The above is adapted from *Garments of Light, Volume Two*. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. Avot 5:6. Ten things were created on the eve of Shabbat at twilight. These are: the mouth of the earth, the mouth of the well, the mouth of the donkey, the rainbow, the mannah, the staff [of Moses], the shamir, the writing, the inscription and the tablets [of the Ten Commandments]. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Melachim alef (I Kings) 3:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. ib. 9 [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. ib. 15 [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. This means apparently that as soon as he awoke he realized the truth of the dream, as explained in the next sentence. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. As, for instance, on Simhath Torah (Rejoicing of the Law). R. Eleazar assumes that Solomon made a feast because through the gift of wisdom he completed the study of the Torah. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Rashi: **Was greater than the wisdom of all the children of the east:** What was the wisdom of the children of the east? They were learned in astronomy, as it is stated in the Pesikta of Para Adumah, and all of this chapter is expounded there according to its ordinary sense. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. Rashi: **And he spoke of trees:** which cure is derived from each tree, and that particular wood would be best for that type of building and to plant [a certain tree] in that type of earth. And also of the beasts, what is its cure and the vital elements [necessary] for its upbringing and development and its food. The Midrash Aggada [has another explanation]: Why did God see fit that a ‘metzora’ become clean with the tallest of the tall trees, as the cedar, and the shortest of the short trees? And also of the beasts and the fowl. Why did God see fit that this one, should become permissible by severing one, either the esophagus or the trachea, and this one, the beast, by severing both the esophagus and the trachea, and fish and grasshoppers with neither. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. Midrash Yalkut [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. I Kings, Soncino Edition [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. Shir Hashirim Rabba 1:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. Ruth Rabbah 1:17 [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. And how are they to be fed? The underlying idea seems to be that even the wisest of men must learn the law. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. Mishnah. Shabbat 24:4. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. On the basis of I Kings v, 13, Solomon is said to have had complete control over nature. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. Lit. ‘male and female singers’. Perhaps shedim we-shedoth ‘male and female demons’. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 2:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. Shir HaShirim (Song of Songs) 3:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. The Thirteen rules of Rabbi Ishmael – rule 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. Genesis Rabbah 31:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. Sanh. 108b; B. B. 16b; Lev. R. 11; Gen. R 31:11; Zohar I:11; Otzer ha-Midrash [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. Rashi on 6:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. see Rashi 8:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. Shemot (Exodus) 20:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. From **Modern Physics and the Shamir,** By Paul Goldstein

     - <https://www.chabad.org/kabbalah/article_cdo/aid/380303/jewish/Modern-Physics-and-the-Shamir.htm> [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. Sota 48b [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. Sota 9:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. Gittin 68a [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. Shabbat 28b [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. Sotah 48b [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. Shemot (Exodus) 28:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. Mishle (Proverbs) 6:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. Shmuel alef (I Samuel) 3:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. Shabbat 22b [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. Commentary to Shemot (Exodus) 31:2. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. Rashi to Shemot (Exodus) 25:31: [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. source: Gold from the Land of Israel, p. 135, adapted from Mo'adei HaRe’iyah, p. 49, found here: http://ravkooktorah.org/SHAV58.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. source: R. David Kasher's "Synesthesia at Sinai," which includes many of these sources as well as this Hasidic interpretation from R. Yehudah Aryeh Leib Alter: https://boulderjewishnews.org/2018/synesthesia-at-sinai-parshat-yitro/ [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
136. Debarim (Deuteronomy) 5:19 [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
137. Melachim alef (1 Kings) 19:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
138. source: Zohar 2:81b, Pritzker Edition Vol. 4, translated by Daniel C. Matt p. 443-446 [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
139. Taanit 9a. [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
140. Pirke Avot 5:6. [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
141. Shaar Hagilulim Hakdamah 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
142. A nes nigleh, a revealed miracle, is an event that openly contradicts the “laws of nature”. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
143. A nes nistar, a concealed miracle, is an event that contradicts the laws of nature within the contex of nature and is evident only to those who contemplate the details of the event. Such a nes (miracle) will not be evident those viewing the event superficially. The return of the Jewish people to the land of Israel after 2000 years of exile and the continued existence of State of Israel in the face of the surrounding hostilities are modern examples of a nes nistar. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
144. What is the connection between Adam’s clothes and the ability to subdue animals? When G-d created the animals, He brought them before Adam and asked him to give each one of them a name. Adam was able to look into the essence of each animal and give it a name. In the Holy Language of Hebrew, the name defines the essence. A name is not conventional, it is essential. The name is the clothing of the essence. The name is the connection to the spiritual root in the upper worlds. When Nimrod wore the garments of Adam, he was able to subdue the animals because he had access to the garments of their essence, to their names. • Source: Based on the Midrash, Bereshit Rabba 37:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
145. Tehillim (Psalms) 69:32 In Shabbat 28b this is referred to Adam. [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
146. The same word is used of the vesture of the priests - cf. Vayikra (Leviticus) 8:13. [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
147. Bereshit (Genesis) 3:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
148. V. Pirke Rabbi Eliezer 20: ‘From the skin which the serpent cast off the Holy One, blessed be He, made garments of glory for Adam and for his helpmate.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
149. Through Enoch. Seth though not actually the firstborn was privileged to be so considered on account of his piety (Mah.). [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
150. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
151. Bereshit (Genesis) 10:21 - E.V. ‘The elder brother of Japheth’. [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
152. Prophetically. [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
153. Identified with Shem. [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
154. Bereshit (Genesis) 14:18 [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
155. From Gen. XI, 27 (q.v.) and Genesis Rabbah 38:14, it appears that he was indeed the firstborn. Mah. explains that the Midrash points out that in Abraham’s case the privilege of birthright and sacrifice was conferred upon him because of his piety, and would have been so conferred even if he were not the firstborn. Rash. and ‘E.J., however, maintain that in the view of the author of this passage, Abraham is mentioned first in Bereshit (Genesis) 11:27 merely because he was the most important. [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
156. Viz. the ram. [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
157. Bereshit (Genesis) 22:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
158. Bereshit (Genesis) 25:31 [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
159. Rashi in the Pentateuch explains: I risk death through the sacrificial service, since its laws are so strict, many involving death (by the hand of heaven). The Midrash here probably understands it in the same sense. [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
160. Bereshit (Genesis) 27:27 [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
161. Adam originally wore the garments mentioned above in the Garden of Eden -- hence, the garments' Divine scent when Yaaqob wore them. Yaaqob, we are told, is the embodiment of Adam, and his original clothes are returned to him by Rivkah. – *Zohar Toldot* [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
162. 5 In the Targum Yerushalmi on Gen. 28: 10, five miracles are said to have hap­pened to Yaaqob on this journey. “The second miracle consisted of Yaaqob, our Father, setting out from Beer Sheva and the path contracted before him and he immediately found himself residing in Charan”. Other biblical incidents that are similarly inter­preted to include the Israelites’ departure from Egypt, cf. Rashi on Ex. 12:37 and 19:4, and the journey of the twelve spies, cf. Rashi on Num. 13:25. See also B. Sotah 13b, which presents Deut. 34:1, namely Moses’ final climb, in a miraculous fashion. [↑](#footnote-ref-162)
163. In the Targum Yerushalmi on Gen. 28: 10, five miracles arc said lo have happened to Jacob on this journey. “The second miracle consisted of Jacob, our Father, setting out from Beer Sheva and the path contracted before him and he immediately found himself residing in Haran”. Other biblical incidents that are similarly interpreted include the Israelites’ departure from Egypt, cf. Rashi on Ex. 12: 37 and 19: 4, and the journey of the twelve spies, cf. Rashi on Num. 13: 25. See also B. Soiah 13 b, which presents Dcut.34: 1, namely Moses’ final climb, in a miraculous fashion. [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
164. Bereshit (Genesis) 28:10. [↑](#footnote-ref-164)
165. Bereshit (Genesis) 28:11. [↑](#footnote-ref-165)
166. Shmuel Beit (II Samuel) 21:16. [↑](#footnote-ref-166)
167. Sotah 42b These four were born to Harafah in Gath; and they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants. Who were they? — R. Hisda said: Saph, Madon, Goliath and Ishbi-benob. ‘And they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants’, as it is written: And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clave unto her. R. Yitzchak said: The Holy One, blessed be He, spake, May the sons of the one who kissed come and fall by the hand of the sons of the one who clave. The name Ishbi beNob is split into two and interpreted homiletically. [↑](#footnote-ref-167)
168. As an avenger, Ish = a man. [↑](#footnote-ref-168)
169. When David, on his flight from Saul, received succor in Nob, (I Sam. XXI.) he was seen there by Doeg the Edomite. On the latter’s reporting this to Saul, he slew all the priests of Nob for treason (Ibid. XXII, 17-19), Doeg being his instrument. For this Doeg was banished from his portion in the future world (the phrase may also mean lost his life העולם מן נטרד; v. II Sam. I, 2; Pesik. ed. Buber III, 28b) and the defeat and death of Saul and his three sons at Mount Gilboa (I Samuel 30:1-6) was a punishment for the same. Thus, all this was indirectly caused by David. [↑](#footnote-ref-169)
170. Lit., ‘thy seed to cease’. [↑](#footnote-ref-170)
171. The name of a place (Rashi). Other interpretations: ‘to fill up breaches’; [‘to limit’, the word being a composite: ‘net and falcon’ (Levy)]. [↑](#footnote-ref-171)
172. Tehillim (Psalms) 28:37. [↑](#footnote-ref-172)
173. David’s sister’s son, and brother of Joab, and one of the captains of David’s army. [↑](#footnote-ref-173)
174. A gribah = one se’ah. [↑](#footnote-ref-174)
175. Lit., ‘The Assembly of Israel.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-175)
176. Ibid. 68:14; v. Ber. 53b. [↑](#footnote-ref-176)
177. V. supra 22a. [↑](#footnote-ref-177)
178. Hoping that the animal’s instinct would lead it to its master. [↑](#footnote-ref-178)
179. That he might cover the distance quickly. [↑](#footnote-ref-179)
180. Orpah: The Moabite sister-in-law of Ruth (Ruth 1). In the Midrash, she is the mother of the giants Goliath and Ishbi-benob. It is unclear whether she herself was a gi­antess (Midrash Ruth). When a potential convert, with genuine intentions, is distanced from the Jewish people by being made to feel unfit, the consequences for the Jewish people can be disastrous. The same occurred to Orpah. When she was discouraged from joining the ranks of the Jews, her children were given vast powers over the Jewish people. One of these children was Goliath, another was Yishbi; both of them were massive warriors who focused their efforts on fighting against the Jewish people. [↑](#footnote-ref-180)
181. Pretending that it had merely fallen out of her hand. [↑](#footnote-ref-181)
182. When David’s life was endangered in his confrontation with Ishbi-benob, according to Tractate *Sanhedrin* (95a), he asked Abishai son of Zeruiah, “Help us”. The nature of the help he received is recounted there: “That is as it is written: ‘Abishai son of Zeruiah came to his aid’ (II Samuel 21:17). Rav Yahuda said, quoting Rav, that he aided him by prayer,” and by virtue of this aid, David was saved. [↑](#footnote-ref-182)
183. The alternative mentioned above. [↑](#footnote-ref-183)
184. It is written: One son of Achimelech ben Achituv escaped, and his name was Evyasar. [Just as his negligence had resulted in the death of all but one of the Kohanim of Nob, similarly, all but one of his descendants were put to death by Asaliah.] [↑](#footnote-ref-184)
185. [Juvenal, Saturnalia, 6,542. alludes to the Jews selling wax-candles in Rome. V. Ginzberg, Legends. VI, 264, n. 87.] [↑](#footnote-ref-185)
186. Shmuel Beit (II Samuel) 21:17. [↑](#footnote-ref-186)
187. At some distance from where Ishbi stood (Rashi). [↑](#footnote-ref-187)
188. A town near the border. [Horowitz, Palestine, p. 158 identifies it with El-Kabbu S.W. of Bethar.] [↑](#footnote-ref-188)
189. Bethar, where the last stand in the Bar Kochba revolt was made (Neubauer, op. cit. 103). [↑](#footnote-ref-189)
190. Surely not; i.e., ‘we are too weak, even combined, to slay him.’ The remark was suggested by the place name Bethre, which means ‘by two’, as previously ‘let us arise’ — בי קום— was suggested by קובי. [↑](#footnote-ref-190)
191. I.e., that she was dead. [↑](#footnote-ref-191)
192. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-192)
193. Bereshit (Genesis) 2:18 [↑](#footnote-ref-193)
194. Korban = sacrifical offering [↑](#footnote-ref-194)
195. Isaiah 41:3. This is interpreted in Bereshith Rabbah (43:7) as referring to Abraham and asserting that he took such long steps that he traveled a mile without setting foot on the ground. [↑](#footnote-ref-195)
196. Shalom (E.V. ’safely’) being read as an abbreviation of shalosh milin, three miles (‘E.J.). [↑](#footnote-ref-196)
197. Isaiah 41:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-197)
198. Chullin 91b [↑](#footnote-ref-198)
199. https://www.mayimachronim.com/tag/midrash-rabbah/ [↑](#footnote-ref-199)
200. Shabbat 97a [↑](#footnote-ref-200)
201. Joshua chapter 7 [↑](#footnote-ref-201)
202. Berachot 62b [↑](#footnote-ref-202)
203. Bereshit (Genesis) 14:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-203)
204. Bereshit (Genesis) 14:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-204)
205. Daat Zkeinim on Bereshit (Genesis) 14:14. [↑](#footnote-ref-205)
206. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 33:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-206)
207. I.e. Ahraham would not hear of violence without seeking to remedy it. [↑](#footnote-ref-207)
208. Lit. ‘stand against them’. Both R. Judah and R. Nehemiah interpret wayyarek, he made pale (in anger). R. Judah holds that he made his servants’ faces pale, i.e. they opposed him; while in R. Nehemiah's opinion he made himself pale by defying them. [↑](#footnote-ref-208)
209. This is one of the cardinal teachings of Judaism: it is man's duty to act nobly and uprightly even at the cost of his life, for in so doing he sanctifies the Divine Name. [↑](#footnote-ref-209)
210. Tehillim (Psalms) 35:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-210)
211. Tehillim (Psalms) 68:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-211)
212. Lit. ' he emptied them ' (herikan). [↑](#footnote-ref-212)
213. Debarim (Deuteronomy) 20:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-213)
214. He derives wayyarek from rek, empty: he ' emptied them ‘, and was left with Eliezer only. Cur edd.: he made them bright (encouraged them); i.e. he inspired them with courage by pointing out that the fainthearted need not go. [↑](#footnote-ref-214)
215. This connects.hanikaw (E.V. ‘ his trained men ’) with hanikah, a surname (v. Jast. s.v. חניכה), hence rendered: the men bearing his name. ‘E.J.: he understands BORN IN HIS HOUSE figuratively, i.e. converted by him; and as they were converted by Abraham they took his name. [↑](#footnote-ref-215)
216. א [1] + ל [30] + י [10] + ע [70] + ז [7] + ר [200] = 318. Cf. n. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-216)
217. Yimiyahu (Jeremiah) 8:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-217)
218. The meaning is that the evil effects of idolatry are felt both before and after it is actually practised. Because Jeroboam was destined to set up a golden calf at Dan (I Kings XII, 19), Abraham was weakened now when he came to that place and so could pursue them no further. Similarly, even after it was destroyed Jeremiah speaks of terror raging in Dan. Cf. Sanh. 96a. [↑](#footnote-ref-218)
219. Sforno on Bereshit (Genesis) 14:15. [↑](#footnote-ref-219)
220. Bereshit Rabba 43:3. [↑](#footnote-ref-220)
221. Ramban 14:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-221)
222. Bereshit Rabbah 43,7. [↑](#footnote-ref-222)
223. Yehoshua (Joshua) 10:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-223)
224. Bamidbar (Numbers) 23:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-224)
225. Bereshit (Genesis) 48:19 [↑](#footnote-ref-225)
226. Yehoshua (Joshua) 10:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-226)
227. Yehoshua (Joshua) 3:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-227)
228. Yehoshua (Joshua) 10:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-228)
229. Shemot (Exodus) 14:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-229)
230. Shemot (Exodus) 10:12-13 [↑](#footnote-ref-230)
231. Shemot (Exodus) 4:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-231)
232. Strong’s defines staff as: 4294 matteh, mat-teh’; or (fem.) mattah, mat-taw’; from 5186; **a branch** (as extending); fig. a tribe; also a rod, whether for chastising (fig. correction), ruling (a sceptre), throwing (a lance), or walking (a staff; fig. a support of life e.g. bread):-rod, staff, tribe. [↑](#footnote-ref-232)
233. A Midrashic work composed by the school of Rebbe Eliezer ben Hyrcanus [c.100]) [↑](#footnote-ref-233)
234. The Shem HaMeforash of Hashem (the 42 letter name of HaShem) and the abbreviations for the 10 plagues carved on it - בְּאַחַ”ב עַדַ”שׁ דְּצַ”ךְ . Also engraved on the staff were the names of the Patriarchs, Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov, as well as the names of the six Matriarchs, Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel, Leah, Bilhah and Zilpah. Also included were the names of Yaakov’s twelve sons, Reuben, Shimon, Levi, Yehudah, Yissachar, Zevulun, Dan, Naftali, Gad, Asher, Yosef and Binyamin. [↑](#footnote-ref-234)
235. “The Midrash Says – The Book of Shemot”, by Rabbi Moshe Weissman. [↑](#footnote-ref-235)
236. Pirkei Avot 5:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-236)
237. A measure of volume for dry objects and for liquids; cf. Sot. 34a. It probably means: the weight of 40 se’ah of water (v. Glos.). This miraculous staff weighed 40 se’ah, that is 240 okkas (672 pounds). The Turkish oka is a measure of weight, equivalent to 2.8 pounds. According to this, a se’ah is 16.8 pounds. Since one gallon of water weighs 8.35 pounds, a se’ah in liquid measure is then approximately 2 gallons.The specific gravity of sapphire is 4, and therefore, if the staff weighed 672 pounds (305kg), it had a volume of 76,000 cubic centimeters, 4638 cubic inches, or 2.68 cubic feet. If it is assumed that the staff was 8 feet long, it would have had an average thickness of seven inches. – The Torah Anthology, Yalkut Meam Loez , Exodus I, volume 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-237)
238. **Rashi Commentary for: ‎ Shemot (Exod.) 17:6** **and you shall strike the rock** Heb. וְהִכִּיתָ בַצּוּר. It does not say עַל-הַצּוּר, upon the rock, but בַצּוּר, [lit., into the rock]. **From here [we deduce] that the staff was of a hard substance called sapphire, and the rock was split by it**.-[from Mechilta] [↑](#footnote-ref-238)
239. Heb. Amora. The teacher or lecturer whispered his points to the amora, who then amplified them to the congregation. [↑](#footnote-ref-239)
240. Pirkei d'Rebbi Eliezer ch. 42 and Midrash Shocher Tov chapter 114,see also the Rav on Avos 5:3; Targum Yonatan to Shemot 14:21 and Davarim 1:1 and Psalms 136:13. [↑](#footnote-ref-240)
241. Shemot (Exodus) 14:22-28 [↑](#footnote-ref-241)
242. For further elaboration on this, see commentary of Ramban (Nachmanides), Genesis 12:6; R. Shalom Dovber of Lubavitch, Kuntres Umaayan, secs. 18ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-242)
243. Bamidbar Rabbah 12:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-243)
244. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 11:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-244)
245. Even in the future, the Third Temple will still serve as a focus of revelation; however, its light will spread throughout the world. [↑](#footnote-ref-245)
246. see Nechemya 9:6; Bava Batra 25a). (The World of Prayer, vol. 1, pp. 123-125 [↑](#footnote-ref-246)
247. V. Bereshit (Genesis) 19:26. [↑](#footnote-ref-247)
248. Lit., ‘was swallowed in its place’. [↑](#footnote-ref-248)
249. Yehoshua (Joshus) 6:20. [↑](#footnote-ref-249)
250. To enable the people to enter the city. According to Rashi this is also signified by the word translated ‘flat’, which means literally ‘under it’ or ‘in its place’. [↑](#footnote-ref-250)
251. Taanit 20a [↑](#footnote-ref-251)
252. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-252)
253. Debarim (Deuteronomy) 2:25, referring to Moses. [↑](#footnote-ref-253)
254. Yehoshua (Joshua) 3:7. [↑](#footnote-ref-254)
255. In Ta'an. R. Samuel b. Nahmani is given. [↑](#footnote-ref-255)
256. טט [↑](#footnote-ref-256)
257. Debarim (Deuteronomy) ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-257)
258. Yehoshua (Joshua) 10:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-258)
259. Debarim (Deuteronomy) ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-259)
260. I.e., the Book of Bereshit (Genesis). [↑](#footnote-ref-260)
261. Yehoshua (Joshua) 10:13. ישר, righteous. [↑](#footnote-ref-261)
262. Bamidbar (Numbers) 23:10, which is taken to refer to the peaceful ending of the Patriarchs. [↑](#footnote-ref-262)
263. Bereshit (Genesis) 48:19, spoken of Ephraim to whose tribe Joshua belonged. [↑](#footnote-ref-263)
264. Josh. ibid. The wording implies a double halt by the sun: (a) in the midst of the heaven, i.e., at noon; (b) hasted not to go down, i.e., towards evening. [↑](#footnote-ref-264)
265. Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah) 23:29 [↑](#footnote-ref-265)
266. Bereshit Rabbah 38:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-266)
267. Can be seen on the site of the Genizah or here: Eruvin 53a, Bereshit Rabbah 44:7, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-267)
268. A kal vachomer (Hebrew: קל וחומר, literally "**lenient and strict**") derives one law from another through the following logic: If a case that is generally strict has a particular leniency, a case that is generally lenient will certainly have that leniency. [↑](#footnote-ref-268)
269. Shemot (Exodus) 7:28 [↑](#footnote-ref-269)
270. A fabulous animal generated in fire which, according to the Midrash, must burn incessantly for seven days and nights; but Rashi here postulates seven years, and the Aruch (s.v.) seventy years. For a fun account of the legend, v. J. E. vol. X, pp. 646-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-270)
271. Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah) 23:29. [↑](#footnote-ref-271)
272. Shir HaShirim (song of songs) 4:3. [↑](#footnote-ref-272)
273. Lit., ‘thy empty ones’. The thought is the reverse of Eccl. VII, 20; there is none in Israel that sinneth, and yet doeth not good, for even the transgressors, devoid of merit as they may seem, still have innumerable good deeds to their credit. [↑](#footnote-ref-273)
274. Song of Songs 4:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-274)
275. Tehillim 19:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-275)
276. Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah) 23:29 [↑](#footnote-ref-276)
277. Shmuel alef (I Samuel) chapter 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-277)
278. Rashi’s source can be found in Sifrei (Parshat Ki-Teitzei), Mechilta (Parshat Beshalach), Pesiqta Zutr’si (Parshat Ki-Teitzei) [↑](#footnote-ref-278)
279. Rabbi Netanel ben Yeshayah's commentary on the Torah "Me'or Ha'afelah", pg. 247 [↑](#footnote-ref-279)
280. from Chachmei Ashkenaz [↑](#footnote-ref-280)
281. Me'am Lo'ez on Shmuel 1:15:33 in the name of "Chachmei Ashkenaz": [↑](#footnote-ref-281)
282. The Razah in Midrash Hachefetz on Shemot 22:17 [↑](#footnote-ref-282)
283. Rabbeinu Bechayei states this is a midrash in his commentary on Devarim 25:19: [↑](#footnote-ref-283)
284. The Amalekites were great sorcerers and used to transform themselves into animals to escape the attacks of their enemies in war.; See Ketab Tamin 61 and R. Bachya in Ki-Teitzei in regards to the text of Pirke D’Rabbi Eleazar 39. [↑](#footnote-ref-284)
285. Rashi, 21:1. and 33:40 [↑](#footnote-ref-285)
286. When HaShem came down on Mount Sinai to give the Law, he appeared in the chariot with the four beasts of Ezekiel. These the people saw; and it was one of them, the ox (Ezekiel 1:10), that they made an image of and worshiped. This was one of the pleas Moses made to palliate the offense of the people (Exodus Rabbah 43:8). [↑](#footnote-ref-286)
287. Rashi to Shemot (Exodus) 32:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-287)
288. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-288)
289. Tan., Beshallaḥ, ii.; Tosef., Soṭah, iv. 7; Soṭah 13a [↑](#footnote-ref-289)
290. The Book of Creation, Heb. Sefer Yeziroh, is the title of two esoteric books. The older, referred to here, was a thaumaturgical work popular in the Talmudic period. It was also known as Hilkoth Yezirah (Laws of Creation), and is so called in the same story quoted on 67b. Rashi there states that the creation was performed by means of mystic combinations of the Divine Name, which does not come under the ban of witchcraft. Its basic idea is that the Creation was accomplished by means of the power inherent in those letters (Cf. Rab's saying: ‘Bezalel knew how to combine the letters by which heaven and earth were created’. Ber. 55a. Cf. also Enoch LXI, 3 et seq.; Prayer of Manasseh: Ecc. R. III, 11 on the magic power of the letters of the Divine Name), and that this same power could be utilised in further creation. The work was ascribed to Abraham, which fact indicates an old tradition, and the possible antiquity of the book itself. It has affinities with Babylonian, Egyptian, and Hellenic mysticism and its origin has been placed in the second century B.C.E., when such a combination of influences might be expected. It is noteworthy that Raba's statement above, though not mentioning the Sefer Yezirah, insists on freedom from sin as a prerequisite of creation by man, v. J.E., XII, 602. [↑](#footnote-ref-290)
291. (I.e., a calf that has reached one third of its full growth; others interpret: (i) in its third year; (ii) third born, fat]. [↑](#footnote-ref-291)
292. Ibid. Raba understands mabadilim in the sense of ‘draw a distinction’. But for their iniquities, their power would equal God's, and they could create a world. [↑](#footnote-ref-292)
293. By means of the Sefer Yeziroh, Book of Creation. V. next note. [↑](#footnote-ref-293)
294. It thus all depends as to whose help is invoked in performing the miraculous. [↑](#footnote-ref-294)
295. working with sheidim/demons/ djinn—never addressed by the Torah, permitted, and regularly done by educated Jews from Babylonia to Eretz Israel to Germany to NYC [↑](#footnote-ref-295)
296. One who performs feats of prestidigitation; a sleight-of-hand artist. [↑](#footnote-ref-296)
297. Yabia Omer Y.D. 5:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-297)
298. The Radak describes what we would call today "mouth to mouth" resuscitation: Even when a miracle is performed, it is preferable that it appears like a natural process. [↑](#footnote-ref-298)
299. Sanhedrin 92b:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-299)
300. See Bereishit Rabbah 56:11, Targum pseudo Yonatan Bereishit 22:19. [↑](#footnote-ref-300)
301. The Netziv (*Ha'amek Davar* 22:19) postulates that specifically now after hearing how Avraham is being rewarded for obeying God's command, Yitzchak decides it is time for him to learn what it is that God wants of him. [↑](#footnote-ref-301)
302. Midrash Hagadol [↑](#footnote-ref-302)
303. Rav Mordechai Cohen reports a tradition that Avraham actually severed most of Yitzchak's trachea and windpipe - rendering him a "kosher" offering; see Siftei Cohen Bereishit 23:2,where he cites this tradition in the name of the Zohar. The source in the Zohar has eluded me (and others). In fact, Rav Mordechai did not actually find this passage either; he states that he heard that such a teaching is recorded in the Zohar. [↑](#footnote-ref-303)
304. Keesay hakavod = throne of glory [↑](#footnote-ref-304)
305. Malbim on Shmuel alef (I Samuel) - Vayikra Rabbah 26:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-305)
306. Shmuel alef (I Samuel) 28:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-306)
307. v. 13 [↑](#footnote-ref-307)
308. Leviticus Rabbah 26:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-308)
309. Tanhuma [ed. Buber], Emor 4 [↑](#footnote-ref-309)
310. Refer to Aristotle's concept of "imagination" or "phantasia"). [II, 36] [↑](#footnote-ref-310)
311. According to Maimonides, there are 11 types of prophecy – ranging from a simple Divine inspiration called Ruach haKodesh (“holy spirit”) to the singular instance of the "face-to-face" communication that Moses experienced. This experience (not the Moses kind) is available to anyone regardless of age, gender or religion, as Maimonides wrote, "A prophet is believed because of what he says, not for reasons of lineage". [↑](#footnote-ref-311)
312. Berachot 57b [↑](#footnote-ref-312)
313. Bereshit Rabbah 17 [↑](#footnote-ref-313)
314. Mendy Hecht [↑](#footnote-ref-314)
315. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-315)
316. Tehillim (Psalms) 68:12. [↑](#footnote-ref-316)
317. The traditional number of the languages of man, i.e., the Torah was given to all humanity. Cf. M. Joseph, Judaism as Creed and Life, pp. 157 seq. [↑](#footnote-ref-317)
318. Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah) 23, ag. [↑](#footnote-ref-318)
319. Perhaps referring to the sparks that fly off when it beats the anvil. [↑](#footnote-ref-319)
320. Commentators differ as to the exact point of the comparison; v. Sanh., Sonc. ed., p. 214, n. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-320)
321. Shemot (Exodus) 20:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-321)
322. The Heb. is ha-koloth (plural), not ha-kol (singular). [↑](#footnote-ref-322)
323. A poetic way of saying that the Divine truths promulgated at the Revelation were intended for all mankind, and were not to be the prerogative of Israel. [↑](#footnote-ref-323)
324. A vivid metaphor describing their fear (Y.T.). [↑](#footnote-ref-324)
325. For on the contrary this Revelation was their charter of life. [↑](#footnote-ref-325)
326. There are differences of opinion as to the source for the name “manna”. Some say that mon means a “portion of food”; others say it got its name because the first time the Jews saw it, they said mon, Egyptian for “what.” [↑](#footnote-ref-326)
327. See Mechilta d’Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai 16:14 and Talmud, Yoma 75b. [↑](#footnote-ref-327)
328. Sifri 11:6; Yalkut Shimoni, Ba’ahalotecha, remez 734. [↑](#footnote-ref-328)
329. Shir HaShirim (Song of Songs) 8:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-329)
330. Debarim (Deuteronomy) 32:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-330)
331. Yoma 21a. Additional sources cited there.

     {I.e., there were ten cubits from the northern wall of Holy of Holies to the Ark, ten cubits from the southern wall to the Ark, and the Ark itself was two and one half cubits wide. Nevertheless, he entire span of the chamber from north to south was twenty cubits. The space taken up by the Ark did not change the measure of the chamber.} [↑](#footnote-ref-331)
332. Beit HaMikdash = Holy Temple [↑](#footnote-ref-332)
333. Shemot (Exodus) 25:10. A cubit is approximately 20 inches [↑](#footnote-ref-333)
334. Yoma 21a, Bava Batra 99a, Megillah 10b [↑](#footnote-ref-334)
335. Yoma 21a [↑](#footnote-ref-335)
336. Pirkei Avot 5:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-336)
337. Pesachim 64b [↑](#footnote-ref-337)
338. Herod Agrippas, also known as Herod or Agrippas I (Hebrew: אגריפס‬; 11 BC – 44 AD), was a King of Judea from 41 to 44 AD. He was the last ruler with the royal title reigning over Judea and the father of Herod Agrippas II, the last King from the Herodian dynasty. The grandson of Herod the Great and son of Aristobulus IV and Berenice, he was born Marcus Julius Agrippa, so named in honor of Roman statesman Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa. He is the king named Herod in the Acts of the Apostles 12:1 (Acts 12:1). [↑](#footnote-ref-338)
339. see Midrash Eicha 1:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-339)
340. Pesachim 85b [↑](#footnote-ref-340)
341. Pirke Avot 5:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-341)
342. Avot D’Rabbi Nathan, chapter 35 [↑](#footnote-ref-342)
343. The Ezrat Israel - The Courtyard of Israel, in the Temple. [↑](#footnote-ref-343)
344. The Ezrat Kohanim - The Courtyard of the priests, in the Temple. [↑](#footnote-ref-344)
345. Megillah 6a [↑](#footnote-ref-345)
346. Avot 5:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-346)
347. Mashiach [↑](#footnote-ref-347)
348. Zech. 9:9).-[from Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer, ch. 31] [↑](#footnote-ref-348)
349. This time, *Mashiach* applies to both Mashiach ben David and Mashiach ben Joseph. [↑](#footnote-ref-349)
350. Peyas HaSadeh, Maareches “Alef”, os Eyin [↑](#footnote-ref-350)
351. The Ben Ish Chai [↑](#footnote-ref-351)
352. By Tamar Kadari [↑](#footnote-ref-352)
353. Marc Bregman, *Serah bat Asher: Biblical Origins, Ancient Aggadah and Contemporary Folklore*, The Bilgray Lectureship, booklet published and distributed by the University of Arizona, 1997 [reprinted in New Harvest (St. Louis: The Brodsky Library Press, 2005)]. [↑](#footnote-ref-353)
354. Astral projection is the ability to enter into a state in which one leaves the physical body and operates in the astral plane, an out-of-body experience. [↑](#footnote-ref-354)
355. Paradise, Heb. פרדס (cf. Cant. IV, 13, Eccl. II, 5, Neh. II, 8), ‘enclosure, preserve, garden, park’ (v. B. D. B. s.v.). L. Blau (Alitjudisches Zauberwesen, pp, 115f) seeks to prove that this account of the entry of the four Rabbis into Paradise is to be understood literally (v. also J.E. vol. V, p. 683). This view is shared, among others, by J. Levy and L. Ginzberg (v. J.E. vol. V, pp. 138f). On the other hand, M. Jast. (Dictionary) and Goldschmidt consider ‘Pardes’ a figurative expression for the mystical realm of theosophy. Rashi explains that the four scholars ascended to heaven, and Tosaf. adds that it only appeared to them that they did so. Similarly, R. Hai Gaon, who discusses the whole Baraitha in a responsum (quoted by Ha-Kotheb in ‘Ein Jacob), and R. Hananel explain that the entry of the Rabbis into the ‘Garden’ was only a vision. Both these authorities refer to the comment on the passage contained in the mystical works ‘Hekaloth Rabbathi’ and ‘Hekaloth Zutarthi’ (v. J.E. vol. VI, pp. 332-3). V. further J.E. vol. IX, pp. 515f. [↑](#footnote-ref-355)
356. Lit. ‘another’, by which tern, Elisha b. Abuyah is referred to after his apostasy. V. J.E. vol. V, pp. 138f, and Ab. IV, 20 (Sonc. ed., p. 55 n. 1, where instead of ‘disciple of R. Meir’, read ‘teacher of R. Meir’). Cf. also the term ‘Others’ supra p. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-356)
357. Giving the illusion of water. [↑](#footnote-ref-357)
358. I.e., how can we proceed! [↑](#footnote-ref-358)
359. Tehillim (Psalms) 101:7. [↑](#footnote-ref-359)
360. Tehillim (Psalms) 116:15. [↑](#footnote-ref-360)
361. Lit., ‘stricken’. [↑](#footnote-ref-361)
362. Mishle (Proverbs) 25:16. [↑](#footnote-ref-362)
363. I.e., apostatized. Scholars differ greatly regarding the nature of Aher's defection: he has been variously described as a Persian, Gnostic or Philonian dualist; as a Christian; as a Sadducee; and as a ‘victim of the inquisitor Akiba’, in J.E., V. 183 and bibliography. [↑](#footnote-ref-363)
364. Shimush Pesukim [↑](#footnote-ref-364)
365. Shimush Pesukim [↑](#footnote-ref-365)
366. Orot Sephardic Machzor For Rosh Hashana With Linear English Translation [↑](#footnote-ref-366)
367. Repetition,usually done three or seven times, or by another number symbolically relevant to the issue at hand, is the premier aspect of constructive words of power (Shabbat 66b, in the Talmud). Thus we find a teaching in the Talmud, for example, that reciting a verse containing the phrase “Voice of the Lord” seven times thwarts evil spirits at night. [↑](#footnote-ref-367)
368. Encyclopedia of Jewish Magic, Myth, and Mysticism [↑](#footnote-ref-368)
369. “In the Talmud, there’s magic and sorcery in every tractate”. [↑](#footnote-ref-369)
370. Magical properties were ascribed to the number seven, which was regarded as the most sacred number. Various factors were responsible for this: it is a combination of three and four, themselves held to be sacred; there are seven days in the week; the seventh day is holy. — The Rabbis, though opposed to superstitions practices in general (v. p. 243, n. 3), were nevertheless children of their age, and recognized their efficacy. [↑](#footnote-ref-370)
371. Or, wild rose bushes. [↑](#footnote-ref-371)
372. The knife, or the thorn bush? [↑](#footnote-ref-372)
373. Shemot (Exodus) 3:2. [↑](#footnote-ref-373)
374. Sar also means to depart, and it is applied magically to the fever. The belief in the efficacy of sacred books or verses to effect cures, etc., was widespread in ancient times both among pagans and believers in God. V. J.E. art. Bibliomancy. [↑](#footnote-ref-374)
375. this may appropriately be referred to the illness. [↑](#footnote-ref-375)
376. Mentioning the mother's name. [↑](#footnote-ref-376)
377. Rashi: this is the incantation formula, but they were not actually sent thence. [↑](#footnote-ref-377)
378. Unintelligible words forming part of the incantation. [↑](#footnote-ref-378)
379. Let it not change to a deeper red. [↑](#footnote-ref-379)
380. Let it not spread. [↑](#footnote-ref-380)
381. An animal with uncloven hoofs (the sign of uncleanness) born of a clean animal. Rashi: one whose semen is locked up, so that he cannot reproduce. [↑](#footnote-ref-381)
382. Mentioning the mother's name. [↑](#footnote-ref-382)
383. Others: epilepsy. [↑](#footnote-ref-383)
384. Lit., 'the son of clay, son of defilement, son of filth' — names for the demon. [↑](#footnote-ref-384)
385. MSS Escorial G.IV.3 26b-27a [↑](#footnote-ref-385)
386. Praxis: practice, as distinguished from theory. [↑](#footnote-ref-386)
387. A pseudepigraphical grimoire (also known as a book of spells) attributed to King Solomon. [↑](#footnote-ref-387)