

## citing sources is punk as hell - rabbi joshua ben levi

(front page) "a song of ascents from the depths" is the opening of tehillim 130. (1) a sugye from bereishis rabbah 21. (4) quote from p34 of "when things fall apart". (6) "give the infinite to the endless" is an interpretation of an idea from mishnah pesachim that i learned from r xava decordova. (7) poem inspired by tehillim 1. (8) quote is from likutei moharan 6. the ideas about malakhim and sheydim are from chagigah 16. (9) the second stanza is based on a quote from hoshea 2 that is said while laying tefillin. (10) the opening is an interpretive translation of bereishis 32 based on the sfas emes. the idea about the angel, in defeat, being able to sing is from chullin 91. (11) text based on ideas in tehillim 30. (12) sugye from berakchos 32. (13) sugye from devarim rabbah 32. (back page) quote from pirkei avos 6.

all translation mistakes and heresies are mine, but using as references:

Talmud/Mishnah: Steinsaltz

Midrash: Sefaria's new translation

Torah: Everett Fox

Nakh: JPS and Koren

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## a song of ascents from the depths

or

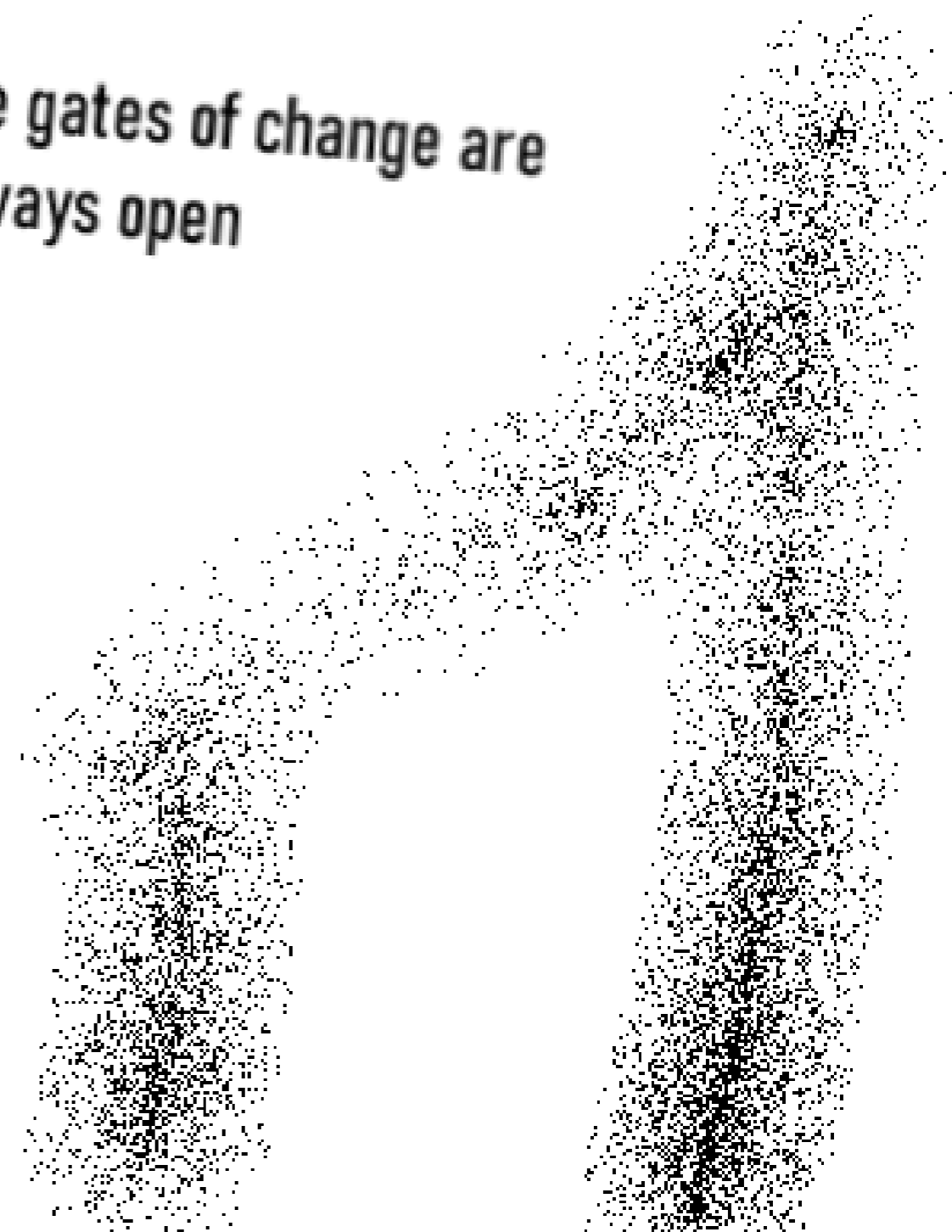
## is it possible to change?

for noach mibeis malkah v'james  
the patients of unit 2G  
binya kóatz  
r xava decordova  
r ariana katz  
the staff of unit 2G

every return is a change and  
every change is a return

the gates of prayer are  
sometimes open  
sometimes locked

the gates of change are  
always open



rabbi elazar said:

even though the gates of prayer were  
locked, the gates of tears were not  
locked

*hear my prayer  
listen to my cries  
do not be silent to my tears*

~~shabbatain~~ elohim said:

here, the human has become one of us,  
to know good and evil.

and now: what if they stretch their  
hand and take also from the tree of life  
and eat forever?

rabbi abba bar kahana said:

this teaches that the holy one of  
blessings opened for the human an  
opening of change called "and now".

for there is no "and now" except change.

the angel came to me  
when i was a teenager

it spoke to me, saying:

*what if?*

count me with those who  
descend to the pit

as dust i will praise the  
Name

will turn the pit of sheol  
into a overflowing well

yaakov remained alone  
struggling with the angel of fear  
until the dust of their conflict  
rose with with dawn

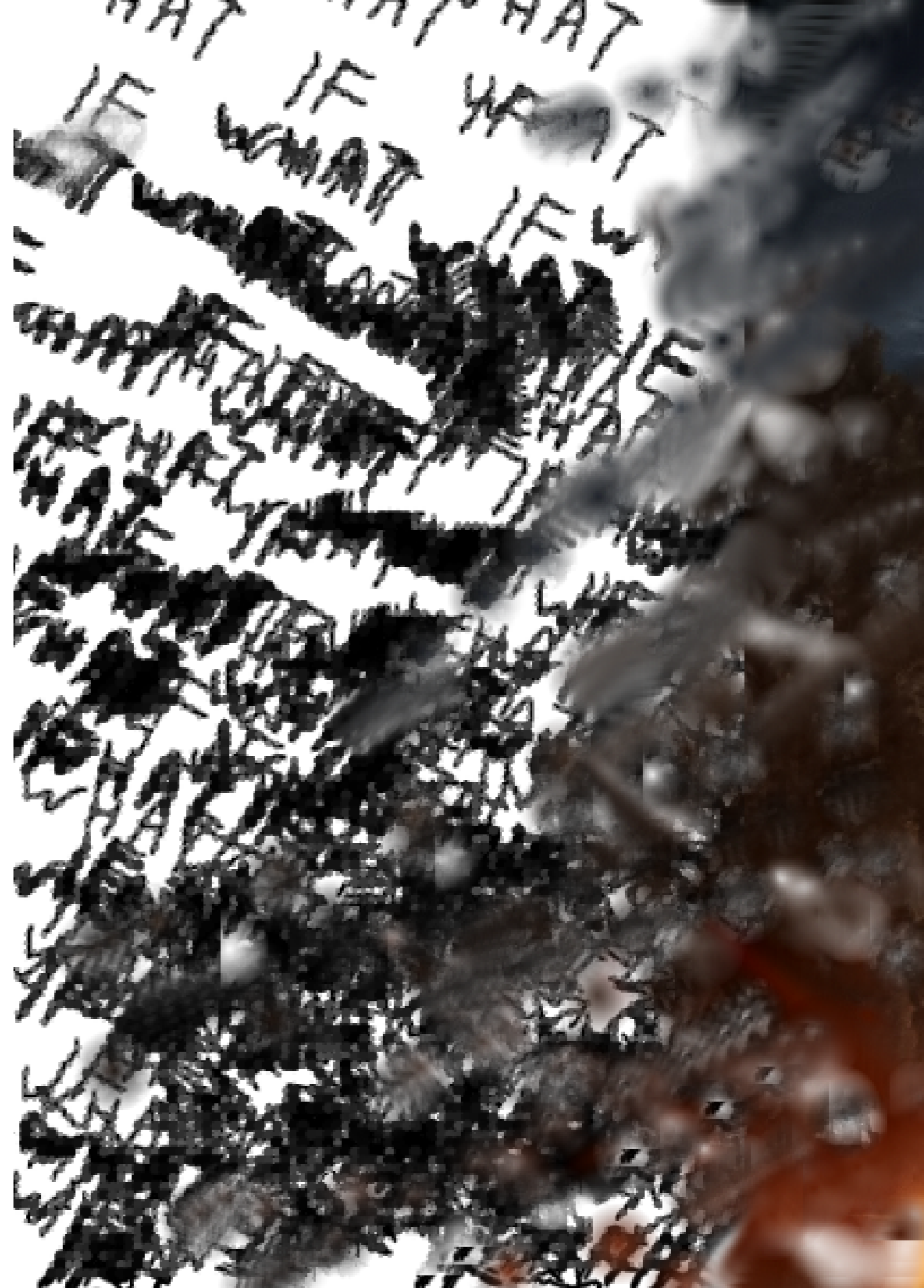
the angel  
knows only one purpose:  
to fight until i set it free      to sing  
its song to the name

the angel fire burns  
but i am the dust of the pit  
and the water of the well

i will move and  
be moved

(i will struggle  
and i will rest)

here



fear says: - pema chödrön  
my weapons are that i talk fast, and i get  
very close to your face...and you do whatever  
i say. if you don't do what i tell you, i have no  
power. you can listen to me, and you can  
have respect for me. you can even be  
convinced by me. but if you don't do what i  
say, i have no power.

as i grew older, my world grew smaller, and the  
voice grew stronger. obeying it brought relief,  
but never peace. and it was never enough.

the voice lives in the past and the future. when i  
do what it tells me to, i bring it into the present.  
into the one time it does not already control. into  
the one time i am alive and capable of change.

i can hear the voice. i can even believe the voice.

but i cannot do what it says.

bliss is being breath  
bliss is this bodymind<sup>h</sup>  
full of the torah of

i am becoming what i am becoming<sup>h</sup>



rebbe nachman says

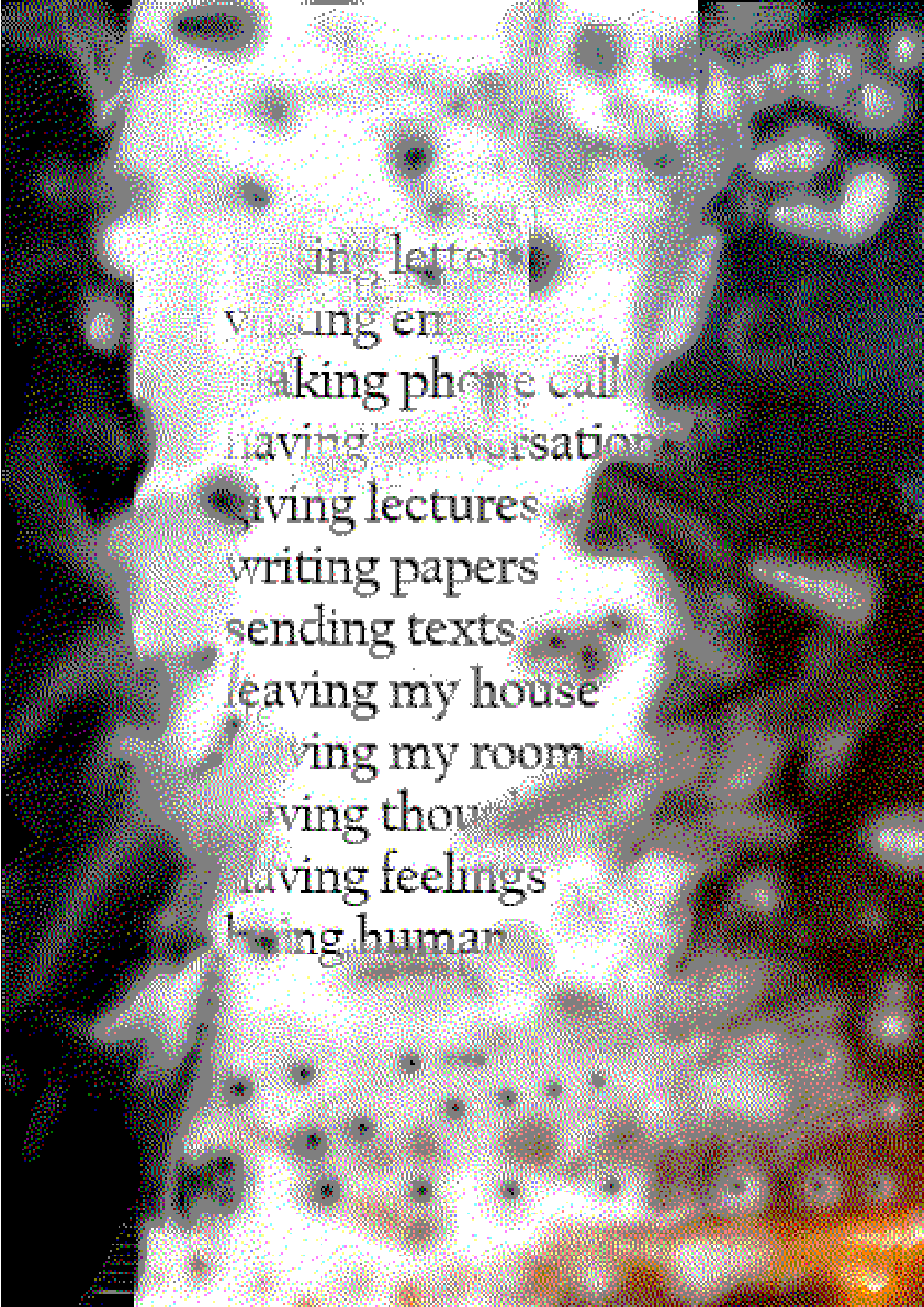
"i am prepared to be" corresponds to  
change. before changing, a person  
does not have being. it is as if she does  
not yet exist in the world.

i am no sheyd to know the future  
no changeless malakh out of time

i am prepared to be

i am change

i exist in this world



writing letters  
writing emails  
making phone calls  
having conversations  
giving lectures  
writing papers  
sending texts  
leaving my house  
leaving my room  
leaving thoughts  
leaving feelings  
being human

the air is heavier  
in the sunrise terrace

breathing in an orange  
as it thaws

hands in the dirt garden

chalk drawings in the  
caulk between  
bricks · saying

give the infinite to the endless

saying

i was here, too

*the tallis wasn't mine  
tefillin at home in  
their boxes, straps  
wrapped strange*

*i bound myself to the world  
in justice in  
love in compassion in  
what if*

*what if i do  
what if*

*i*

*i do not know this place  
i will*

