

Land

God tells Abraham:

קוּם הַתְּהַלֵּךְ בְּאֶרֶץ לְאֶרְבֶּת וּלְרֹחֶבָה כִּי לְךָ אֶתְנֶנָּה

*Arise! Walk through the land: in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for unto thee will I give it.*¹

God is telling Abraham to arise, meaning to increase his spirituality and closeness to God, by walking through the *Land*, the *Land* that will be the inheritance of the Israelites. Walking through the *Land* means moving through the *Land*. Moving means experiencing the *Land*, by moving from one place in the *Land* to another place in the *Land*. God is telling Abraham to experience the *Land* that God gives to him and to his descendents,

*To thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever.*²

and by experiencing the *Land* in the proper way, in its full length and breadth, he will arise, meaning that he will draw nearer to God.

We too want to understand in as complete a way as possible what God is here telling to Abraham. We too want to arise and draw nearer to God by experiencing the *Land* in its full length and breadth in the proper way. Perhaps on this journey of understanding we will learn, be surprised about one of the deep meanings for אֶרֶץ, land, in Torah and arise just as God commanded to Abraham. We begin by recalling what Zophar the Naamathite spoke to Job.

*Can you achieve an understanding of God? Can you fathom the extent of the Almighty? It is like the heights of heaven; what can you do [to understand]? It is deeper than the Pit; what can you know? Longer than the Land is its measure and wider than the sea.*³

Why does the verse say:

¹Genesis 13:17.

²Genesis 13:15.

³Job 11:7-9

Longer than the Land is its measure and wider than the sea.

אַרְכָּהּ מֵאֶרֶץ מִדָּה וְרֹחְבָּהּ מִן־יָם

Land, אֶרֶץ, has the attribute of length. Its comparison is made on the basis of longness. That which is long must be relatively narrow. The contrast to *Land* is that of the sea. Its attribute is its wideness. The sea is broad. And in the breadth of the sea there are no places of distinction; everything is alike; everything is hidden. The sea, יָם, has gematria 50. There are 50 levels of perfection, 50 gates of understanding.

Rabbi Schneerson teaches that

The difference between *sea* and *land* is that sea denotes those things that are hidden, just as the creatures of the sea are concealed by its waters. *Land*, on the other hand, alludes to that which is revealed. Thus, in terms of man's divine service, the *sea* represents a person's individual soul powers and actions as they pertain to his own self, while *land* refers to his actions as they relate to the world around him.⁴

On the *Land*, there is distinction; there are landmarks. From landmark to landmark we travel and move on the *Land*. What is on the land is revealed. And on how we move on the *Land* we are measured.

The word אֶרֶץ can also be understood by examining the pairs of its letters. The letters אר constitute the word אר. It is a unit of measure that in English is called *are*. It is a measure of an area that is 10 by 10 meters. The word used in the verse for measure is מִדָּה. Its gematria is 49. It also has the meaning of garment and personality trait. The letters רץ constitute the word רץ meaning to *run*. And the letters אר constitute the word אר, meaning *hurrying, hastening* or *narrow*. So the *Land* is a long narrow measured area on which we run and hasten, meaning on which we grow and develop our personality traits.

When King David was already filled with inspiration, he wrote Psalm 24 to express his spiritual enthusiasm.

*The Land and her fullness belong to the Lord,
The world and those who dwell therein,*

⁴Menachem M. Schneerson, *The Chassidic Dimension*, Sholom Wineberg, compiler, (Brooklyn, New York, Vaad L'Hafotzas Sichos, 1998), p. 244.

*For He founded her upon seas,
And established her on the rivers.*⁵

This *Land* and her fullness, her very essence belongs to the Lord. This *Land* and the world built up on it belong to the Lord. And as well those who dwell in it belong to the Lord.

Rabbi Hirsch writes on this verse

The earth must serve His Sovereignty which trains men how to fulfill His moral Law, which Sovereignty He has designated with His Name. ... All the earth is a “training ground” for God, on which men are to attain the peak of their moral destiny and God’s nearness here below.⁶

The psalm continues,

*Who shall ascend to the mountain of the Lord,
And who shall stand in the place of His Sanctuary?*⁷

King David is here asking who will arise and explore and walk through the Land, the Holy Land, the place of His Sanctuary? Rashi tells us that Land here means the land of Israel. And the land of Israel

is like a funnel through which all of sanctity which descends from above is channeled and dispersed throughout the world.⁸

King David answers

*He that is clean of hands and pure of heart,
Who has not lifted up his soul, which is Mine,
Unto Vanity and has not sworn deceitfully.
He shall receive a blessing from the Lord
And a just kindness from the God of his salvation.*⁹

⁵ *Psalms 24:1-2.*

⁶ *Samson Raphael Hirsch, Psalms, Feldheim, New York, 1997, p173.*

⁷ *Psalms 24:3.*

⁸ *Tehillim*, Avrohom Chaim Feuer, translator and commentary editor, Vol. 1, Mesorah Publications, New York, 2001, p 296.

⁹ *Psalms 24:4-5.*

Rabbi Hirsch explains that clean hands here means that all our possessions have been obtained through Torah correct transactions. There are no ill-gotten gains. Pure heart here means a pure mind harboring no impure thoughts. Not lifting up our soul to vanity means that we respect our soul, because our soul does not belong to us; it belongs to God.

So with it we strive only for goals that are noble, ends that are neither based on vanity nor doomed to decay.¹⁰

Such a person, King David says is one who will receive a blessing, from the Lord. Blessing here means prosperity in whatever we do in this world. Prosperity means whatever will serve our genuine welfare.

So what have we learned? We understand that our movement on the *Land* is our Torah growth and development. Arise means to ascend to the mountain of the Lord, and stand in the place of His Sanctuary. Our arising comes about by doing, which means by walking through the land in a Torah correct way. This is what brings us near to God. This is how we can be of service to God.

The Zohar explains that ארץ is

the Holy Land of Israel, which is the first to imbibe sustenance and receive blessing from God, the rest of the world then receiving from it. ... this Holy Land (the Shechinah) is called “the land of Israel.”¹¹

The Talmud¹² writes that

He who transgresses in secret is as though he pressed the feet of the Shechinah for it is written

*Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool.*¹³

By transgressing secretly a person acts as if God’s presence is not there and thus consciously confines the feet of the Shechinah into a narrower place than what they in fact occupy: the whole earth.

¹⁰Samson Raphael Hirsch, *Psalms, Feldheim, New York, 1997, p174.*

¹¹*The Zohar*, Vol 3, (II,22b), Harry Sperling and Maurice Simon, (London: The Soncino Press, 1978), p. 76.

¹²Kiddushin 31a.

¹³Isaiah 66:1.

Land: Spiritual State of Consciousness and Being

In what follows, we explore the metaphor of *Land* in Torah. We will develop how *Land* means our spiritual state of consciousness and being as it relates to our service to God.

In Biblical language, the *Land* of God consciousness is the *Land* of Israel, the *Land* of milk and honey. God consciousness is not just an awareness, it is an awareness and state of internal being and external living in which our will conforms to the will of God. Where there is a consciousness of God and where our will conforms to the will of God, God makes things happen miraculously. Not being in the *Land* of God consciousness means being in the *Land* of constriction. In Biblical language, the *Land* of constriction is the *Land* of Egypt. Being in the *Land* of constriction means a consciousness devoid of God. And where there is no consciousness of God and no external living conformance to the will of God, things happen naturally, in accordance with the will of God.

The Zohar tells us that one *land* is called *land* of the living and the other is called *land* of darkness:

For there is a “land of the living” on high, which is the Land of Israel, and a land below called “land of darkness.”¹⁴

Rabbi Maryles, the Yaruslaver Rebbe, explains the verse

*And in all the land of your possession, you shall grant redemption to the land.*¹⁵

as follows.

The verse alludes to the responsibility of the Jewish people, in all lands they come to possess (even outside the land of Israel), to redeem the “higher land,” i.e. the territory of the soul, by releasing the sparks of holiness in captivity among the nations so that they may rise upward to their source. In doing so, one brings redemption to the Shechinah as well, which is also referred to as the “land.”¹⁶

And on the verse

¹⁴*The Zohar* Vol 2, (I, 193a), Harry Sperling and Maurice Simon, (translators), The Soncino Press, London, 1978, p. 235.

¹⁵Vayikra 25:24.

¹⁶Shimon Maryles, *Toras Shimon*, (Southfield, MI: Targum Press, 2000), p. 73.

*And you shall eat and be satisfied, and you shall bless
The Lord your God for the good land which He granted
you.*¹⁷

Rabbi Maryles comments,

*for the good land which He granted you – the “land”
being a metaphor for one’s soul, which Hashem grants
to each person in order to cultivate it in accordance
with His will.*¹⁸

Finally, on the verse

*And it shall be that when you come to the land which
the Lord your God has given to you as an inheritance,
and you take possession of it and settle it ...*¹⁹

Rabbi Maryles explains

And there shall be joy when you approach the Shechi-
nah (often symbolized by the “land”) which Hashem
has given you as an inheritance, for the sake of unifying
and perfecting His name. When your relationship with
the land is predicated upon this privilege, then you can
be certain of possessing it and settling it in peace and
prosperity, without fear of those forces²⁰ which seek to
undermine your hold.²¹

King David proclaims that we must serve God with joy.

*Serve God with gladness, come before Him with joyous song.*²²

Serving God does not mean only in the synagogue or only in prayer.
Serving God is not something that is fixed in place or time. For God is not

¹⁷Deuteronomy 8:10.

¹⁸Shimon Maryles, *Toras Shimon*, (Southfield, MI: Targum Press, 2000), p. 102.

¹⁹Deuteronomy 26:1.

²⁰The Yetzer Hara, the evil inclination.

²¹Shimon Maryles, *Toras Shimon*, (Southfield, MI: Targum Press, 2000), p. 109.

²²Psalms: 100:2

fixed in place or time. Our service to God is in the home, in business, in the marketplace, in the street as well as in the synagogue. Our service is for all our waking hours.

How do we perform our service? By maintaining a consciousness of the Shechinah, symbolized as the *Land* we come to possess. When we have this kind of consciousness, we are in the land and being in the land we are joyful and full of song. We experience creation as awesome, something that is on the one hand so complex and wonderful that it is indescribable. And yet it is simultaneously something that is near to us. It is in this state of consciousness that we can fulfill the commandment:

*You shall love the Lord, your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your everything (all your resources).*²³

The Torah tells us that by our cleaving to God, by making our will conform to his will, God brings us, we who are spiritual cultivators, into a *Land* of Israel, a consciousness and state of being, that is not a flat *Land*, but a mountain, the height of all the *Land*, the height of all living, being and consciousness.

The first occurrence of the word אֶרֶץ in Torah is in its first verse:

*With a beginning, God created the heaven and the earth (Land).*²⁴

Here the contrast to *Land* is heaven, שָׁמַיִם. Notice that שָׁמַיִם can be broken into two words יָם and שָׁמַיִם. יָם means *sea* and שָׁמַיִם means *there*. What is here is *Land*. What is there is sea. We are on the *Land* and moving there, moving to the sea. Once we are on the sea, in heaven, there will be no movement like there had been on the *Land*. In heaven, there is no further growth and development. In heaven we are there. And there we will forever experience the experiences of the level of growth and development we attained on the *Land*.

With a beginning at the time of creation. But the time of creation is not just that time long ago when God created the world from nothing. The time of creation is also this moment. For each moment God continues the world and this continuing the world is creation. In our lives, each situation we are in, is a new moment. Each joy or difficulty we live through brings us a new

²³Deuteronomy 6:5

²⁴Genesis 1:1.

moment. And this new moment has within it the potential to connect Land and heaven, by connecting to God by living through the moment doing the Torah correct thought, speech and action.

The gematria of **הַשָּׁמַיִם**, the heaven, is 395. The gematria of **נַפְשָׁה**, soul, is also 395, telling us about the intricate connection between soul and heaven.

We read in Genesis:

And God said:

Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together to one place, and let the dry land appear.

And it was so. And God called the dry land אֶרֶץ.²⁵

Midrash Rabbah asks why is the dry land called אֶרֶץ?

Because she conformed, רָצָה, to his will רְצוֹן.²⁶

From this we learn that we are in the *Land* when we make our will to conform to God's will.

The root **יִרַשׁ**, means to inherit, take possession of, or succeed, and the word **יָשָׁר**, means straightness, righteousness, equity, honesty, fairness, integrity, sincerity, purpose, or straightforwardness. Our inheritance is existence in which the physical part of us resides and that we must approach as an initiator, having an attitude of righteousness, integrity, honesty, and sincerity. From this we see that Israel, **יִשְׂרָאֵל**, means **אֵל יִשָׁר**, the straightforwardness, honesty, and sincerity of God and as well means the inheritance or possession of God. Hence the *Land* of Israel, **אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל**, is that place, that state of consciousness whose substance is filled with the straightforwardness, honesty, sincerity, and inheritance of God.

אֶרֶץ is related to **אֶרְצָה**, which is the first person future of the root **רָצָה**, meaning to will. From this point of view, **אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל** means *I will go straight to God. I will to possess in me the presence of God. I will to make my will whatever God's will is.*

²⁵ *Genesis* 1:9-10.

²⁶ *Midrash Rabbah*, vol 1, *Genesis* (5:8) trans. H. Freedman (London, Soncino Press, 1983), p. 38.

Planting the *Land* means expressing ourselves. And for what purpose do we express ourselves? We express ourselves to live, to give the gift of the seed. We express ourselves to give the gift of self.²⁷

The word **חַיָּוָה** is related to the word **חַיָּוִת**, which is the constructive form of the noun **חַיָּוָה**, meaning animal or beast. On one level, the verses involving **חַיָּוָה** are about animals of the *Land* and beasts of the field. But there is a deeper level of meaning to the verses having the word **חַיָּוִת**. This level can be understood by allegory. *Land* corresponds to the consciousness and being where our mind dwells. An animal of the *Land* is that which roams the *Land*, living off the *Land*. So allegorically, an animal of the *Land* is the animal desires and thoughts that appear in our consciousness. They come from our animal soul.²⁸ Psychologically, these are the desires and thoughts that can be attributed to our ego. “A beast of the field” is an idiomatic expression for a wild animal. A wild animal has the connotation of animal that not only cannot be domesticated but eats other animals. So allegorically a wild animal is the wild animal desires and thoughts of the mind. These are the inclinations and thoughts of the ego that view the world as a jungle and whose understanding of surviving in the world is based on the law of the jungle.

*And God made the animals of the Land of every kind, and cattle of every kind, and creeping things of the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.*²⁹

So at this level, we can understand that God makes animals of every kind that live in our consciousness. That is, God brings into existence the possibility of desires and thoughts of all kinds. These thoughts and desires are given life in us by our dwelling on them. Cattle, our livestock, our domesticated animals, correspond to our everyday domesticated thoughts. And creeping things of the ground correspond to our most close-to-ground thoughts, thoughts and desires that cannot rise to heaven.

And to every animal of the Land, and to every bird of the sky, and to everything that creeps on the ground, wherein there is a

²⁷Rabbi Yitzchak Ginsburgh, *The Hebrew Letters* (Jerusalem: Gal Einai Publications, 1992), p. 80.

²⁸Rabbi Shneur Zalman, *Likkutei Amarim – Tanya*, bilingual ed. (Brooklyn, NY: Kehot Publication Society, 1993), p. 25.

²⁹*Genesis* 1:25.

*living soul, every green herb shall be for food: and it was so. And God saw that it was very good.*³⁰

A bird of the sky allegorically corresponds to the heavenly thoughts of the mind.

The animals of the *Land* are delivered into our hand. By our free will, we are to rule and govern them. They are to fear us. The animals of our awareness are not to scare us.

*And behold, I establish my covenant with thee, and with your seed after thee, and with every living soul that is with thee, with the birds, with the cattle, and with every beast of the earth with thee, from all that came out of the ark, to every animal of the Land.*³¹

God establishes a covenant with us. The covenant is that all things that happen to us come from the beneficence of God to help us perfect our ways and become perfect and holy before God. This means that it is possible for us to learn to have the self-conscious ruler become a perfect ruler of the mind.

After Lot separated from Abraham, God said to Abraham:

*Now, lift up your eyes and look from the place where you art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the Land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.*³²

Just before Jacob left Laban, God spoke to Jacob in a dream and said:

*Now lift up your eyes and see all the rams which leap upon the flock are streaked, speckled and grizzled: for I have seen all that Laban does to thee. I am the God of Bet-el, where you didst anoint a pillar, and where you didst vow a vow to me. Now arise, get out of this Land, and return to the Land of your birth.*³³

³⁰ *Genesis* 1:30.

³¹ *Genesis* 9:9-10.

³² *Genesis* 13:14.

³³ *Genesis* 31:12-13.

Lifting up our eyes also has another meaning that we can understand we thinking about what we would see if we looked downward instead of upward. Looking downward we see the dirt of the earth. We see that which is low and veiled. The earth is veiled because it is from the fertility of the earth that all plant life grows. But looking at the dirt of the earth we do not see that fertility.

Now consider the meaning of looking upward. By looking upward we take a broad deep perspective. It can be so broad that all the disparate elements come together in unity. Looking upward is looking spiritually. Looking spiritually we must see unity. God is One. God is all there is. There is nothing else.³⁴ To move away from the view of the side of the coin we see and just come to see the coin, we must look upward. To view better the side of the coin we see we look downward. But then our perspective is just the side of the coin we see. We are not aware of the two sides nor are we aware of the bounding of the two sides in a unity which is the coin.

From this we learn that to receive the perfection and completeness of this world, a perfection and completeness created by God, we must lift up our eyes toward God. This lifting up our eyes is not just on occasion. But our eyes must continually be toward God in order to continuously receive the perfection and completeness.

*I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of your loins. And the Land which I gave to Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to your seed after thee will I give the Land.*³⁵

Why does the Torah start these verses with *I am God Almighty*. Does God need to exclaim that He is Almighty? Does Jacob need to be told this in order for Jacob to understand that God is talking to him? The obvious first interpretation we might make for this verse is surely not right. God does not need to pronounce his mightiness and Jacob does not need to be told that God is talking to him. Rather the verse sets up an equation. On the one side is *I am God Almighty*. On the second side *be fruitful and multiply*. The first side implies the second side.

³⁴Deuteronomy 4:35.

³⁵Genesis 35:11-12.

*And six years you shall sow your Land and shalt gather in its fruits, but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of thy people may eat. And whatever they leave, the beasts of the field shall eat.*³⁶

Six years we should sow the *Land* means that for six units of time, the self-conscious must maintain control. The seventh year, the seventh unit of time, the self-conscious must relax and rest. It must not rule. It must not engage in creative activity. It must not give more patterns and images to the subconscious. Rather, it must permit other more spiritual dimensions of self to live and be more spiritually productive. Also the self-conscious can rest to reflect upon what it sees the subconscious doing, what it sees the subconscious playing back. And whatever the subconscious plays back, this is what should nourish the poor part of ourselves and this is what should nourish the wild animals in our self-consciousness. That is, we should observe and honor our wild animals. We should observe and honor our poor. At least by recognizing them, we have the opportunity of doing something about them. We have the opportunity of transforming the wild animals elevating them spiritually thereby truly enriching the poor.

*I will not drive them out from before thee in one year, lest the Land become desolate and the [wild] beasts of the field multiply against thee. Little by little I will drive them out from before thee until you be increased and inherit the Land.*³⁷

*And the Lord your God will put out those nations before thee by little and little. You may not consume them at once, lest the [wild] beasts of the field increase upon thee.*³⁸

The other nations that are driven out of the *Land* stand for that part of our value system and expectations that are not in accord with Godliness. These nations are the same nations spoken of in the following:

*Righteousness exalteth a nation, but the kindness*³⁹ *of the nations*

³⁶ *Exodus* 23:10-11.

³⁷ *Exodus* 23:29-30.

³⁸ *Deuteronomy* 7:22.

³⁹ The Hebrew uses the noun **חֶסֶד**, which can mean *and kindness*, relating to the verb **חָסַד** meaning to *do favors, do good, or do a kindness*, or it can mean *and disgrace, and*

is sin.⁴⁰

*And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that Land to a good and spacious Land, into a Land flowing with milk and honey.*⁴¹

*I am the Lord and I will bring you out from under the burdens of Egypt and I will deliver you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm, and with great judgments. And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God. And you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who brings you out from under the burdens of Egypt. And I will bring you into the Land which I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And I will give it to you for a heritage. I am the Lord.*⁴²

The reason that I will give it to you for a heritage is that I am the Lord. My nature and very essence it to give to you for a heritage. And that is the reason why when you dwell in the *Land* and the *Land* produces, you must give to me, in your own way, of what I have given to you.

*The first of the first-fruits of your Land you shall bring to the house of the Lord thy God.*⁴³

It is not enough to dwell in the *Land*. We must know, know and not believe, who it is that gives us the *Land*, who it is that brought us from the state of constriction, to the state of dwelling in holiness.

*And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, who brought them forth out of the Land of Egypt, that I might dwell among them. I am the Lord their God.*⁴⁴

shame, or and abomination, relating to the verb חָסַד, meaning to deprecate, reproach, or sneer at. Many translations use the word reproach. However, the Alter Rebbe in Tanya, p. 5, quotes Etz Chayim, Portal 49, ch. 3, “that all the good that the nations do, is done from selfish motives.” And he also quotes the Gemara, Bava Batra (10b) “that all the charity and kindness done by the nations of the world is only for their own self-glorification.” And since the nations are not acting out of a holy motive, but out of a selfish motive, their seeming deeds of kindnesses are as a sin.

⁴⁰Proverbs 14:34.

⁴¹Exodus 3:8.

⁴²Exodus 6:6-8.

⁴³Exodus 23:19, 34:26.

⁴⁴Exodus 29:46.

*I have said to you that you shall inherit their Land, and I will give it to you to possess it; a Land that flows with milk and honey: I am the Lord your God, who has separated you from the peoples.*⁴⁵

To get to the *Land* and to dwell in the *Land* require the same actions on our part.

*And ye shall do My statutes and keep My judgments and do them. And ye shall dwell in the Land in safety. And the Land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell in safety.*⁴⁶

*If you walk in my statutes and keep my commandments and do them, then I will give you rain in due season and the Land shall yield its increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. And your threshing shall reach to the vintage and the vintage shall reach to the sowing time. And you shall eat your bread to the full and dwell in your Land safely. And I will give you peace in the Land, and you shall lie down and none shall make you afraid. And I will remove evil beasts out of the Land, neither shall the sword go through your Land.*⁴⁷

In the wilderness of Paran, the Israelites are ready to go into the promised *Land*. God commands Moses to send men to search out the *Land*. As before, *Land* here means state of consciousness. Moses chooses the heads of the children of Israel, one prince from each of the twelve tribes, to search out the *Land*. These are the most respected and renowned men of each tribe. And in telling them their mission, Moses uses the word עָלוּ, which means go up, elevate yourself.

And Moses sent them to explore Canaan and he said to them:

Go up through the Negev and on into the hill country. And see the country, what it is and the people who dwell in it, whether they are strong or weak, few or many, and what the Land is that they dwell in, whether it is good or bad and what cities they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strongholds, and what the

⁴⁵ *Leviticus 20:24.*

⁴⁶ *Leviticus 25:18.*

⁴⁷ *Leviticus 26:3-6.*

*Land is, whether fat or lean, whether there are trees in it or not. And be of good courage and bring of the fruit of the Land.*⁴⁸

Here we understand that Moses tells them to go through the Negev, which is the desert of the south and the worst part of the *Land*⁴⁹ and then go to the high country, which is fertile. First see the worst and then see the best, for our consciousness has the capacity to contain within it the worst and the best. Know what the worst is, but retain only the best. Then see the people in the *Land*. Determine if they are strong or weak. Here people means will. See what kind of will dwells in consciousness. Is it a strong will or a weak will? See the state of consciousness that the will has created in this *Land*. See whether this state of consciousness is good or bad. See the cities. Report back about the centers of creative and cultural activities. Tell us whether it is good, having wells and deep waters,⁵⁰ meaning that it has the possibility of Torah, or whether it is dry, having no water, meaning that it is devoid of the possibility of Torah. Tell us whether the *Land* has trees, whether this state of consciousness can support honorable, proper people,⁵¹ people who can adapt and work with zeal and conscientiousness.

And when you find all this out, be of good courage. Regardless of how you interpret the bad things you see, the difficult things you see, be of good courage. For the possibility of the bad must exist in order for the good to exist. So be of good courage and bring back the fruit of the *Land*. Bring back some of the milk and honey.

When this group of twelve come back after exploring the *Land* for forty days, they bring back with them one cluster of grapes so large that they had to carry it on a pole carried by eight of them. They brought back pomegranates and figs. And when they came back, they showed the Israelites the fruit of the *Land* and said to them that the *Land* “flows with milk and honey.”⁵² This state of consciousness flows with milk and honey.

And then they said **וַיֹּאמְרוּ**: but, however.⁵³ Then they said that the people

⁴⁸*Numbers* 13:17-20.

⁴⁹Rashi, *Pentateuch and Rashi's Commentary, Numbers*, vol. 4, trans. Abraham ben Isaiah and Benjamin Sharfman (Brooklyn, NY: S.S. and R. Publishing, 1976), *Numbers* 13:17, p. 128.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, *Numbers* 13:19, p. 129.

⁵¹*Ibid.*

⁵²*Numbers* 13:27.

⁵³*Numbers* 13:28.

are strong and the cities are fortified and very great. Allegorically this means that the will that is required to make this consciousness endure in us must be a strong will. And they observed that “they are stronger than we.”⁵⁴ Their wills are stronger than our wills. To be in this state of consciousness we will have to build fortified structures as they built fortified structures. Do you realize how much work this is going to require? Do you know how hard it is to live so zealously, always trying to maintain our connection to God? Do you realize what it means to be constantly working on developing and refining our character traits? Every day we will have to face the children of Anak living within us. We will have to confront the Anak, that in us that inclines us to ostentatiousness,⁵⁵ the Amalekites, that in us that inclines us to doubt God,⁵⁶ the Hittites, that in us that inclines us to frighten others,⁵⁷ the Jebusite, that in us that inclines us to despise others,⁵⁸ the Amorite, that in us that inclines us to boast about ourselves,⁵⁹ and the Canaanite, that in us that inclines us to oppress ourselves.^{60,61} None of it can be hidden. Constantly will we be engaged in sacrificing these parts of ourselves. Constantly we will be transforming ourselves. And when we transform one aspect, nullifying it at one level, we will proceed to a higher level and then again face a higher-level Amalekite, a higher-level Hittite, and so forth. We often find ourselves at work, overcoming some internal resistance, so that we can go beyond where we are, transcending our current consciousness having negative judgments about others. “Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?”⁶² Slavery in the *Land* of constriction is not so much work. At least it is identical day

⁵⁴Numbers 13:31.

⁵⁵Anak in Hebrew is עֲנָק. The root עֲנָק, in addition to meaning “giant,” means to wear, to decorate, tie, to put ornaments around the neck.

⁵⁶Amalekite in Hebrew is עֲמָלֵק. Its gematria is 240, the gematria of the root סִפֵּק, which means to doubt.

⁵⁷Hittite in Hebrew is חִתִּי. This is related to the word חִתִּית, which means fright or terror.

⁵⁸Jebusite in Hebrew is יְבוּסִי. This is related to the root בּוּס, meaning to tread underfoot, to trample, crush, despise, loathe, or detest.

⁵⁹Amorite in Hebrew is אַמֹּרִי. This is related to the root אָמַר, which means to say. The Hitpael form of this root is הִתְאַמַּר, which means to boast or to be overproud.

⁶⁰Canaanite in Hebrew is כְּנַעֲנִי. This is cognate to the root כָּנַע, which means to oppress ourselves, to be depressed, or mournful.

⁶¹Numbers 13:28-29.

⁶²Numbers 14:4.

after day. We do not have to confront new things. We are not required to grow or change. We are not required to work to go beyond where we are. We are not required to overcome where we are.

Then Caleb, one of the twelve who explored the *Land*, spoke to the Israelites and used the word נֹכַח, which means well able or can.

*And Caleb stilled the people before Moses and said: "Let us go up at once, and possess it: for we are well able to overcome it."*⁶³

Caleb said to pay no attention to the work that we will have to do to dwell in this *Land*, in this state of consciousness. This work is our service to God. It is the way we go beyond and transcend, creating and bringing into existence within ourselves, even that which did not exist before. It is the way we fulfill being created in the image of God. We can do it. We can do it joyously. It is the holiness we are called upon to fulfill. It is the only thing that is meaningful to do. And whatever we have to confront, we can confront it and overcome it. We can possess this *Land*. We can dwell in this state of consciousness. We can be in emergence.

*The Land which we passed through to explore is an exceedingly good Land. If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this Land and give it to us; a Land which flows with milk and honey.*⁶⁴

*But Joshua, the son of Nun, who stands before thee, he shall go in there. Encourage him, for he shall cause Israel to inherit it.*⁶⁵

*And they took of the fruit of the Land in their hands, and brought it down to us, and brought us back word, and said: "It is a good Land which the Lord our God is giving us."*⁶⁶

To possess the *Land* requires us to cleave to God by the actions which bind us to God.

*Walk in all the ways that the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live and prosper and prolong your days in the Land that you will possess.*⁶⁷

⁶³ Numbers 13:30.

⁶⁴ Numbers 14:7-8.

⁶⁵ Deuteronomy 1:38.

⁶⁶ Deuteronomy 1:25.

⁶⁷ Deuteronomy 5:30.

What does it mean to *prolong your days*? Each period of time consists of a period of darkness called night and a period of lightness called day. Darkness is a code word meaning no consciousness of God. Lightness is a code word meaning consciousness of God. Each of our situations is a cycle of darkness preceeding the lightness. Sometimes the proportion of darkness in a cycle can be small in which case the lightness of the cycle is long. Othertimes the proportion of darkness in a cycle is large in which case the lightness of the cycle is short. The Torah tells us that when we walk in the ways of the Lord, ways that God has commanded us, then our cycles will have a larger proportion of lightness and a smaller proportion of darkness. The proportion of a cycle for which there is lightness, is the part of the cycle that we are in the *Land*. This is the part of the cycle that we are illuminated by the Shechinah, the indwelling presence of God.

And you shall do that which is right and good in the sight of the Lord: that it may be well with thee, and that you may go in and possess the good *Land* which the Lord swore to thy fathers.⁶⁸

You shall not have in your bag diverse weights, a great and a small. You shall not have in thy house diverse measures, a great and a small. But you shall have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shall thou have: that your days may be lengthened in the *Land* which the Lord your God gives thee.⁶⁹

There is a clear unambiguous emphasis that proper ethics is a necessary condition for dwelling and remaining in the *Land*. The person whose weights are diverse, meaning that in transactions or trading, they receive the larger weight (the greater value) of goods and their partner in the trade receives the smaller weight of goods (the smaller value) is a person, who regardless of their outward appearance of religious observance, cannot stay in the *Land*.

*For the upright shall dwell in the land,
And the whole-hearted shall remain in it.*

*But the wicked shall be cut off from the land,
And the faithless shall be plucked up out of it.*⁷⁰

⁶⁸ *Deuteronomy* 6:18.

⁶⁹ *Deuteronomy* 25:13-14.

⁷⁰ *Proverbs* 2:21-22.

*The righteous shall never be moved;
But the wicked shall not inhabit the land.*⁷¹

And when we are in the *Land*, we will be full.

*For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good Land – a Land with streams and pools of water, with springs flowing in the valleys and hills; a Land with wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey; a Land where bread will not be scarce and you will lack nothing.*⁷²

Water in the *Land* means Torah. Hills and valleys in the *Land* refers to the easiness or difficulty of the circumstances we are in. A difficult circumstance only means darkness if we cannot live through it in a Torah correct way. Otherwise, a difficult circumstance is a hill and we are walking up the incline of a hill. Other kinds of difficult circumstances we are walking down the incline of the hill. Sometimes walking down a steep incline is even more difficult than walking up a steep incline. The hills and valleys of the *Land* is the texture and fabric of our situation.

A *Land* with wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey; a *Land* where bread will not be scarce is a *Land* of nourishment. Each situation, each of our interactions provides for us Torah nourishment. And this is the reason the Torah verse concludes that we shall lack nothing. For everything that is important for us, is being provided for us. When we are in the *Land* everything is provided for us in the light; we have God consciousness of it. When we are not in the *Land*, everything is also provided for us, the most essential thing being the difficult circumstance. This is the circumstance that challenges our very being guiding us little by little to change our internal values, to change some aspect of our internal belief structure, bringing it more in line with Torah values: Guiding us to think, say, and act in accordance with our new Torah values. And when we demonstrate by our actions that we have moved with our new Torah values, we find ourselves living in the *Land*. We find ourselves secure and we will rejoice.

But when you cross the Jordan and settle in the Land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, where He will give

⁷¹Proverbs 10:30.

⁷²Deuteronomy 8:7-9.

*you rest from all thy enemies around thee so that you will live in safety. Then there shall be a place which the Lord thy God shall choose to cause His name to dwell there. There you shall bring all that I command thee: your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, thy tithes, and the offering of your hand, and all thy choice vows which ye vow to the Lord. And you shall rejoice before the Lord your God, you and your sons, and your daughters, and your menservants, and your maidservants.*⁷³

Who are our enemies? Our most difficult enemy is our evil inclination. Here the Torah is telling us that when we settle the *Land*, we will have some rest from our enemies. We will live in safety.

But we will not be finished. Within us there will be that which is deficient.

*If there be among you a poor man, one of thy brethren within any of your gates in your Land which the Lord your God gives thee, you shall not harden thy heart, nor shut your hand from your poor brother; but you shall open your hand wide to him and shall surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he lacks.*⁷⁴

Here a poor man is a code word for some part of our personality which is poor in Torah. The Torah here enjoins us to gather those parts of our personality that are rich in Torah and open their hands wide to lend him and give him the Torah he needs. What is interesting about this advice is that any part of our personality that is rich in Torah, has enough depth, to give the required Torah advice to any other part of our personality, regardless how different a dimension it is. This is because each dimension of our personality has within itself all dimensions of our personality.

When Abraham goes down to Egypt to sojourn there because of the severe famine in the *Land* where he dwelled, the Egyptians see how beautiful Sarai is and they bring her to Pharaoh.

*And when Pharaoh's officials saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh and she was taken into his palace.*⁷⁵

⁷³ *Deuteronomy* 12:10-12.

⁷⁴ *Deuteronomy* 15:7-8.

⁷⁵ *Genesis* 12:17.

When Pharaoh hears that Joseph's brothers have come to Egypt, he invites the entire family in, giving them the best of the *Land*.

*The Land of Egypt is open before you; settle your father and your brothers in the best part of the land; let them stay in the region of Goshen. And if you know any capable men among them, put them in charge of [make them rulers over] my livestock.*⁷⁶

As Sarai was brought to the palace of Pharaoh, each situational context brings us to the palace of the Egyptians, the palace of limitations. And why is **מִצְרַיִם**, Egypt, the land of limitation? Because **מִצְרַיִם** is from the root **מָצַר**, which means to bound, border, fix boundaries, or limit. And once in the land of the Egyptians as Joseph's family was, we are offered the best of the *Land*. And we are given the opportunity to be rulers over wealth, rulers of the livestock. This means that we are offered the best of illusions: surface beauty and money. This is the illusion that we are subject to the *Land* of limitation. And once we buy into being subject to limitation, just as the Israelites were enslaved by the Egyptians, we too become enslaved by limitation. We become so enslaved to the illusion that we do not even become aware that we have fallen into the illusion. We engage in activities of building empty cities, vain structures, that which has appearance but no essence. We choose context whose purpose is for the sake of protecting us, but that in reality separates us and limits our ascent. And when our ascent is limited, we descend.

Our coming into the *Land* is in part by our doing but in major part it is from the help we receive from God.

*And the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs and with wonders. And he brought us to this place and gave us this Land, a Land flowing with milk and honey.*⁷⁷

This passage give us the meaning for outstretched arm. When we are in bondage to limitation because we live in a way that does not transcend where we are and how we are, and when we realize that we are indeed in slavery and are miserable because of this slavery, then God will hear our cry

⁷⁶ *Genesis* 47:6.

⁷⁷ *Deuteronomy* 26:8-10.

and deliver us out of slavery with an outstretched arm. God will deliver us to the *Land* of milk and honey. God will deliver us to a state of consciousness full of milk and honey, a state of consciousness that is perfect and complete.

The deliverance with the outstretched arm is not something that happens once in our lives. Rather, it happens once each cycle of our lives. The cycle begins when we go down to sojourn in Egypt just as Abraham did and just as Joseph did. We immerse ourselves in limitation and in physicality in order to express ourselves. Express means to push out from our essence something of our essence. We do this by the garments of thought, speech, and action. Once our expression is complete, which happens when we have repeated the expression in all its variations for all the different circumstances in which it is appropriate, we often mindlessly continue the repetition of the expression. We repeat because of habit, laziness, or lack of watchfulness. Then the expression becomes solely limitation. And this is how we become slaves in the *Land* of Egypt, the *Land* of constriction. We are held in bondage by our evil inclination, which is naturally lazy about understanding or finding new, more meaningful ways of being and doing. Our evil inclination

literally renders a man so blind that he becomes like one that gropes in the dark and stumbles over the obstacles which he does not see.⁷⁸

The outstretched arm of the blessed Holy One delivers us. And we find ourselves wandering in the wilderness. In the wilderness, the place of

*the vast and dreadful desert, that thirsty and waterless Land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions.*⁷⁹

In the wilderness, we are given water, the Torah. We are led to the *Land* of milk and honey, the *Land* of our inheritance. What perfection! What completion! Then soon after we arrive in the *Land* of our inheritance, we express ourselves at the next higher level, and when we are not careful enough about the mindless repetition of our expression, we begin the cycle again, enslaved in another Egypt.

Egypt is not a *Land* where we must necessarily become slaves. Joseph, for example, did not enslave himself. Our actual situation in Egypt always

⁷⁸Rabbi Moshe Chayim Luzzatto, *Mesillat Yesharim: The Path of the Upright*, trans. Mordecai Kaplan (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1966), p. 50.

⁷⁹*Deuteronomy* 8:15.

is that we have completed a level of transcending and in Egypt there are hidden sparks of Godliness waiting for us to reveal them by our expression, an expression that can no longer be merely a repetition. The revelation of the hidden sparks of Godliness by our expression is our transcendence.

We shall rejoice.

*And now behold, I have brought the first fruits of the Land, which You, O Lord, have given me. And thou shall set it before the Lord your God, and worship before the Lord your God. And you shall rejoice in every good thing which the Lord thy God has given thee, and your house, you, and the Levite, and the stranger that is among you.*⁸⁰

And we shall be blessed.

*The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy barns, and in all that you settest your hand unto; and He shall bless thee in the Land which the Lord your God gives thee.*⁸¹

*The Lord shall open to thee his store house of the good, the heavens, to send rain on your Land in its season and to bless all the work of thy hand.*⁸²

And we should never forget that we have the choice to do or not do. We have the choice and we know the choice that God wants us to choose.

*See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; in that I command thee this day to love the Lord your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments: then you shall live and multiply. And the Lord your God shall bless thee in the Land into which you goest to possess it.*⁸³

*To love the Lord your God and to obey His voice that you mayst cleave to him: for He is your life and the length of your days, that you mayst dwell in the Land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.*⁸⁴

⁸⁰ *Deuteronomy 26:10-11.*

⁸¹ *Deuteronomy 28:8.*

⁸² *Deuteronomy 28:12.*

⁸³ *Deuteronomy 30:15-16.*

⁸⁴ *Deuteronomy 30:20.*

*Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to His voice, and cleave to Him. For the Lord is your life and He will give you many years in the Land He swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.*⁸⁵

And by doing we will emerge. But the emergence may take time.

And he gave Joshua, the son of Nun, a charge, and said:

*Be strong and of good courage, for you shall bring the children of Israel into the Land of which I swore to them. And I will be with thee.*⁸⁶

That which is in emergence does not immediately accomplish what is to be accomplished, for what is to be accomplished takes place later in time. It is the son of Nun, Joshua, the offspring of Nun, who goes into the *Land* and causes us to inherit it. The father, Nun, emergence, does not go into the promised *Land*. Therefore, when we are engaging in emergence we are charged to be strong and of good courage for it will take time for our emergence to produce something seeable. And in emerging we shall be full of the spirit of wisdom.

By our unification with and connection to Godliness, our state of being and consciousness is brought to a good and spacious *Land*, a *Land* flowing with milk and honey, a *Land* with streams and pools of water, a *Land* with springs flowing in the valleys and hills, a *Land* where bread is not scarce, and a *Land* where we lack nothing. By our unification with and connection to Godliness,

*All nations shall call you blessed: for you shall be a Land of delight.*⁸⁷

Hence, good *Land* is a state of consciousness and being in which we have the highest level of delight. We understand and feel that we have everything and that everything has been brought to us by God.

Holy meaning means that we acknowledge, recognize, and bless the connection that the everyday situation has to the Divine. We fully receive our

⁸⁵ *Deuteronomy* 31:19-20.

⁸⁶ *Deuteronomy* 31:23.

⁸⁷ *Malachi* 3:12.

everyday situations. If there were no death, then the urgency to establish this connection with the time we are given would not be there. Our endowment of the everyday with holiness is what transcends the limitation of time, the limitation of death, for the transcending makes each moment eternal. Our transcending is the eternal possession of our soul.

When we do not make each of our everyday situations sacred, then we are in the wilderness, the desert. In the desert, we find that there is no water and what bread there may be we grow tired of and find deficient. The Israelites asking Moses why were they brought up to the desert did not have the understanding that the wandering in the desert is the interface between the slavery in Egypt, in limitation, and the freedom in the *Land* of milk and honey. And this interface is not deficient. The wilderness too has the abundance of all things. For the wilderness, paradoxically, is an opening. If we did not experience the deficiency of the wilderness, we would not have the urge to go on and to change ourselves, thereby transcending ourselves. We would just be content to stay where we are. And this means we die spiritually. Therefore, even in what appears to be the wilderness, we serve God joyfully and with gladness of heart. But if we do not recognize the connection our wilderness has with the Divine, who gives to us all our openings, then we will interpret the wilderness as our enemy. And we will be in hunger and thirst and we will have great deficiency: our lives will be in poverty.

God tells the Israelites who are in the desert,

*Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee to the place which I have prepared.*⁸⁸

Exactly the situation of the Israelites is our own situation when we are in the desert. God tells us that He sends us an angel to guard us on the way and to bring us to the place that He has prepared for us. This is the reason why when we are in the desert and there is the danger of the snakes and scorpions, we are not afraid.

Here we discover where learning, teaching and living with righteousness lead. They lead to the place God prepares for us. This is a holy place, a place filled with cosmic purpose. It is a place that nurtures our soul. It is a place we love to be, a place of fulfillment. We are led to this place by learning in accordance with our angel, that silent inner voice, our Godly soul, by which we become aware and learn of the way. When we listen to it, this inner voice

⁸⁸ *Exodus* 23:20.

keeps us in God's way, on the path of Godliness. And when we follow this path, which means living righteously, we are led to the place that God has prepared for us. This place is the purpose of creation.

If we do not dwell in the *Land*, meaning the *Land* of Israel, we will dwell in another land, a land into which God will cast us. Our state in this land is described by the Torah also.

*They will eat their food in anxiety and drink their water in despair, for their Land will be stripped of everything in it because of the violence of all who live there.*⁸⁹

*Therefore the anger of the Lord was kindled against this Land, to bring upon it all the curse that is written in this book.*⁹⁰

*And the Lord rooted them out of their Land in anger and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another Land, as at this day.*⁹¹

The large ל of the word וַיִּשְׁלַכְם, here translated as *casts them*, makes this verse require another interpretation. We may parse the word וַיִּשְׁלַכְם as וַיִּשׁ לְכֶם, existence for you. Thereby we may read: existence for you is in another *Land*. *Land* refers to our consciousness. So in the full context of these two verses we understand that when existence is for us in another state of consciousness, separated from God, then as it is written in this book, God puts a curse on our *Land*. And for what purpose is the curse put? In order for us to experience the consequence of this choice of state of consciousness. Because experiencing its consequences will create for us the opportunity to learn; and by learning we change, thereby activating the process of repentance.

This is the reason why the Zohar teaches:

When the sons of men are righteous and observe the commands of the Torah, the earth becomes invigorated, and a fullness of joy pervades it, because then the Shekinah rests upon the earth, and there is thus gladness above as well as below. But when mankind corrupt their way and do not observe the commands of the Torah,

⁸⁹Ezekiel 12:19.

⁹⁰Deuteronomy 29:26.

⁹¹Deuteronomy 29:27.

and sin before their Master, they, as it were thrust the Shekinah out of the world, and the earth is thus left in a corrupt state. For the Shekinah being thrust out, another spirit comes and hovers over the world, bringing with it corruption.⁹²

The Zohar also teaches that mankind constitute the essence of the land.

R. Isaac studied regularly with R. Simeon. One day he asked him:

With reference to the passage

And the earth was corrupt

if men sinned, why should the earth be called corrupt?

R. Simeon replied

We find a parallel in the passage,

*And the land was defiled, therefore I did visit the iniquity thereof upon it.*⁹³

where the same problem arises. The explanation is that mankind constitute the essence of the earth, so that they infect the earth with their own corruption.⁹⁴

*And in Seir dwelt the Horites aforetime, but the children of Esau dispossessed them; and they destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their stead; as Israel did unto the Land of his possession, which the Lord gave unto them.*⁹⁵

Now the *Land* of Seir is the dominion of Esau.⁹⁶ And the power and strength of Esau is Samael.⁹⁷ And in the *Land* of Seir means in a consciousness brought on by the desires and values of a person like Esau. And these desires and values are described by Isaac's blessing to Esau:

⁹²*The Zohar*, vol. 1, (I,61a), trans. Harry Sperling and Maurice Simon (London: Soncino Press, 1978), p. 198.

⁹³Leviticus 18:25.

⁹⁴*The Zohar*, vol. 1, (I,62a), trans. Harry Sperling and Maurice Simon (London: Soncino Press, 1978), p. 201.

⁹⁵*Deuteronomy* 2:12.

⁹⁶*The Zohar*, vol. 2, trans. Harry Sperling and Maurice Simon (London: Soncino Press, 1978), p. 64.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 65.

*Behold, your dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven above: and by thy sword shalt you live, and you shalt serve thy brother.*⁹⁸

*Isaac thus blessed him with worldly goods; he surveyed his grade and said, “And by your sword shall you live,” as much as to say: “This is just what suits you, to shed blood and to make war.”*⁹⁹

The Zohar further interprets the meaning of “thy dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven above.” This wording is the opposite order from the corresponding part of the blessing given Jacob, where the dew of the heaven comes first and the fatness of the earth comes second.

The difference between the two goes very deep. For the “dew of heaven” promised to Jacob is the supernal dew that flows from the Ancient of Days, and is therefore called “dew of heaven,” namely, of the upper heaven, dew that flows through the grade of heaven, to fall on the “field of consecrated apples.” Also, the earth mentioned in Jacob’s blessing alludes to the supernal “earth of the living.” Jacob thus inherited the fruit of the supernal earth and the supernal heaven. Esau, on the other hand, was given his blessings on earth here below and in heaven here below. Jacob obtained a portion in the highest realm, but Esau only in the lowest. Further, Jacob was given a portion both above and below, but Esau only here below.¹⁰⁰

Thus we learn that by having the values of Esau, our state of consciousness shall be in the *Land* of Seir. We shall shed blood and make war. And our inheritance shall be only the earth below and the heaven below.

Relative to consciousness, what does it mean to shed blood and make war? To shed blood is to make a negative judgment about someone in our circle. To make war is to push the other person away. We push the other person away with impatience and anger. Why does this lead to an inheritance of only the earth below and the heaven below? Because the moment we make a negative judgment of another, we cease to see the other person as a messenger

⁹⁸ *Genesis* 27:39-40.

⁹⁹ *The Zohar*, vol. 2, p. 67.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 61

of God. Our consciousness is that what the other person says and does is from him/her and not from God. Thus we lose God consciousness. Then our world is only the earth below and the heaven below.

In conclusion, we have learned that *Land* in Torah is a metaphor for spiritual state of consciousness and being. Just as we must work the land by turning it over, fertilizing, planting, weeding, watering, and harvesting, so must we do so with our consciousness, constantly improving and transforming the way we interpret our world and the judgments we make with respect to that interpretation. In this way we grow ever closer to God in thought, speech, and action.

*Observe and seek out all the commandments of the Lord your God; that you may possess this good Land, and leave it for an inheritance for your children after you forever.*¹⁰¹

*The righteous shall inherit the Land, and abide forever in it. The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom, and his tongue speaks what is right. The teaching of God is in his heart; his feet do not slip.*¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ *1 Chronicles 28:8.*

¹⁰² *Psalms 37:29-31.*