

ESSENCE

TO

ESSENCE

**Life through the Lens of Chassidic and
Kabbalistic Wisdom**

Zev Zelenko, M.D.

Levi Yitzchok Zelenko

Edited by Ephraim Zelenko

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This book includes holy words, including the Hebrew name of Hashem (G-d) and verses from the Torah. Therefore, care must be taken to handle and/or dispose of this book with the proper honor due to Hashem and His words. For guidance on this matter, please consult a rabbinic authority.

Table of Contents

Endorsements

Dedication

Acknowledgments

Foreword

Aleph

Blunt His Teeth

Cainism

Dominance Hierarchy

Everything

Free Will

G-d's Will

Holy of Holies

Intermediates

Jurisprudence

Knowledge

Life and Death

Mothers

Nullification

One Stone

Purim

Quintessence

Repentance

Sacrifice

Truth

Unknown

Virtue

Wisdom, Understanding, and Knowledge

X

Yitzchok

Z End Is in Z Beginning

Appendixes

Suggested Reading in English

About the Author

Endorsements

Arnie Gotfryd, Ph.D.

Rabbi Heschel Greenberg

Rabbi Chaim Dovid Kagan, Ph.D.

Rabbi Chaim Miller

Rabbi Daniel Schonbuch, LMFT

Ed Yisroel Susskind, Ph.D.

Arnie Gotfryd, Ph.D.

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B”H

For the intellectually minded Jew, for whom the interplay of divine wisdom and worldly wisdom are an endlessly fascinating dynamic, Zev Zelenko’s *Essence to Essence* is a uniquely insightful, inspirational and authoritative guidebook into the sublime pathways that reveal the ultimate unity of both.

It isn’t every day or even every decade that an author publishes a single concise treatise that integrates encyclopedic breadth of knowledge in both spheres and lays the ideas out so clearly, cogently and pleasantly that even those without formal education in either science or mysticism can get such an authentic and enlightening education in both.

For the serious student of Torah and Science, *Essence to Essence* represents a breath of fresh air, creatively presented, easy to read, yet the real deal. It is an invaluable contribution, being neither arcane and pedantic nor simplistic and glittery. Thank you, Dr. Z!

Dr. Arnie Gotfryd

Make the world a beautiful place with acts of goodness and kindness.

Arnie Gotfryd, Ph.D.—Dr. Gotfryd is an environmental scientist, having earned Canada’s first doctorate in applied ecology. He taught an accredited, award-winning undergraduate course, “Faith and Science,” which has been the most popular offering at the University of Toronto’s New College for many years. Dr. Gotfryd has lectured in 40 cities around the world on matters of faith and science and has published several volumes on the subject, including *Mind over Matter: The Lubavitcher Rebbe on Science, Technology and Medicine*.

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ב"ה

Z

Dr. Zelenko's most recent book, *Essence to Essence*, is a deep and interesting presentation of some of the deepest teachings of Kabbalah and Chassidus. It is a significant contribution to the dissemination of *pnimiyus haTorah* that paves the way and prepares us for the Final Redemption.

This book, in which Dr. Zelenko reveals his intellectual grasp of Kabbalah and Chassidus will serve as a companion to his first book, *Metamorphosis*, in which he bares his heart and soul.

What is most striking to me about this work is Dr. Zelenko's passion for translating lofty, mystical and Chassidic concepts into his own life.

As I wrote in my letter of endorsement to his first book, I have known Dr. Zev Zelenko for several decades, and the ultimate praise I can write about him is his *pnimiyus*. *Pnimiyus* is the ability to be authentic, consistent and deep.

One of the hallmarks of one who is endowed with *pnimiyus* is his ability to take abstract concepts and allow them to affect his emotions, which then lead to action.

Dr. Zelenko's work is precisely that. He demonstrates how the most sublime ideas can inform, inspire and elevate all other aspects of our being.

We are now standing on the threshold of the Final Redemption, when there will be a complete alignment between the physical and spiritual, internal and external. The superficiality and falseness of *Galus*—exile—will be replaced with the truth of G-d permeating every fiber of existence.

Internalizing the transcendent message of this book will go a long way in preparing us for the time when the deepest secrets of *pnimiyus haTorah* will be revealed by our righteous Moshiach.

Wishing you a *refuah shleima u'krova*, amongst all of Israel; *arichas yomim v'shonim tovos*, and a *Purim Sameach!*

Heschel Greenberg

Rabbi Heschel Greenberg—Rabbi Greenberg is the founder and director of the Jewish Discovery Center in Buffalo, New York. He has been lecturing on all facets of Judaism for over forty years. Rabbi Greenberg is an internationally renowned Judaic scholar, the author of several books and hundreds of scholarly, popular articles.



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בס"ד

ערב ש"ק פרשת ויקהל כ"ד אדר ראשון תשע"ט

My dear friend, Dr. Zev Zelenko שי', has produced a book of intellectual depth on the application of פנימיות התורה—the inner mystical dimension of Torah—to our everyday existence. *Essence to Essence* explains many deep concepts in Kabbalah and Chassidus and shows how they inform us on some of the basic questions of life today. Physics, biology, politics and psychology are all touched upon here and examined in the light of Torah.

It is not an easy read. The one who studies this book will find that the ideas expressed in it require time and thought to be assimilated and understood. It will stimulate agreement or disagreement, support or counterargument, but the reader will certainly be moved from a static position.

Dr. Zelenko's earlier book took us on his emotional journey through his life of searching and growing. This book takes the reader on an intellectual and scholarly path laid out by the author.

I urge all those who are interested in how Torah and Chassidus relate to our modern world to read *Essence to Essence*. As we await the Messianic era, Dr. Zelenko has given us a foretaste of the revelation of the depth of Torah and the essence of our existence we will enjoy then.

Thank you so much, Zev, for sharing your thoughts with us all.

Rabbi Chaim Dovid Kagan, Ph.D., ARCS, DIC

Rabbi Dr. Chaim Dovid Kagan, Ph.D.—Rabbi Dr. Kagan was born in London, England and educated at prestigious *yeshivos* in the U.K. and in Israel. He received his *semichah* (rabbinical ordination) from Rabbi Simcha Shlomo Levin, z”l, and from the Israeli Chief Rabbinate. Rabbi Kagan also received a thorough scientific training, earning a B.Sci. and M.Sci. from the Imperial College of Science, London, U.K., and a Ph.D. from Bar-Ilan University, Israel. He is an associate of the Royal College of Science, U.K., and a diplomat of the Imperial College of Science, U.K. Dr. Kagan served as the Myron Bantrell Fellow in applied physics at the California Institute of Technology, investigating the areas of nonlinear optics, quantum optics, optical computing, and optical implementations of neural networks. Dr. Kagan has also collaborated on a project involving the use of artificial intelligence to design automobile transmissions. Dr. Kagan has published many scientific papers and given many conference presentations on his scientific work. He has also published and edited various novellae on Talmudic law and jurisprudence. Rabbi Dr. Kagan is a noted lecturer on the Torah and science interface. At present, Rabbi Dr. Kagan is the Dean of the Monsey Beis Chaya Mushka Girls High School, and the Rabbi of Congregation Bais Menachem, Wesley Hills, New York. Rabbi Kagan resides with his wife Miriam in Wesley Hills.

Rabbi Chaim Miller

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B”H

17th Teves, 5779

Dr. Zev Zelenko kindly sent me a review copy of his forthcoming work, which is entitled *Essence to Essence*.

While I do not know Dr. Zelenko personally, I can see from this work that he has tried very hard to find G-d, and along his journey he has succeeded in absorbing an impressive degree of Torah wisdom, especially from the schools of Kabbalah and Chassidus.

Anybody who is on a similar journey can benefit from the hard work that Dr. Zelenko has put into this book. He reads and conveys our sacred texts authentically, through the eyes of a person who was schooled in western thought. While anyone can benefit from it, the book is ideally suited to a “seeker” who has had little exposure to Jewish wisdom and wishes to access a large amount of core information in a short period of time. The book also takes time to present Kabbalah and Chassidus as a worldview, discussing its philosophical, psychological and political implications.

I congratulate Dr. Zelenko on his achievement and wish him success.

Rabbi Chaim Miller

Rabbi Chaim Miller was educated at Haberdashers' Aske's School in London, England and studied medical science at Leeds University. He published the best-selling *Kol Menachem Chumash* (Gutnick Edition), which makes over a thousand complex discourses of the late Lubavitcher Rebbe easily accessible to the layman. His 2011 compilation, *Torah, Five Books of Moses* (Slager Edition, Lifestyle Books), was distributed to thousands of servicemen and women in the U.S. Army. In 2013, he was chosen by *The Jewish Press* as one of sixty “Movers and Shakers” in the Jewish world. His latest works include *Turning Judaism Outward*, the first full biography of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, and the multivolume *Practical Tanya*, which has set new standards in the translation of Chasidic thought for contemporary readers.

Rabbi Daniel Schonbuch, LMFT

2/26/19

B”H

“Essence to Essence” is a remarkable guide to uncovering the esoteric principles of Kabbalistic and Hasidic thought. Dr. Zev Zelenko combines his vast knowledge of metaphysical and spiritual concepts with extensive acumen in the worlds of science and medicine. Every chapter conveys remarkable intellectual depth and philosophical clarity, making highly complex ideas understandable even for the average reader. “Essence to Essence” is an invaluable contribution to Jewish scholarship and timeless wisdom.

Rabbi Daniel Schonbuch, LMFT;
Author, *Think Good and It Will Be Good*

Rabbi Daniel Schonbuch, MA, LMFT—Rabbi Schonbuch is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist who specializes in treating anxiety disorders and OCD. He is the author of four books on family psychology: *At Risk—Never Beyond Reach*, for parenting teens at risk; *First Aid for Jewish Marriages*, *Getting Closer*, and *It Will Be Good*.

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Ed Yisroel Susskind, Ph.D.

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Dr. Zelenko has written a wonderful text that clarifies the basic concepts of Kabbalah. His writing is clear, entertaining, and erudite.

I have been a clinical psychologist (therapist, professor, writer) for nearly 50 years. Approximately 35 years ago, I began my journey to attempt to become a *chosid*. As I studied, there were many basic Kabbalistic terms that were beyond me; and so, I went for the “gist”, for the main Chassidic point, while skipping over the Kabbalistic details. On the one hand, I developed a basic understanding of the ideas like the *sefiros* (such as *chesed* vs. *gevurah*); but on Friday night, I would chant the prayers with no clue as to what *ze’ir anpin* meant. What was *atik*, or *partzufim*, etc.?

Dr. Zelenko’s lucid explanation has helped me move a bit deeper. I am not yet a “first degree black belt,” but maybe I am moving from yellow to green. I will need to reread his book many times.

Dr. Zelenko shares many of his own insights and his personal life anecdotes. His extensive footnoting and detailed glossary offer the reader the opportunity to go yet deeper. Further, the very structure of the book is intriguing; the framework is more curvilinear than linear.

I hope you will enjoy the gift that he offers us.

Ed Yisroel Susskind, Ph.D.

Dr. Yisroel Susskind, Ph.D.—Dr. Susskind received his Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology at Yale in 1969. During the following sixteen years he was a full-time faculty member in the graduate training programs of three universities, including three years at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He is a past president of the Maryland Psychological Association. His resume includes one book, fourteen scientific publications, numerous articles and presentations for professional societies and the public, and radio/television appearances. Dr. Susskind has long been interested in the relationship between Torah, Jewish culture and psychology. One of these interests involves the complementary relationship between Jewish philosophy and principles of psychotherapy. A second interest is the relationship between traditional Judaism’s view of marriage and the modern practice of marital and family therapy.

Dedication

“Let my soul be as dust to all,” (*Berachos* 17a; included in the weekday *Amidah*). This profound statement is layered with wisdom and meaning. This physical world is filled with a myriad of corrupting, parasitic influences from within and without. The only way to thrive and prosper in such an environment is to be perpetually bound with one’s source and purpose. When the soul is connected to its root, it is shielded from subjugation to finite creations, such as space-time.

Space-time is created for the purpose of providing a matrix for man to serve his Creator. Most of humanity has become enslaved to the limitations of the world instead of being their master.

The only way to free oneself from the grasp of corrupting finitude is by developing a suprarational faith in the hidden essence of G-d and in the divine essence of one’s soul. By connecting your essence with G-d’s essence, your soul becomes ungraspable (“like dust to all”) and attains true freedom. It is my hope that this book will arouse and reveal your quintessential bond with G-d.

I dedicate this book to my wife, Rinat, and to my children: Levi Yitzchok, Esther Tova, Eta Devorah, Nochum Dovid, Shmuel Nosson Yaakov, Menachem Mendel, Shira, Liba, and any future children (G-d willing). I also dedicate this book to my parents, Alex (Aaron) and Larisa (Leah); and to my brother and his wife, Ephraim and Chany. May they all live long, healthy, and deeply meaningful lives. Finally, I dedicate this book in memory of my mentor, Rabbi Fivel Weiss, A”H.

Zev Zelenko, M.D.

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my profound gratitude to G-d for His kindness and mercy that He constantly bestows upon me. This book represents my attempt to give praise and express gratitude to G-d for His gifts and the privilege of having self-awareness and free will. It is my hope that He finds this book pleasing and that it reflects the truth of His existence and purpose for creation.

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to my wife, Rinat, for her patience and sacrifice that enabled me to write this book.

I would like to thank my son, Levi Yitzchok, for co writing this book with me. It has been a wonderful bonding experience to work together with him.

I would like to express my appreciation to my brother, Ephraim, for the countless hours he spent reviewing and commenting on the content of this book. I found his insights very valuable.

I would also like to express my appreciation to the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, and to his emissaries—Rabbi Heschel Greenberg, *shliach* in Buffalo, N.Y.; Rabbi Schneur Zalman Gafne from Tzfat, Israel; Rabbi Yosef Wirtemberg and Rabbi Yaakov Goldberg, from Yeshivah Hadar HaTorah in Brooklyn, N.Y.—for their efforts in educating me in the depths of Chassidic wisdom. I would like to express my gratitude to Rabbi Berish Kaufman from Kiryas Joel, N.Y., for initiating me into the wisdom of Lurianic Kabbalah, which has helped me further understand the depth of Chassidic teachings.

Furthermore, I would like to express my gratitude to Rabbi Daniel Schonbuch, Rabbi Yaacov Bergstein, Rabbi Yeruchem Cohen, and Dr. Aryeh Gotfryd, Ph.D., for their encouragement and guidance in writing this book.

Foreword

BS"D

FROM THE DESK OF SCHNEUR ZALMAN GAFNE

It's well known the statement of the Talmud (*Megillah* 6b) that if someone says *yogati umatzosi*, I worked hard and I found what I was looking for, then *ta'amin*, you should believe him. The Talmud then continues to stress markedly this truth by stating two other negative possibilities (e.g: If someone says *lo yogati*, I didn't work hard, but *matzosi*, I found what I was looking for, don't believe him), which throws a rare emphasis on the rectitude of the original principle of *yogati umatzosi*.

Likewise, well known is the famous observation of the Lubavitcher Rebbe that the word "*matzosi*" doesn't translate as "I understood," "I learned" or "I grasped," but rather "I found." The implication is that the knowledge mastered is like a found article, not something proportional or linked with your abilities, but something you find unpreparedly. "*Yogati* " means deep, faithful toil, i.e. not just hard work, but something demanding labor that lies outside your usual abilities. Thus, HaShem rewards you with results that are likewise *shelo be-erech*, beyond expectations—*matzosi*.

Perhaps we could broaden the above concept to areas beyond pure learning per se (even though the latter also applies here as we'll mention). Zev's early childhood and youth in Russia were during the dawn of what was to be, decades later, a great Jewish spiritual awakening. Following the wilderness of the fear-stricken years of Stalinist dictatorship, accompanied by the ruin and bitterness left over

from Hitlerism and the Second World War, there began to appear young Jewish scholars and laymen alike who opened the pipeline for, what was later to be, a significant return (both in quantity and quality) to Jewish teaching and traditional values. Even though Zev's exposure to Jewish teaching, in a structured way, did not occur during his life in Russia, the seeds of yearning for Jewish ideas and values were sown in this troubled air.

Later, after setting up life in the "new world" of the United States, he began his journey of questioning and searching for Jewish life and Torah ways. Most of these are described vividly in his previous book, *Metamorphosis*.

My suggestion is that this spiritual journey and its outcome are a clear example of the above Talmudic precept: "*yogati umatzosi ta'amin*." Chassidus teaches us that *yogati* comes from a deep inner level of the soul's powers called *da'as ne-elam*. *Da'as*, in general, is the power to delve into the depths of concepts, leading to total emotional commitment to them. This, at least, begins with reasoning and understanding. *Da'as ne-elam* is much deeper; it is how the very essence of the soul is *mekushar*, bound up, to the divine, to *HaShem*. This can be compared to how a small child first calls its father "*tati*" or "*abba*" without even knowing why. The child feels a tremendous draw, love to the parent with its 'everything'. As a Jew grows and allows himself to listen to his inner voice (calling "*abba*"), he may become ready to exert a special effort to make changes in his life—to move to other places, accept other people, etc. The results of this effort are likewise not proportionate; he finds new life, new concepts, new abilities, like finding a gift—*matzosi*.

A further great step in Zev's life—his embracing of Torah-true Orthodox-Chassidic Judaism and his start on his journey of Torah study—bears out, once more, the above Talmudic principle. From the outset, he showed he was ready for effort and obstinate diligence in the form of *yogati*. Having a brilliant mind is a divine gift, knowing how to use it and "work" it non-stop, how to set goals and reach them with your

mind, is *yogati* in action. During the time he spent in our yeshiva, Ohr Tmimim in Kfar Chabad, he was *kol kulo* (with his whole being) in his studies day and night. He thus gained fundamentals in Talmudic and *halachic* learning together with concepts of Chabad Chassidus (*penimius haTorah*) which were the foundations of his becoming the leading scholar in Torah learning, both Talmudic and Kabbalistic, that he is today. *David HaMelech* tells us that "those who sow with tears (toil beyond the self) harvest (reap) with song (joy)" (*Tehillim* 126).

I had the privilege to urge Zev to continue his medical studies and become a doctor. His far-reaching success as a doctor and medical advisor stem from toil beyond the norm. Once again, the results are in the form of *matzosi* (an unbounded divine gift). However, the *yogati* in Torah study (and his ability to thus be a shining example to others) went on despite all the commitments of the medical *yogati*.

Recently, *HaShem* tried him with a test that demanded a super-human *yogati*—a serious illness that could have been fatal, G-d forbid. His response to this was more toil that saw him returning to his old schedules and writing this brilliant anthology of Torah essays.

This book is not relaxing, armchair reading. If the reader is prepared to share the author's *yogati*, he will likewise share in the *matzosi*—the finding of "*sholol rov*," ("great treasure") (*Tehillim* 119). And then, many doors will open, with *HaShem's* help.

Schneur Zalman Gafne

Rabbi Schneur Zalman Gafne—Rabbi Gafne was handpicked by the Lubavitcher Rebbe to establish and run Yeshivah Ohr Tmimim in Kfar Chabad, Israel. It was one of the very first centers of Jewish learning that was designed to educate English-speaking young adults interested in the ways of Torah and *mitzvos*. Rabbi Gafne led the yeshivah for over forty-five years, during which time he educated thousands of students, many of whom now hold prominent positions as rabbis and community leaders. Rav Gafne currently lives in Tzfat, Israel,

where he maintains a full schedule of teaching the next generation in the depths of Jewish wisdom.

Aleph

“The end is wedged in the beginning and the beginning is wedged in the end.”¹ This mystical teaching from *Sefer Yetzirah* refers to the multidimensional and nonlinear nature of space-time.² “The beginning” refers to the first movement of G-d’s will toward the existence of Jewish souls (the word used in *midrash* is “Yisroel”): The “Jewish souls arose in G-d’s thought.”³ “The end” refers to the full actualization of G-d’s will—the revelation of His essence in the lowest realms.⁴ The beginning, the end, and everything in between is multidimensional, interdependent, and hyperlinked upon everything else. Every point along space-time contains G-d’s fullest wisdom and will for the revelation of His essence to His beloved children, as it is stated, “Everything with Your wisdom, You have created.”⁵

¹ *Sefer Yetzirah* 1:7

² Albert Einstein, *On the Electrodynamics of Moving Bodies* (translation of “Zur Elektrodynamik bewegter Körper,” *Annalen Der Physik* 17:891, 1905).

³ *Bereishis Rabbah* 1:4

⁴ “The purpose of the creation of this world is that the Holy One, blessed be He, desired to have a dwelling place in the lower worlds.” Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, *Tanya, Likkutei Amarim*, ch.36. English translation from *Lessons in Tanya* (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Kehot Publication Society, 1993).

⁵ *Mishlei* 3:19

G-d's essence transcends all appellations. Any attempt to describe His essence is limiting and thus incongruous with the truth of His existence. The reality is that G-d's essence is undefinable and formless, and it transcends any attempt to define it. He is not limited by the inadequate descriptions of infinite, finite, spiritual, or material.

G-d's essence has no beginning or end.⁶ He always was, is, and will be.⁷ When referring to a beginning or end, we are referring to the arousal of G-d's will and not His essence.⁸ G-d's will is the emanating force through which the divine plan is brought into revelation.

The purpose of creation is the revelation of G-d's hidden essence (*helem ha'atzmi*) within space-time of the physical world. The finite

⁶ See Maimonides (*Rambam*), *Mishneh Torah*, trans. Rabbi Eliyahu Touger (Brooklyn, NY: Moznaim Publishing Co., 1992): "The foundation of foundations and firmest pillar of all wisdom is to know that there is a first being, that He caused all beings to be, and that all beings from heaven and earth, and from between them, could not be if it were not for the truth of His own Being."

⁷ This is alluded to in the name *Havayah (De'Liayla)*—the *tetragrammaton*—which refers to G-d's transcendence over the limitations of creation. Time emanates from Him and He is found in the past, present, and future equally. He was, He is, and He will be.

⁸ G-d's infinite light is referred to as *ohr ein sof* (light without end). This implies that the infinite light has a beginning. The beginning of the *ohr ein sof* is the arousal of G-d's will to emanate. In contrast, the essence of G-d has no beginning or end. Thus, referring to G-d as having no beginning is more precise because that correctly implies that He has no end.

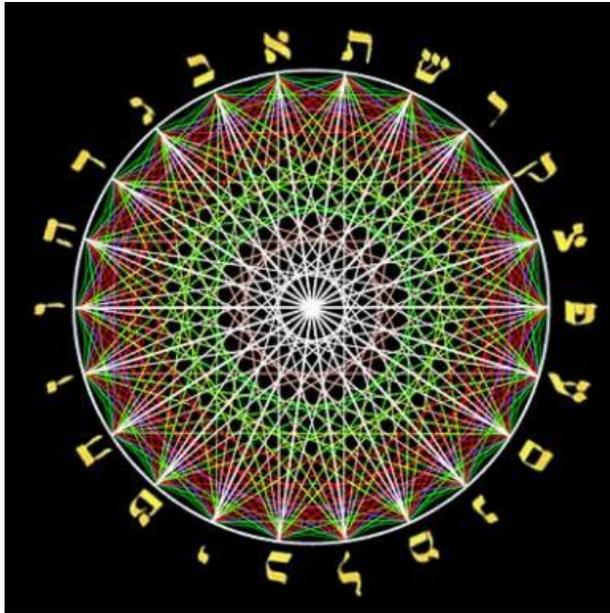
world will become a conduit for the revelation of His infinite light without the nullification of the finite dimension.⁹ This represents the revelation of G-d's essence because only His essence can unify opposites. Since G-d's essence transcends everything, and everything is emanated from Him, it is within His ability to harmonize complete opposites.

Some examples of the revelation of G-d's essence through the fusion of opposites include infinity and finitude, heaven and earth, miracles and nature, soul and body, spiritual and material, and husband and wife.

G-d brings into being creation through the medium of anthropomorphic speech. The Bible describes creation via ten divine utterances.¹⁰ Divine speech is formed through various combinations of the twenty-two Hebrew letters.

⁹ This represents the revelation of G-d's hidden essence (*helem ha'atzmi*), which has the potential to fortify the finite to be a vessel for the revelation of the infinite without itself being nullified. G-d's hidden essence transcends everything and has the capacity to fuse opposites in a harmonized manner.

¹⁰ *Pirkei Avos* 5:1: "With ten utterances the world was created. And what is learned—couldn't it have been created by one utterance? Rather, it was done this way in order to punish the wicked, who destroy the world that was created with ten utterances, and to give reward to the righteous, who sustain the world that was created with ten utterances."



22 Hebrew letters forming 231 gates (connecting lines)¹¹

¹¹ *Sefer Yetzirah* speaks of 231 gates through which the world is created. The 231 lines connecting the 22 letters are called the 231 gates. This simply means that the gateway of creation is through the combination of letters, which represent divine powers. According to the early Kabbalists, the 231 gates are hinted at in the name "Israel." In Hebrew, Israel is spelled *YiSRAeL*. These letters can also spell out *YeShRLA*, which literally means "there are 231," for the combined numerical value of the three letters *reish*, *lamed*, and *aleph* equals 231. The *Midrash* states that at the beginning of creation, "Israel rose in thought." The name Israel thus alludes to the fact that creation took place through these 231 gates. (Based on Rabbi Nissan Dovid Dubov's essay, "Deeper Reality,"//www.chabad.org).

His speech is ongoing and represents His will for continued existence. As it is stated, “Forever, G-d, Your word stands firm in the heavens.”¹² If He were to stop uttering the ten divine utterances, existence would revert to nonexistence.¹³

The first letter of the Hebrew alphabet is *aleph* (א). This first letter represents the revelation of G-d’s essence, which will be perceived and experienced by all creation at the end of G-d’s plan. The *aleph* represents the fusion of diametric opposites in perfect harmony. The *aleph* represents two opposing divine energies, *memale kol almin*¹⁴ and *sovev kol almin*.¹⁵ *Memale kol almin* is G-d’s finite, indwelling, and permeating energy that vivifies all the worlds from within. *Sovev kol*

¹² *Tehillim* 119:89

¹³ *Lessons in Tanya, Sha’ar HaYichud VeHaEmunah*, ch.1: “For if the creative letters were to depart even for an instant, G-d forbid, and return to their source, that source being the degree of G-dliness from whence they emanate, all the heavens would become naught and absolute nothingness, and it would be as though they had never existed at all.”

¹⁴ *Lessons in Tanya, Igeres Hakodesh*, Epistle 3: “These garments are drawn forth from the [infinite] light of the blessed *Ein Sof*; deriving from a source which is infinite, they enable the soul to cope with the infinite degree of revelation which it will encounter in *Gan Eden* from the level of *sovev kol almin*.”

¹⁵ *Ibid*: “The mode of life-giving divine illumination called *memale kol almin* (lit., “filling all worlds”), becomes integrated and manifest within the creatures it animates.”

almin is G-d's infinite energy that forms the matrix for all existence. It is usually hidden and unable to be revealed in the worlds. Perhaps what is referred to in cosmology as dark energy¹⁶ may be a derivative of *sovev kol almin*.

The *aleph* represents *memale kol almin* in the following way: the word "*echad*," which means "*one*," is spelled in Hebrew: *aleph-ches-dalet*. The *Shulchan Aruch* explains¹⁷ that the *aleph*, which has the numerical

¹⁶ In cosmology and astronomy, dark energy is an unknown form of energy that is hypothesized to permeate all of space and accelerate the expansion of the universe. Dark energy is the most accepted hypothesis to explain the observations since the 1990s indicating that the universe is expanding at an accelerating rate.

¹⁷ *Shulchan Aruch HaRav, "Hilchos Shema,"* 61:6. English translation by Rabbi Eliyahu Touger and Uri Kaploun (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Kehot Publication Society, 2012):

Whoever prolongs his enunciation of the *dalet* in the word *echad* will have his days and years prolonged. Likewise, one should not cut the *ches* short, but also prolong it somewhat, in order that one should have the time to mentally affirm the sovereignty of the Holy One, blessed be He, over heaven and earth. For the *ches*, numerically equivalent to eight, alludes to the seven heavens and the earth. This is hinted at by the "hump" in the center of the upper line of the *ches*, implying that He dwells in the sublime heights of the world. The annunciation of the *dalet*, however, should be prolonged more, in order that one should have the time to contemplate how the Holy One, blessed be He, is alone in His world and rules over all four directions of the world. There is no need to prolong one's enunciation more than this. Some people

equivalent of one, represents the one G-d. The *ches*, which has the numerical equivalent of eight, represents the seven heavens and the one earth. The *dalet*, which has the numerical equivalent of four, represents the four directions of the compass. According to Chassidic thought, the first letter of a word has dominion over the rest of the word.¹⁸ So, in the present context, the *aleph* rules over the *ches* and *dalet*. In other words, the one G-d, represented by the *aleph*, rules over the seven heavens and the earth, represented by the *ches*, and the four directions, represented by the *dalet*.

The implication from the above ideas is that even though spiritual and material creation is real, nevertheless G-d rules over and controls them according to His will. In other words, the finite system of worlds exists, and G-d rules over them through *hashgacha pratis* (divine providence). This is the definition of *memale kol almin*.

follow the custom of tilting their heads in a manner that mirrors their thoughts, i.e., up, down, and to each of the four directions.

¹⁸ The dominance of the first letter of a word over the subsequent letters in that word is illustrated by the principal of the unification of G-d's names, *Havayah* (הַיְהוָה) and *Adonai* (אֲדֹנָי). The higher supernal unity is symbolized by the inter-inclusion of *Adonai* into *Havayah* making *Havayah* the dominant name: הַיְהוָה, אֲדֹנָי (note how the letter *yud* of the name *Havayah* is written first). The lower unity is symbolized by the inter-inclusion of *Havayah* into *Adonai* making *Adonai* the dominant name: אֲדֹנָי, הַיְהוָה (note how the *aleph* of the name *Adonai* is written first).

The *aleph* also represents *sovev kol almin* in the following way: the written form of the *aleph* looks like this (‘/’), a *yud* on top, a *vav* in the middle, and a *yud* on the bottom. The numerical value of *yud* is ten, and *vav* is six. This makes the numerical value of the form of an *aleph* equal twenty-six. Twenty-six is of great significance because it is the numerical value of G-d’s ineffable name—the Tetragrammaton (*yud-hay-vav-hay*)—referred to as *Havayah*. *Havayah* represents G-d’s infinite, revelatory energy that exists outside of the space-time continuum (He was—past, He is—present, and He will be—future.)¹⁹ *Sovev kol almin* literally means *surrounds or encompasses all worlds*.

Sovev kol almin and *memale kol almin* are opposites that represent infinite and finite energies, respectively. Both concepts are alluded to in the letter *aleph*. Thus, we may conclude that the *aleph* is representative of G-d’s essence, which has the capacity to unify opposites. The *aleph* is the beginning of the Hebrew alphabet and the first letter of the first word that G-d spoke when He revealed Himself to the nation of Israel on Mount Sinai.²⁰ Contained within the *aleph* is the highest ultimate ideal of G-d’s plan, which is the revelation of His essence through all of creation.

¹⁹ *Sefer Yetzirah* 1:1, commentary Rabbi Eliezer of Garmezah.

²⁰ See *Shemos* 20:2: “אֲנִי (אֵלֹהִים) אֲנִי הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְּךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם, מֵעַבְדֻת מִצְרָיִם.”

When an *aleph* is introduced into a person's consciousness, he or she is exposed to the concepts of *memale kol almin*, *sovev kol almin*, and G-d's essence. These concepts are the essence of Judaism and life itself. Thus, the end is wedged in the beginning and the beginning is wedged in the end.



Blunt His Teeth

When an entity is connected to its source, it reflects the essence of the source and is impervious to corrupting influences.²¹ The root of a Jewish soul is derived from the essence of G-d²² (we are considered a chip off the old block) and it is thus resistant to impurity. The soul's root,

²¹ *Mishnah Uktzin, 3:8* (Translation from Sefaria.org):

Regarding a branch of a fig tree which was broken off but is still attached by its bark, Rabbi Yehudah considers it to be pure; but the Sages say that if it could still live and produce fruit, the figs on the branch are not susceptible to being rendered impure, as they are still connected to the earth.

²² *Lessons in Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, ch.2:*

The second, uniquely Jewish, soul is truly “a part of G-d above, “A part of G-d above” is a quotation from Scripture (*Iyov* 31:2). The Alter Rebbe adds the word “truly” to stress the literal meaning of these words. For, as is known, some verses employ hyperbolic language. For example, the verse describing “great and fortified cities reaching into the heavens” is clearly meant to be taken figuratively, not literally. However, the expression “a part of G-d above” is meant to be taken literally, and to prevent us from viewing it as figurative language, the Alter Rebbe adds the word “truly,” thus emphasizing that the Jewish soul is quite literally a part of G-d above.

also referred to as the *yechidah* or the *pintele Yid*,²³ is always connected to its source and reflects the purity and holiness of the source. Unfortunately, empirical evidence seems to contradict the above concept with many historical examples of impure and immoral behavior. How can an entity be pure in its source and, simultaneously, impure in its thoughts, speech, and actions?

The soul has a querulous relationship with the body. The revealed aspects of the soul are intimately associated with the body, whereas the source of the soul is associated with the body in an indirect and encompassing fashion. The embodied and revealed aspects of the soul are called *nefesh*, *ruach*, and *neshamah*.²⁴ The roots of the soul that

²³ Yiddish term (literally: the point/dot of the Jew), meaning the inner, Jewish soul spark.

²⁴ *Zohar* I, 206a (Translation from Sefaria.org):

Come and see: When the blessed Holy One created the human being, He gathered his dust from the four directions of the world and formed his body on the site of the Temple below and emanated upon him a soul of life from the Temple above. The soul comprises three aspects and therefore has three names, corresponding to supernal mystery: *nefesh*, *ruach*, *neshamah*. *Nefesh*, as has been established, is the lowest of all. *Ruach* is sustenance, presiding over *nefesh*, a higher rung above her, sustaining her completely, fittingly. *Neshamah* is the highest sustaining existence of all, prevailing overall, holy rung transcending all. These three rungs are included within human beings—in those who attain devotion to their Lord. At first one possesses *nefesh*, a holy preparation by which a person is refined. When one begins to purify himself on this rung, he is ready to be crowned with *ruach*, a holy rung hovering over *nefesh*, by which a virtuous person is aroused. Once he is

elevated by *nefesh* and *ruach*, initiated into perfection through serving his Lord, then *neshamah* alights upon him—supernal, holy rung prevailing over all—so that he is crowned by that rung. Then he is consummate, perfected on all sides, worthy of the world that is coming; he is beloved by the blessed Holy one, as is said: “Endowing those who love me with existence” (*Mishlei* 8:21). Who are “those who love me”? Those who have a holy *neshamah*. Rabbi Yehuda said: If so, look at what is written, “All that had the *neshamah* of the spirit of life in its nostrils, of all that was on dry land, died” (*Bereishis* 7:22)! He replied: Certainly so! For there did not remain among them any of those who possessed a holy *neshamah*, such as Jared, Enoch, of all those righteous ones whose merit could have saved the world from destruction, as it is written: “All that had the *neshamah* of the spirit of life in its nostrils, of all that was on dry land, died”—they had already died and departed from the world; none of them remained to protect the world at that time.

Zohar II, 141b (Translation from Sefaria.org):

Hibbut ha-kever is depicted as a three- to seven-day process of separation of the soul from the physical body. During this time, the disembodied being undergoes a purification process, surrendering attachments to the physical realm. For those beings clinging to physical existence, the process of separation can be excruciatingly painful. The disembodied soul “wanders about the world and beholds the body, which was once its home, devoured by worms and suffering the judgment of the grave (*hibbut ha-kever*).” However, those beings which have cultivated spiritual awareness leave behind body and material existence less painfully, even effortlessly, “like drawing a hair out of milk” (*Berachos* 8a).

metaphorically surround the body (*makif* or *makifim* [plural]) are called *chayah* and *yechidah*.²⁵

The *nefesh* is connected to the blood of the body, whereas the *ruach* and *neshamah* are manifest through the heart and mind, respectively. These three levels of the soul have forces pulling them apart from each other and the body. The *chayah* is the closest encompassing force of the soul (*makif hakorev*)²⁶ and functions to bind the *nefesh*, *ruach*, and *neshamah* with the body. It may be conceptualized as ‘soul binding energy.’ The Talmud refers to the *chayah* as the first and closest shadow formed by the body.²⁷ Even though the *chayah* is considered a *makif*, it is

²⁵ *Bereishis Rabbah* 14:10 (Translation from Sefaria.org):

By five names is the soul called: *nefesh*, *ruach*, *neshamah*, *chayah* (living one), *yechidah* (unique one). *Nefesh* – this is the blood . . . *ruach*—for she rises and falls, as in: “Who knows if the *ruach* of human beings goes upward?” (*Koheles* 3:21). *Neshamah* – this is the character . . . *Chayah* – that all the limbs die and (i.e., unless) she lives in the body. *Yechidah* – that all the limbs are two by two, but she is singular in the body.

²⁶ See Rabbi Sholom Dovber Schneersohn, *Samech Vav* (2010), “U’Re’isem,” 351. *Makif hakorev* describes the encompassing level of the soul called *chayah*. It has the advantage of the potential of revelation but has the disadvantage of being open to *yenikas hachitzonim* (invasion of foreign forces).

²⁷ *Gittin* 66a (Translation from Sefaria.org):

Demons too can appear in human form, and therefore the fact that the being looked human is not proof that it is not a demon. The Gemara

very closely associated with and affected by the three lower levels of the soul and body, and vice versa.

The essence—root—of the soul is eternally bound with the essence of G-d as the term “*yechidah leyachdach*”²⁸ (“essence to essence”) implies. It is referred to by the verses: “The candle of G-d is the soul of man,”²⁹ and “Jewish souls arose in G-d’s thought.”³⁰ Its purity and holiness is constant and unwavering. It is also referred to as “*makif ha’rechok*”³¹ (the “distant encompassing force”) and the “shadow of the shadow.”³² This level of the soul is always present and provides the hidden matrix

explains: There is a case where they saw that he has a shadow (*bavua*). The Gemara objects: Demons also have a shadow (*bavua de’bavua*). The Gemara explains: It is a case where they saw that he had the shadow of a shadow. The Gemara objects: And perhaps demons too have the shadow of a shadow? Rabbi Chanina says: Yonatan, my son, taught me that demons have a shadow, but they do not have the shadow of a shadow.

²⁸ *Nusach Seder Hoshanos, Yom Gimmel.*

²⁹ *Mishlei 20:27*

³⁰ *Bereishis Rabbah 1:4*

³¹ *Samech Vav, “U’Re’isem,” 352: Makif ha’rechok* describes the encompassing level of the soul called *yechidah*. It has the advantage of being impervious to *yenikas hachitzonim* but has the disadvantage of usually being outside of the realm of revelation.

³² See footnote 27.

for the other four lower levels of the soul. Without the *yechidah*, the other levels of the soul (*chayah*, *neshamah*, *ruach*, and *nefesh*) would be incomplete and irrelevant.

There exists a constant tension and pull for unity within the soul. The drive for oneness represents the soul's true desire for wholeness via internal and external unity.³³ When the soul is whole, it creates the potential for all souls to metaphorically coalesce as one with each other.

³⁴ When all souls are one, this creates the potential for the Nation of Israel to coalesce into oneness with G-d.³⁵

³³ Ibid., "*HaChodesh Hazeh Lechem*," 206: This is connected to the fact that the essence of the soul perceives G-d's desire for a dwelling place in the lowest realms. This leads to the nullification of the soul's own desire to stay in the realm of revealed divinity. It accepts on itself the yoke of the divine will and reorients itself downward. This earthbound descent creates a life long longing within the embodied soul for reunification with its heavenly essence. Only when the soul is whole and one with itself can it be absorbed in the collective general soul of Israel.

³⁴ As it is stated in *Bereishis Rabbah*, "the souls of Israel arose in G-d's thought." This represents a stage in the divine plan before G-d revealed the *ohr ein sof* (infinite light). All the souls were considered righteous and as one. The Baal Shem Tov states that *Adam HaRishon* contained within him all the souls of Israel. Before the sin, they were considered as one cohesive entity. (See Rabbi Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl, *Me'or Einayim*, "*Pinchas*.")

³⁵ *Shemos Rabbah*, ch. 15, states that in the future, after the resurrection of the dead, there will be a marriage between G-d and Israel (when all the souls will be considered as one again). This represents a stage of collective oneness

Our choices and decisions matter and have profound universal effects. Our values are predicated on objective truth that transcends space-time. This truth is based on divine revelation by way of the revealed and esoteric wisdom of the Torah. Good decisions effectuate positive, constructive outcomes and foster soul unity. Bad decisions affect negative, destructive outcomes and result in the soul's fragmentation. This soul disunity occurs between the *yechidah* and the four other levels of the soul. The *yechidah* remains bound to G-d's essence but becomes disconnected from its revealed dimensions. This results in a spiritual 'iron curtain' that has profound negative consequences on a Jew's well-being.

With the above conceptual understanding, the following analysis can be understood. We celebrate Passover by having a *seder* to commemorate the Jewish people's exodus from Egyptian slavery and abuse. The *seder* is an activity of Jewish education and transmission of faith to the next generation. Part of the *seder* involves reading a narrative of the four sons³⁶ asking their father questions. Each son asks their father a distinctive question. The Haggadah's narrative is as follows:

The wicked one, what does he say? "What is this service to you?!" He

among all the souls of Israel called *yechidah klalis*. (*Mikdash Melech*, 93:2; Rabbi Isaac Luria (The Arizal), *Likkutei Torah*, "Bereishis," 5:22).

³⁶*Haggadah Shel Pesach, Maggid.*

says ‘to you,’ but not him! By thus excluding himself from the community he has denied that which is fundamental. You, therefore, **blunt his teeth** and say to him: “It is because of this that G-d did for me when I left Egypt”; “for me”—but not for him! If he had been there, he would not have been redeemed!

What does “blunt his teeth” mean? How does aggressive dental work belong to the narrative? It seems out of place and violent. And why not poke him in the eye or pull his ear?

The Hebrew word for “wicked” is רשע (*rasha*) and has the numerical equivalent of 570 (70 = ע , 300 = ש , 200 = ר). The Hebrew word for “teeth” is שניו (*shinav*) and has the numerical equivalent of 366 (6 = ו , 10 = י , 50 = נ , 300 = ש). “Blunt” implies a form of removal, so if we subtract (remove) 366 from 570 we get 204, which is the numerical equivalent of “blunt his teeth.” 204 is an extremely significant number because it is the numerical equivalent of the word צדיק which means *righteous*. Thus, blunting his teeth transforms a wicked person into a righteous one. But the question remains: How and why does blunting the teeth effectuate such a transformation?

Teeth have significance in Jewish law. Per the laws of healing on the Sabbath, the severity of the illness or injury determines the level of desecration permitted. In cases of life-threatening emergencies, the Sabbath laws are suspended to facilitate saving the person’s life.³⁷ Thus,

³⁷ *Shulchan Aruch HaRav*, 328:2:

it is crucial to understand the parameters of what is considered life-threatening. The *Shulchan Aruch* states that internal injuries are considered life-threatening. It further states that the teeth represent the boundary of what is considered an internal injury.³⁸ Thus, the teeth represent the conceptual barrier between internal and external.

With this understanding of what teeth represent, we can answer the above questions. When the Haggadah instructs the father to blunt the teeth of the wicked son, it is teaching us that the barrier between the internal and external aspects of a Jewish soul should be removed. This

[For] one who has a life-threatening illness it is a *mitzvah* to transgress Shabbos on his behalf to help heal him and those which act with alacrity [and do so first] are praised. One who seeks Halachic advice to verify if he can save him is spilling blood through this delay and the one who is asked such a question is to be ashamed because he should have made a public speech mentioning that it is allowed. Even a questionable life-threatening situation pushes off the prohibitions of Shabbos. The reason for this is because: it says in the verse, “That one should do and live by them” and what is “and live by them” trying to teach us? It is saying that one should see to it that one will for certain live through doing the *mitzvah* and should not do so if he will come through this *mitzvah* to a case of a possible life-threatening danger. [One] must use a known treatment or one prescribed by a medical expert: Nevertheless, even if there is a definite danger one may only transgress Shabbos for medical treatment that is known to all or is done by a professional doctor. When it is a known form of healing then even if one does not know if he will be cured through it or not, one transgresses Shabbos out of doubt that perhaps it will heal.

³⁸ Ibid., 328:3: Any internal wound, starting with a person’s teeth and inward.

barrier is a spiritual iron curtain that prevents the truth of his essence from being revealed to the lower soul levels that are associated with his body. As explained earlier, the essence of the Jewish soul (*yechidah*) is always in a state of absolute purity since it is perpetually bound and connected with the essence of G-d. It is the bad choices that the son has made that has resulted in him being considered wicked. These choices have created a schism in his psyche that obscures the truth of the son's pure and righteous essence. Therefore, the father is charged with the responsibility to motivate, educate, and facilitate the spiritual, psychological, emotional, and physical healing of his son. Thus, by "blunting his teeth," the wickedness of the son is cleansed away by the purity of his essence, and he reverts to his true righteous self.

Cainism

A major theological and philosophical question about the essence of existence is whether creation is hierarchical in nature. This question has serious social and political ramifications. Are we all equal, or is inequality integral to G-d's plan? I will suggest that both are true.

G-d's plan for creation consists of different stages. The nature of current existence is characterized by confusion and unbalanced chaos.³⁹ This is a direct consequence of the primordial sin involving the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Bad.⁴⁰ The sin caused a cataclysmic change to existence by effectuating the mixture of good and evil.⁴¹ Because of the sin, the first couple was exiled from the Garden of Eden and received

³⁹ Entropy, the second law of thermodynamics, states that any system will deteriorate into a state of maximum disorder. This is a physical manifestation of the metaphysical reality of the Shattering of the Vessels in the spiritual realm of *tohu*.

⁴⁰ *Bereishis* 3:6. The world of *tohu* exists to facilitate the perceived existence of evil. This serves man in the sense that it provides him with options to choose from, when he is given the opportunity to exercise his G-d given free will. However, the primordial sin caused a great imbalance and intensified the forces of impurity.

⁴¹ Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, *Torah Ohr* (2010 edition), "*Bereishis*," 10b.

gender-specific punishments. The man was cursed to work the land by the sweat of his brow,⁴² whereas the woman was cursed with painful childbirth.⁴³ These punishments have a rehabilitating function for all of humanity and are designed to rectify the world by containing the energy of chaos within the stability of order.⁴⁴

From the very beginning of creation, G-d differentiated male from female via unique source material, biological characteristics, and emotional predisposition. Man's body was derived from the inanimate earth and, afterwards, G-d blew into him the soul of life;⁴⁵ whereas woman was derived from refined, living matter—the man himself.⁴⁶ The

⁴² *Bereishis* 3:17: “And to man He said, Because you listened to your wife, and you ate from the tree from which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed be the ground for your sake; with toil shall you eat of it all the days of your life.”

⁴³ *Ibid.* 3:16: “To the woman He said, I shall surely increase your sorrow and your pregnancy; in pain you will bear children. And to your husband will be your desire, and he will rule over you.”

⁴⁴ Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, *Sefer HaSichos*, vol. 12, “*Vayeitzei, Tes Kislev*, 5752.”

⁴⁵ *Bereishis* 2:7: “And the Lord G-d formed man of dust from the ground, and He breathed into his nostrils the soul of life, and man became a living soul.”

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 2:22: “And the Lord, G-d, built the side that He had taken from man into a woman, and He brought her to man.”

implication is that women, by nature, are naturally more refined and sensitive.

The biological differences are obvious. The male has an aggressive, testosterone-driven constitution that results in an increased musculature, external anatomy, and a war-like, competitive nature. Women have a softer, nurturing disposition, internal anatomy, and an agreeable personality, driven by an estrogen-favored constitution. Both genders contain both testosterone and estrogen, the differences arise from the relative percentages of the hormones.⁴⁷ Males possess a higher percentage of testosterone,⁴⁸ and females have a higher percentage of estrogen.⁴⁹ These are very broad generalizations that describe most of humanity throughout history. However, there are a myriad of exceptions to the above model. Especially in this generation, where the wide use of contraception has changed the role of women in society. Women now

⁴⁷ This is the physical manifestation of the metaphysical reality that all souls are made from the union of the *partzufim of ze'ir anpin* (male) and *malchus* (female) in the world of *atzilus*. Thus, the souls derived from this union possess attributes of both male and female. The male predominant soul is derived from the dominance of *ze'ir anpin*. The female predominant soul is derived from the dominance of *malchus*. See *Samech Vav*, "*Hachodesh Hazeh Lechem*."

⁴⁸ AD Mooradian, JE Morley and SG Korenman, "Biological Actions of Androgens," *Endocrine Reviews*, 8 (1)(Feb 1987): 1–28.

⁴⁹ KJ Ryan, "Biochemistry of Aromatase: Significance to Female Reproductive Physiology," *Cancer Research* 42 (8 Suppl.)(August 1982): 3342s–3344s.

control their own reproductive life, which has resulted in a historically atypical value structure. Women can delay marriage and children to pursue the type of careers that have traditionally been the purview of men. Therefore, it can be said that women have assumed a more “man-like” identity.

The two genders have significant emotional differences and needs. Most men are ego-driven, self-centered, and require external recognition and reassurance. Men seek power, money, fame, and external validation of their self-worth. Most women have a selfless, nurturing nature and are thus more suited for taking care of infants. An infant is the most vulnerable form of life since it is completely dependent on others to meet its needs. The majority of women are uniquely suited to provide an infant with this nurturing and thriving environment. This requires self-sacrifice of one’s own needs for meeting the needs of the infant. Thus, women who possess an agreeable character tend to excel at mothering by being more nurturing, tolerant and patient.

In addition to having these inherent qualities, which make women loving and sensitive caregivers, they are also more attuned to sensing negative emotions and energies. The Arizal explains that the spiritual source of the feminine is *gevurah*,⁵⁰ which means severity, judgment and

⁵⁰ Rabbi Isaac Luria, *Sha’ar HaKavanos*, “*Inyan Kavanos HaAmidah*,” *drush beis, Kavanah HaKol*.

metaphorical negativity. The majority of women do not respond well to criticism and tend to become embittered when contending with negative reinforcement. A man's role is to sweeten the bitterness and to shield the woman from the negativity that plagues her by providing a safe environment of positive reinforcement. This partnership between men and women creates a balanced environment of safety and nurture for the development of healthy offspring. Women become increasingly vulnerable when nurturing infants and thus require the protection of vigilant men. Perhaps, this explains why women seek spouses that are positioned high on the dominance hierarchy.

One of the most archetypal examples of inequality espoused by the Torah is the story of the two brothers, Cain and Abel. The summary of the narrative is as follows: Both brought an offering to G-d. G-d accepted Abel's offering and rejected Cain's offering.⁵¹ Cain became angry and depressed. G-d asked Cain, "Why are you upset? Improve yourself and I will accept your offering as well." Cain killed Abel.⁵² Here

⁵¹*Bereishis* 4:3-6: "Now it came to pass at the end of days, that Cain brought the fruit of the soil as an offering to the Lord. And Abel, he too, brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fattest, and the Lord turned to Abel and his offering. But to Cain and his offering He did not turn, and it annoyed Cain exceedingly, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you annoyed, and why has your countenance fallen?"

⁵² *Ibid.* 4:8: "And Cain spoke to Abel, his brother, and it came to pass when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and slew him."

we see that G-d related to the two brothers in different and unequal ways. Abel's offering was pleasing and accepted by G-d because he was on a high spiritual level. Cain's offering was displeasing to and rejected by G-d because he had not refined himself sufficiently.

This story displays a recurring theme throughout human history and governance. When G-d asked Cain, "Why are you upset?" He implied that Cain bore personal responsibility for his actions and should improve himself. Instead of being jealous of his brother, G-d encouraged Cain to refine himself spiritually, intellectually, and emotionally. Cain chose to envy and hate his brother, which progressively corroded his soul to such an extent that he murdered his kin. Cain's choice represents an ideology that has plagued humanity throughout history and has resulted in the murder of hundreds of millions of people.

The most recent example of "Cainism" is communism. Communist ideology believes in the equality of outcome.⁵³ In other words, it believes that everyone is the same and should live at the same economic and

⁵³ Equality of outcome is a concept that is central to leftist/statist political ideologies and is used regularly in political discourse, often in contrast to the term, "equality of opportunity". It describes a state in which people have approximately the same material wealth and income, or in which the general economic conditions of their lives are alike. Achieving equal results, generally, entails reducing or eliminating material inequalities between individuals or households in a society. It also usually involves a transfer of income or wealth from wealthier to poorer individuals, or adopting other measures to promote equality of condition.

social level. The supposition is that if a person has more wealth or status, this person must have acquired it through theft and exploitation.

Communist regimes in the twentieth century were immensely oppressive and tyrannical and committed the worst atrocities in human history. If the Politburo determined someone to be wealthy, having 'privileged' education and social status, or questioning the legitimacy of the communist ideology, they were promptly executed or imprisoned in some hideous gulag.⁵⁴ The leadership positions of these communist regimes seemed to be tailor made for only the most ruthless people. They were always cynical despots and hypocrites of the highest order. They certainly didn't believe in the ideology that was sold to the masses. They were sociopathic opportunists, who wasted no time in securing themselves in positions of power by exploiting an emotionally incontinent, peasant population and an easily manipulated system of governance. The communists' cruelty and barbarism pushed utopia further away.

Communism was and is doomed to failure because it is against the will of G-d since it violates at least three of the Ten Commandments: Do not

⁵⁴ For a detailed account of this period in history, see *The Gulag Archipelago 1918–1956*, by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn.

have other gods before Me,⁵⁵ do not steal,⁵⁶ and do not covet.⁵⁷ The current state of the world requires human beings to rectify the primordial sin by choosing good and staying away from evil.⁵⁸ Once the world is rectified, good and bad will be separate again, G-d will sweep away the spirit of inequity,⁵⁹ and death will be swallowed up forever.⁶⁰ Only then will the promised utopia materialize, and we will all be equal in outcome. The world will be filled with the knowledge of G-d and everyone will be enveloped in the infinite bounty of His presence.

⁵⁵ *Shemos* 20:5: "You shall neither prostrate yourself before them nor worship them, for I, the Lord, your G-d, am a zealous G-d, Who visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the sons, upon the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me."

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 20:13: "You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* 20:14: "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, his manservant, his maidservant, his ox, his donkey, or whatever belongs to your neighbor."

⁵⁸ *Tehillim* 34:15: "Shun evil and do good, seek peace and pursue it."

⁵⁹ *Zechariah* 13:2: "And it shall come to pass on that day, says the Lord of Hosts: I will cut off the names of the idols from the earth, and they shall no longer be mentioned. And, their prophets and the spirit of iniquity I will remove from the earth."

⁶⁰ *Yeshayahu* 25:8: "He has swallowed up death forever, and the Lord G-d shall wipe the tears off every face, and the shame of His people He shall remove from upon the entire earth, for the Lord has spoken."

The current state of the world is filled with hierarchy and inequality by design. Currently, everyone deserves equality of opportunity, but not outcome. We need to take responsibility for our lives and heed G-d's advice to Cain: Improve yourself and I will accept your offering.⁶¹



⁶¹ *Bereishis* 4:7: "Is it not so that if you improve, it will be forgiven you? If you do not improve, however, at the entrance, sin is lying, and to you is its longing, but you can rule over it."

Dominance Hierarchy

Life is not fair, and people are not equal. A divinely ordained dominance hierarchy has existed since the beginning of creation and serves the purpose of rectifying the world. The reality of existence is that man bears personal responsibility for his own life. A person must challenge himself to continuously push past the boundaries of his own limitations.⁶² This continuous challenge results in growth, which brings order to chaos. Once prerequisite order is achieved, the world will experience an effulgence of divine utopia.

The dominance hierarchy has a metaphysical source. The concepts of higher or lower, better or worse, stronger or weaker, all stem from the

⁶² In *Devarim* 16:3, we are commanded to remember the Exodus from Egypt (*Mitzrayim*) every day. The root of the word *Mitzrayim* is the same as the word *meitzar*, which means limitation. The practical implication is that we are commanded to constantly come out from our personal limitations. Furthermore, tractate *Chagigah* 9b states that someone who studies Torah one hundred times is not considered a servant of G-d, whereas a person who studies one hundred and one times *is* considered a servant of G-d. *Tanya, Likkutei Amarim*, chapter 15, explains that in the times of the Gemara, it was customary to review a piece of learning one hundred times. However, someone who reviewed his learning one hundred and one times was considered as if he broke out of the limitation of the norm and was thus considered a servant of G-d.

same divine idea of “limitation.” G-d creates a finite system so that man has a medium upon which the Creator’s will can be actualized.

The creation of finitude is continuous and dynamic.⁶³ The *midrash* teaches that before G-d willed for the world, all that existed was G-d and His name.⁶⁴ G-d’s name refers to His infinite energy potential within Himself prior to His will to emanate, create, form, and act. When it arose in His will to create the world, he brought out of potential the divine infinite light (*ohr ein-sof*). This infinite light is the matrix for finite existence. Infinity may be conceptualized as perfection. Perfection implies that all is included, and nothing is lacking. In other words, the infinite possesses within itself all possibilities including G-d’s finite potential. If the infinite was to lack within itself this finite potential, then it would not be infinite.⁶⁵ Thus, the finite is one of the countless states of being that exists within the infinite.

For finitude to have perceptible existence, G-d creates a potential metaphysical space. This dynamic and perpetual process allows creation

⁶³ See *Tanya, Sha’ar HaYichud VeHaEmunah*, ch.1. “If the creative letters of G-d’s speech were to depart for an instant and return to their source, all of creation would become absolute nothingness, and it would be as though they had never existed at all.”

⁶⁴ Rabbi Eliezer Ben Hyrkanus, *Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer* (circa 100–300 CE), ch.3.

⁶⁵ Rabbi Meir Ben Gabbai, *Sefer Avodat HaKodesh* (1480 –), *sha’ar aleph, perek ches*; Rabbi Sholom Dovber Schneersohn , *Sefer Yom Tov Shel Rosh Hashanah, Samech Vav Leil Beis Chag HaShavuos (Samech Zayin)* and *BeShaah Sheh-Hakdemo (Ayin Beis), Leil Beis Chag HaShavuos*.

to seem to exist and is the result of the cataclysmic withdrawal of G-d's infinite light. In other words, finite creation cannot have palpable existence until G-d withdraws the nullifying effect of the infinite. By withdrawing the infinite light, a potential 'space' is created for the revelation of finite existence. The teasing apart of the finite from the infinite is a prerequisite for the soul to exist within a body and sets the stage for man to be able to exercise his free will.

G-d uses His powers of revelation and concealment during the creation process. These phenomena are best represented by G-d's names, *Havayah*⁶⁶ and *Elokim*⁶⁷, respectively. The progressive stages of creation are characterized by different patterns of interaction between these two names. The revelation of divine infinite light is referred to by the higher name of *Havayah (Havayah De'Liayla)*.⁶⁸ To bring about the

⁶⁶ *Havayah* refers to G-d's ineffable tetragrammaton name, spelled *Yud-Hey-Vav-Hey*. This name is associated with G-d's desire for revelation and mercy.

⁶⁷ *Elokim* refers to G-d's name associated with His desire for restraint and concealment.

⁶⁸ *Havayah De'Liayla* represents the infinite light (*ohr ein-sof*) which emanates from G-d. See Rabbi Sholom Dovber Schneersohn, *Samech Vav*, "Parshas Acharei Mos/Kedoshim," 274; Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, *Torah Ohr*, "Parshas Beshalach" and *Likkutei Torah*, "Drushei Rosh Hashanah."

metaphorical 'empty space' (*makom panuy*),⁶⁹ G-d uses His power of concealment, which is represented by the name of *Elokim*.⁷⁰ This concealment is accomplished through the withdrawal of infinite light (*ohr ein-sof*) back into its source within G-d's essence. It is of paramount importance to understand that this withdrawal involves G-d's infinite light but not His essence.⁷¹ His essence continues to fill the empty space.

⁶⁹ Rabbi Isaac Luria, *Etz Chaim, heichel aleph, heichel Adam Kadmon, sha'ar aleph, anuf beis, drush Igulim v'Yosher*.

⁷⁰ *Elokim* seems to have more symmetry and primacy with the hidden essence of G-d (*helem ha'atzmi*) than *Havayah*. *Elokim* is G-d's power of restraint and concealment, which parallels the nature of G-d's essence to be hidden. Furthermore, *Bereishis* 1:1 states, "In the beginning created *Elokim*." The implication is that G-d created *Elokim* first. The creation of the *makom panuy* is a manifestation of the superior power of *Elokim*. *Elokim* dominates over and withdraws the infinite light, which is a manifestation of *Havayah*. The *Zohar* 1:15a writes that "In the beginning of the arousal of the will of the King, He engraved (carved) within the supernal holiness, with *botzina de kardenusa* (the Lamp of Darkness)." This Lamp of Darkness represents dark or negative energy which overpowers light or positive energy (*ohr ein-sof*) to create the *makom panuy*.

⁷¹ *Tanya, Sha'ar HaYichud VeHaEmunah*, chapter 7, explains the doctrine of *tzimtzum shelo k'peshuto* (*tzimtzum* that is not literal). When the Arizal writes that G-d removed Himself, he means to say that it refers to the removal of the light back into G-d's essence and *not* that G-d removed Himself from the newly formed empty space. G-d's essence permanently permeates the empty space. Thus, the empty space is not empty. It only appears empty from the perspective of creation because the light was withdrawn. Light serves the role of making its recipient aware of the existence of the luminary that emitted the light.

In other words, G-d's essence is always present. As mentioned above, the empty space is formed through the effect of *Elokim* and its first manifestation is referred to as *tzimtzum harishon*⁷² (the first withdrawal) in Kabbalistic and Chassidic parlance.

As is known, the empty space is not empty. The essence of G-d and the infinite light, which was withdrawn into His essence, fills the space. "Empty" refers to the lack of revelation of the infinite light. Light serves the purpose of revealing the Emanator of the light.⁷³ The withdrawal of the infinite light creates a metaphorical darkness because of the resulting concealment of G-d's presence. The space only has the illusion of being empty.

The withdrawal of the infinite light is a prerequisite for the creation of the finite system of worlds.⁷⁴ It was stated earlier that the *tzimtzum harishon* is accomplished by G-d's power of concealment (*Elokim*). This

⁷² *Etz Chaim, heichel aleph, heichel Adam Kadmon, sha'ar aleph, anuf beis, drush Igulim ve'Yosher*, refers to the cataclysmic withdrawal and concealment (*siluk ha'ohr*) of the infinite light into G-d's essence. This creates the metaphysical empty space (*makom panuy*) in which all finite creation will exist.

⁷³ Rabbi Yosef Ergas (1685–1730), *Shomer Emunim*, pt. 2, ch. 11, notes that light is emitted from the luminary without ever being separated from it.

⁷⁴ When the infinite light is revealed, the finite light (*ohr ha'gvul*) and the power of limitation (*koach ha'gvul*) are concealed and are not interacting with each other.

power is also referred to as the “power of limitation” (*koach ha’gvul*).⁷⁵

The power of limitation causes the withdrawal and by doing so reveals its existence and presence. Until this point, it was obscured by the overwhelming effulgence of the infinite light.

The next stage in the evolution of creation is the reintroduction of light into the empty space. However, the light that is reintroduced is a narrow sliver of the original infinite light which is referred to as the *kav* (line).⁷⁶ This finite light (*ohr ha’gvul*) is also referred to as “the lower *Havayah*” (*Havayah De’Litata*).⁷⁷ Until this point, this light has been obscured by the infinite light.

⁷⁵ G-d’s power of limitation is synonymous with His ability to withhold revelation. This restraint is symbolized by G-d’s name *Elokim*. The power of *Elokim* is greater than the power of *Havayah*, which represents revelation. *Elokim* is the source of energy that causes the infinite light to withdraw back into G-d’s essence. The name *Elokim* overpowers the infinite light and withdraws it into G-d’s essence. *Koach ha’gvul* is analogous with the *nikudah* of the *rishimo* (trace) or the letters of the *rishimo*. The essence of the *koach ha’gvul* (*Elokim*) is that its power is infinite which explains its ability to act upon and withdraw the infinite light. See *Samech Vav*, “*Vayikra, Adam Ki Yakriv*,” 251.

⁷⁶ The *kav* is a dichotomous entity consisting of the *ohr ha’gvul* and the *koach ha’gvul*. The *kav* is the only divine path through which G-d chooses to provide energy to create the finite system of worlds (*sefer hishtalshelus*).

⁷⁷ *Samech Vav*, “*Acharei Mos/Kedoshim*,” 274. *Shem Havayah De’Litata* refers to the finite light in the *kav* and is involved in creating the finite worlds *ex-nihilo*.

At this stage, the empty space contains within itself the essence of G-d, the infinite light in a withdrawn and concealed state, the finite light, and the power of limitation. When the infinite light is dominant, the finite light (*ohr ha'gvul*) and the power of limitation (*koach ha'gvul*) are obscured and unassociated with each other. The *tzimtzum harishon* has multiple simultaneous effects. The withdrawal of the infinite light facilitates the coupling of the finite light with the power of limitation. These two forces are diametric opposites and require divine essence and will to unify them.

The unification of the *ohr ha'gvul* with *koach ha'gvul* is the source of all dichotomous associations in the system of finite worlds. This includes the fusion of the soul with the body, and more abstractly, the integration of lights with their corresponding vessels. These two diametric forces represent the revelations and concealments that are found at every point of finite existence. These two forces are manifest in and through the *kav*, which is the conduit through which divine vitality is transferred to finite creation. In fact, it is the coupling of the finite light with the power of limitation which results in the formation of the *kav*.⁷⁸

The *kav* is represented conceptually as a thin line. The “top” of the line represents the highest level of divinity which is connected to its source

⁷⁸ See Rabbi Shalom Dovber Schnnersohn, *BeShaah Sheh-Hakdemo (Ayin Beis)*, fourth edition, “*Lil Beis Chag HaShavuos*,” *siman ches*.

within the infinite light.⁷⁹ As the *kav* energy descends through the worlds' finite hierarchy, the relative influence of the two opposing forces changes. At the top of the *kav*, the finite light is dominant, and the power of limitation is relatively dormant. As energy "goes down" the *kav*, there is a differential shift in the relative association of these two opposing forces. The lower levels in the *kav* have less influence from the finite light and more influence from the power of limitation. In other words, the relative balance of revelation and concealment changes depending on the level of the *kav* being analyzed. The higher worlds have more revelation and the lower worlds have more concealment.⁸⁰ This is the metaphysical source of the dominance hierarchy.

⁷⁹ *Etz Chaim, heichel aleph, heichel Adam Kadmon, sha'ar aleph, anuf beis, drush "Igulum ve'Yosher,"* explains that the top or head of the *kav* is drawn from the infinite light itself and touches it. And through this *kav*, the light is drawn down and spread out within the empty space. This is the theological basis of hierarchy in creation.

⁸⁰ See *Tanya, Likkutei Amarim*, ch.36.

From G-d's perspective, He fills all space and time; yet, creation experiences a series of worlds that descend from level to level through a multitude of filters that decrease the intensity of the light and vitality that extends from Him. This world represents the ultimate descent in terms of concealment of His light; there is a prevalence of multiple layers of darkness. The descent is so great that the result is a world full of *kelipot*; it is characterized by a sense of otherness that opposes *Havayah*, saying, I and nothing but I!

Prior to the *tzimtzum harishon*, the infinite light was dominant and nullified all perception of finitude. The infinite light can also be conceptualized as endless paths of illumination and possibilities (*sefiros ein kaytz*).⁸¹ To facilitate G-d's dominion and providence for finite existence, G-d chooses ten specific "strings" of illumination. This act of self-limitation is alluded to by the statement, "[G-d] estimated within Himself with the power of restraint what will be afterwards."⁸² In other words, G-d chooses a finite number of possibilities through which He will exert His divine providence over every aspect of finite existence. This also represents the arousal of G-d's will for creation of a finite system of worlds.

⁸¹ *Sefiros ein kaytz* is analogous to the concept of *ohr ein-sof*. Both terms denote infinite potential states of being and revelation. See *Tikkunei Zohar* (2010 edition), *Hakdamah Beis*, 227: "You are one but not in an accounting or numerical sense." The Alter Rebbe explains that "not in a numerical sense" means not in ten sefiros, but rather in an infinite number of ways.

⁸² "[G-d] estimated within Himself with the power of limitation, what will be later," this means that He chose and manifested finitude by forming ten potential channels of revelation. This act of self-limitation represents the manifestation of G-d's power of *Elokim (koach ha'gvul, rishimo)*. The *eser sefiros ha'ginuzet* are the first manifestation of potential finitude within the infinite. However, they remain obscured by the infinite light until the *tzimtzum harishon*. See *Samech Vav*, "Rosh Hashanah," 7.

G-d exalts the number of ten and its associated concept.⁸³ The Base-10 number system (also known as the decimal system) is considered special and holy. G-d chooses to self-limit the infinite number of possibilities and bring about ten unique channels referred to as the ten hidden *sefiros (eser sefiros ha'ginuzet)*.⁸⁴ G-d uses His power of limitation, referred to as *Elokim*, to effectuate a transition from the *sefiros ein kaytz* to the *eser sefiros ha'ginuzet*. The *eser sefiros ha'ginuzet* are the source of the finite light in the *kav* after the *tzimtzum harishon*. Conceptually, this self-limitation can be referred to as the *tzimtzum* before the

⁸³ *Vayikra* 27:32: "Any tithe of cattle or flock of all that pass under the rod, the tenth shall be holy to the Lord."

Megillah 23b: "The Gemara asks: From where are these matters (i.e. that ten people are needed in each of these cases) derived? Rabbi Chiyya bar Abba said that Rabbi *Yochanan* said: It is as the verse states: "And I shall be hallowed among the children of Israel" (*Vayikra* 22:32), which indicates that any expression of sanctity may not be recited in a quorum of fewer than ten men. The Gemara asks: From where in the verse may this be inferred? The Gemara responds that it must be understood as Rabbi Chiyya taught: It is inferred by means of a verbal analogy [*gezera shava*] between the words "among" and "among." Here, it is written: "And I shall be hallowed among the children of Israel," and there, with regard to Korach's congregation, it is written "Separate yourselves from among this congregation" (*Bamidbar* 16:21). Just as regarding Korach, the reference is to ten men, so too, the name of G-d is to be hallowed in a quorum of ten men."

⁸⁴ Analogous terms for the *eser sefiros ha'ginuzet* are: *malchus of ein sof*, *atzilus de'klalus*, *atik of AK*, source of the *ohr ha'gvul* in the *kav* (*Havayah De'Litata*).

tzimtzum harishon ("tzimtzum zero" so to speak). Once G-d manifests the *tzimtzum harishon*, while concurrently "carving out"/ "hollowing out" the *makom panuy*, He proceeds to create the first finite state or "quasi-world" in the *kav*, called *Adam Kadmon (AK)*.⁸⁵ The *kav* energy that creates *AK* is characterized by the revelation of the finite lights (*Havayah De'Litata*). The power of limitation is present in potential but has not yet exerted its direct influence. This stage of creation can be referred to as ten lights with no vessels.⁸⁶ *AK* is unrestrained, finite energy potential and is the most abstract and general will of G-d for His finite creation.⁸⁷

The next quasi-world is called *akudim*.⁸⁸ This stage is characterized by "ten lights in one vessel."⁸⁹ The Arizal explains that the formation of this

⁸⁵ *Samech Vav, "Pinchas, Tetain Emes L'Yaakov,"* 400. *AK* is also referred to as *Adam de'beriyah de'klalus*.

⁸⁶ *Samech Vav, "Emor, Yud-Zion Iyar."* The ten *sefiros* of *AK* represent ultimate simplicity; they appear all equal and have no trace of differentiation in the form of vessels.

⁸⁷ *BeShaah SheHakdemo (Ayin Beis), "Leil Beis Chag Hashavuos,"* 2.

⁸⁸ *Bereishis* 30:39. *Akudim* means "bound" and refers to the striped pattern of the sheep in the story of Yaacov and Lavan.

⁸⁹ *Etz Chaim, heichel aleph, heichel AK, sha'ar Vav, sha'ar Akudim*, explains the complex formation of the one vessel of *akudim*. A very brief overview of the process is: There is a collision (*bitush*) of an *ohr makif* and *ohr pnimi* in the mouth (*peh*) of *AK*. *Peh* has the numerical value of *shem SOG* (63) and the 22

one primordial vessel is derived from the light itself. He states that “from the thickening of the light, the vessel is formed.”⁹⁰ This “thickening” of the light, is being induced by G-d, using His power of limitation (*koach hagvul*), which has heretofore been dormant within the *kav*. The light is “thickened” or “congealed” into a newly formed vessel, and it is the source of the subsequent ten vessels that will be formed in the lower worlds.

The next two stages in the evolution of creation are chaos (*tohu*) and order (*tikkun*) which co-exist in parallel with each other in order to form

letters of the Hebrew alphabet. From the collision of these two lights in the mouth of *AK*, one primordial and ethereal vessel is created. However, while still in the mouth of *AK*, the vessel is still in potential. A direct light is then emanated from the mouth of *AK* towards the umbilical area. Since creation is dynamic and characterized by oscillating frequency (running and returning), the direct light is redirected back toward the mouth of *AK*. However, since holiness never fully departs from a place where it has been, a remnant called *ohr yosher* (straight light) remains in the umbilical area of *AK*. As the redirected light is withdrawn into the mouth of *AK*, a light called *ohr chozer* (the returning light) is emanated from the back of this retracting light. This *ohr chozer* returns and collides with the *ohr yosher*, and from this collision the vessel of *akudim* is formed.

⁹⁰ *BeShaah SheHakdemo (Ayin Beis), “Leil Beis Chag HaShavuos,” 13.*

the basis of free will. The world of *tohu*,⁹¹ also referred to as *nikkudim*,⁹² is characterized by “ten lights in ten vessels” which are referred to as the ten *sefiros* of *tohu*.⁹³ As mentioned earlier, these ten vessels of *nikkudim* are derived from the single primordial vessel of *akudim*, which G-d has further subdivided into ten vessels of *tohu* through the manifestation of the power of limitation. The structure of *tohu* is characterized by separation, lack of hybridization and instability.⁹⁴ The ten *sefiros* are organized in a pattern of individuality and disunity. The lack of cohesion amongst the *sefiros* in *tohu* is by divine design and leads to entropy and chaotic disintegration. *Tohu* deteriorates into chaos and

⁹¹ See Rabbi Jacob Immanuel Schochet, *Mystical Concepts in Chassidism* (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Kehot Publication Society, 1979), ch. 9.

⁹² *Nikkudim* means “dots” and refers to the spotted pattern of the sheep in the story of Jacob and Lavan (*Bereishis* 30:39).

⁹³ See *Etz Chaim, heichel beis, heichel nikkudim, sha’ar ches, sha’ar drushi nikkudim*.

⁹⁴ See *Etz Chaim, heichel beis, heichel nikkudim, sha’ar tes, sha’ar Sheviras Hakelim*; and *Mystical Concepts in Chassidism*, ch.10.

leads to the “shattering of the vessels.”⁹⁵ This shattered state is the source of all disorder in the world.

Tohu's parallel and diametric state is the world of *tikkun*. *Tikkun*, which means rectification, is a world of order.⁹⁶ G-d emanates a harmonizing force from the world of *AK* (specifically, G-d's *shem MA* from the forehead of *AK*),⁹⁷ which gathers the shattered vessels of *tohu* and hybridizes them into stable, metaphysical structures. These structures are called *partzufim*⁹⁸ and form the blueprint of stable existence. The stability of *tikkun* is based on the hybridized pattern of the *sefiros*.⁹⁹ *Partzufim*¹⁰⁰ can be conceptualized as stable, metaphysical and

⁹⁵ The ten *sefiros* of *tohu* had three qualitative levels of damage. The *sefirah* of *kesser* suffered a blemish (*pagam*). The outer aspects of *sefiros* of *chochmah* and *binah* underwent a nullification (*bitul*). The remaining seven *sefiros* of *chesed*, *gevurah*, *tiferes*, *netzach*, *hod*, *yesod*, and *malchus* underwent the total shattering of their vessels (*shevira*).

⁹⁶ See *Mystical Concepts in Chassidism*, ch.9.

⁹⁷ See *Etz Chaim*, *heichel beis*, *heichel nikkudim*, *sha'ar yud*, *sha'ar tikkun*.

⁹⁸ See *Mystical Concepts in Chassidism*, ch.8.

⁹⁹ Each *partzuf* is a spiritual reconstruction using all ten *sefiros*. The different *partzufim* form a complex and interdependent system in the world of *tikkun*.

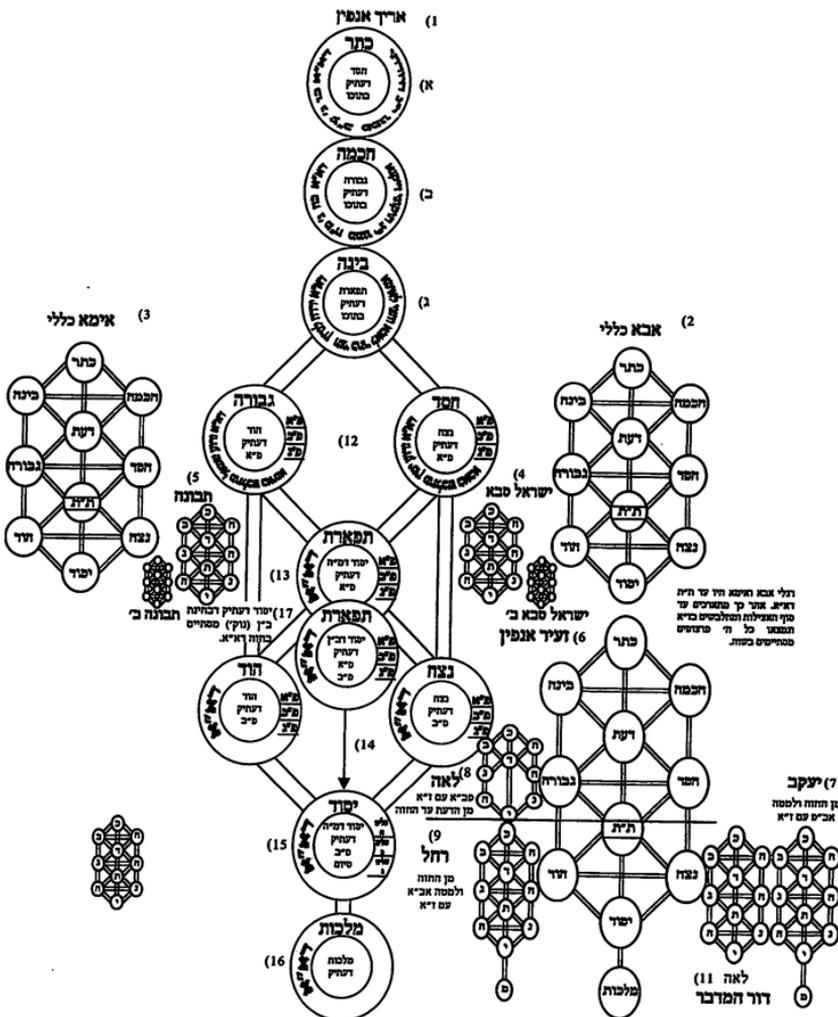
¹⁰⁰ The *partzufim* are as follows: 1a) The inner dimension of the *sefirah* of *kesser* was reconstructed as the *partzuf* of *atik yomin*; 1b) The blemish (*pagam*) in the outer dimension of the *sefirah* of *kesser* was reconstructed as the *partzuf* of *arich anpin*; 2a) The inner dimension of the *sefirah* of *chochmah* was

archetypal constructs that form the mechanism for the flow of divine energy into the worlds. They are also affected by man's actions. Acts that are according to G-d's will cause the *partzufim* to orient themselves "face-to-face" and allow for unobstructed flow of divine plenty into the world.¹⁰¹ *Tikkun* is the source of all order in the world.

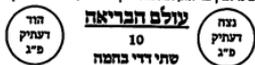
reconstructed as the *partzuf of abba*; 2b) The damage (*bitul*) in the outer dimension of the *sefirah* of *chochmah* was more extensive and was reconstructed into a quasi-*partzuf* called *Yaakov*; 3a) The inner dimension of the *sefirah* of *binah* was reconstructed as the *partzuf of ema*; 3b) The damage (*bitul*) in the outer dimension of the *sefirah* of *binah* was more extensive and was reconstructed into a quasi-*partzuf* called *Leah*; 4) The shattering (*shevirah*) of the six *sefiros chesed, gevurah, tiferes, netzach, hod, and yesod* were all hybridized together to form the *partzuf of ze'ir anpin*; 5) The shattering (*shevirah*) of the *sefirah* of *malchus* was reconstructed as the *partzuf* called *rachel* or *nukvah of ze'ir anpin*.

¹⁰¹ Man's appropriate deeds cause the *partzufim* of *ze'ir anpin* and *rachel* to orient face-to-face with each other and unify as one. This results in an arousal from below and causes the *partzufim* of *abba* and *ema* to orient face-to-face with each other and unify as one. This results in an arousal from below and effectuates a positive release of divine energy from the *partzufim of arich anpin, atik yomin, and beyond (radlo, atzmus ein sof lifnay hatzimtzum)*.

רישא דלא אחידע
 הוא נ"ד דעתיק העומד למעלה מכל האצילות ע"ג ראש א"א



פרעוד שנתת האצילות למסך מבדיל בינו ובין בריאה, ומלכות בוקעת אותו, ונעשית עתיק בבריאה, וכל העלמות כיוצא בזה



The Layering of Partzufim in Atzilus

Order and disorder are co-existing parallel states. Every aspect of existence is governed by the constant dynamic tension between these two states of being. Free will is based on man's ability to choose between order and disorder.

Tikkun can be further subdivided into four worlds. These worlds all share the same architectural blueprint of stability. The worlds, in descending order of revelation of G-d's light, are called: The World of

Emanation (*atzilus*)¹⁰²; the World of Creation (*beriyah*)¹⁰³; the World of Formation (*yetzirah*)

¹⁰² *Atzilus* (World of Emanation) refers to the realm of souls and complete holiness. The root of the word *atzilus* is *atzil* which means proximity. *Atzilus* is a world that is “near” to G-d. Its level of divinity is called “revelation of the concealment.” This refers to the revelation of the ten *sefiros* that were in a state of concealment before the *tzimtzum* as the *eser sefiros ha’ginuzet* (the ten hidden *sefiros*). The *sefiros* were also in a state of obscurity in the higher realms of *AK*, *akudim*, and *nikkudim* due to the lack of vessels that were capable of revelation. The lights and vessels of *atzilus* are considered holy as it is stated in the *Zohar*, “He and His lights are one, He and His vessels are one.” *Atzilus* is the first realm capable of stable, ordered revelation of divinity. For this reason, the Arizal refers to this world as *asiyah de’klalus*. This is made possible by the process of *tikkun* described above. The *partzuf* of *abba* is dominant as is the *shem ayin beis* (AB).

¹⁰³ *Beriyah* (World of Creation) refers to the world below *atzilus*. G-d’s Throne of Glory alluded to in Ezekiel’s vision of the Holy Chariot is associated with the *partzufim* of *arich*, *abba*, and *ema* of *beriyah*. It is considered the world of the *seraphim* (the fire angels). The *partzuf* *ema* is dominant, and it is also referred to as the “upper garden of Eden.” *Shem samech gimmel* (*SOG*) is dominant. It is considered a realm of thought and of intellectual awe and love of G-d. The *Zohar* describes the *sefiros* of *beriyah* as “He and His lights are one, He and the vessels are **not** one.” *Beriyah* is the first realm where the forces that oppose divinity exist and are referred to as *elokim acharim* (other gods). These parasitic forces receive nourishment from the “backside” of the *partzufim* of *ze’ir anpin* and *rachel* of *beriyah*, which also represent the lower forty-eight levels (out of a total of 120 different permutations) of the name *Elokim*.

;¹⁰⁴ the World of Action (*asiyah*).¹⁰⁵ The World of Action can be further subdivided into the spiritual World of Action and the material World of Action. The material World of Action encompasses all the known physical universe.

A dominance hierarchy exists within the system of worlds, from AK until this physical World of Action. A differential of divine revelation exists within this system and forms the metaphysical basis for hierarchy that exists in nature, society, and amongst men. Man is not static and has the potential to ascend or descend within this hierarchy. Our decisions matter and have profound effects on the system of worlds and beyond.¹⁰⁶ Our choices are possible due to the existence of free will. Free

¹⁰⁴ *Yetzirah* (World of Formation) refers to the world below *beriyah*. The angels called *chayos hakodesh* belong to this realm. The *partzuf of ze'ir anpin* is dominant and it is also referred to as the "lower garden of Eden." *Shem mem hey (MA)* is dominant. It is considered a realm of speech and of emotional awe and love of G-d. This world represents a balanced realm of divinity and opposing forces.

¹⁰⁵ *Asiyah* (World of Action) is subdivided into spiritual *asiyah* and material *asiyah*. It is the world below *yetzirah*. The angels called *ophanim* reside in the realm of spiritual *asiyah*. The *partzuf of rachel (malchus)* is dominant as is *shem beis nun (BON)*. It is the realm of action and considered the world where G-d desires His dwelling place to be. In its current state, it is filled with mostly parasitic forces that oppose divinity. Man resides in this world and is tasked with sanctifying this realm through the observance of Torah and *mitzvos*.

¹⁰⁶ When man observes G-d's will by turning away from bad and doing good, he causes divine union that cascades up and ripples through the *partzufim* of each

will is a uniquely divine attribute since there is no power greater than G-d that makes Him do or want anything. G-d gives man the ultimate gift and responsibility of free will. We become partners with G-d in the creative process and fulfil His deepest desire for a dwelling place in the lower worlds. For free will to exist, there must be choices available within creation. To create options for man to choose, G-d creates parallel systems of disorder and order. Man's psyche exists within this metaphysical space.

The razor's edge between order and disorder is the metaphysical space where G-d's presence is most found and where He awaits man's choices. This is the quintessential point of man's existence. Maimonides (Rambam) explains that the right way to live is the middle way.¹⁰⁷ Man

world until the highest level of divinity is reached. This causes a reciprocal arousal from above and results in an earthbound effulgence of divine blessing.

¹⁰⁷*Mishneh Torah, Sefer Madda, "De'ot," ch.1:*

The straight path: This involves discovering the midpoint temperament of every trait that man possesses within his personality. This refers to the trait which is equidistant from either of the extremes. Therefore, the early Sages instructed a man to evaluate his traits, to calculate them and to direct them along the middle path, so that he will be sound of body. For example: he should not be wrathful, easily angered; nor be like the dead, without feeling, rather he should adopt an intermediate course; i.e., he should display anger only when the matter is serious enough to warrant it, in order to prevent the matter from recurring. Similarly, he should not desire anything other than that which the body needs and cannot exist without, as *Mishlei* 13:25 states: "The righteous man eats to satisfy his soul." Also, he shall not

needs to stay away from the extremes and attempt to extract and integrate the best of order and disorder. The Lubavitcher Rebbe, Menachem Mendel Schneerson, taught that we must take the lights of chaos/disorder (*tohu*) and channel them into the vessels of order (*tikkun*).¹⁰⁸ This implies that both order and disorder possess elements that are integral to and must be harnessed for the actualization of G-d's plan for the world.

The extremes of both order and disorder are pathologic on both the macro and micro levels. On the societal level, the disease of extremes leads to totalitarianism. Totalitarianism is characterized by the following attributes: Rule by a single party; total control of the military; total control over the means of communication (such as newspapers, propaganda, etc.); police control with the use of terror as a control tactic; control of the economy.

The pathology of order on the macro level leads to fascist regimes like Nazi Germany. The Nazi's were extremely ordered in their world view.

labor in his business except to gain what he needs for immediate use, as *Tehillim* 37:16 states: "A little is good for the righteous man." He should not be overly stingy nor spread his money about, but he should give charity according to his capacity and lend to the needy as is fitting. He should not be overly elated and laugh excessively, nor be sad and depressed in spirit. Rather, he should always be quietly happy with a friendly countenance. The same applies to his other traits. This path is the path of the wise. Every man whose traits are intermediate and equally balanced can be called a wise man.

¹⁰⁸ *Sefer Ha'Sichos, vol.12, Vayeitzei, Tes Kislev, 5752.*

They believed that they were at the top of the dominance hierarchy due to their racial superiority. Furthermore, those on the lower levels of the hierarchy were meant to be slaves to the Aryan race. Those on the lowest level, the Jews, were to be exterminated because they were believed to pollute the world with their existence. The essence of the contamination was rooted in the moral values that the Jew's brought into the world. The Jews revealed to the world G-d's absolute moral code that transcends time-space. This moral code creates turbulence in those societies and cultures that prefer to live according to their own relativistic and rationally derived values. Therefore, the beliefs and values of Nazi Germany were incongruous with G-d's moral code. The presence of the Jews created an inner turbulence in the evil German collective unconscious, and in order to be free of this conflict, the Jews needed to be destroyed, G-d forbid.

Conversely, the pathology of disorder on the macro level leads to Marxism and communist regimes. Communist societies are characterized by rejection of ordered hierarchy. Instead of having structured society that allows for upward mobility, these regimes homogenize humanity into an artificial, premature and false state of equality. Since these ideas are antithetical to reality, totalitarian governments must impose force to keep the human soul and spirit stifled. The conceptual mistake of Communism is rooted in the arrogant denial of G-d and His will. While equality of outcome is superficially appealing, its practical application leads to chaos and tyranny. Only *after*

humanity fulfills its job in fixing the world, will the divinely promised utopia materialize.

Human psychology and emotional health are also governed by the dynamics of order and disorder. Order provides the necessary structure for organized and stable living. Disorder provides the motivational energy for a person's will to explore the unknown and move forward past one's own limitations. The careful integration of both these elements is integral to emotional, psychological, and spiritual health. Finding the middle way and moving along its razor's edge allows for the harnessing of the best potential of order and disorder. This path leads a person toward a life of meaning, purpose, and fulfillment.

Deviation from the middle way leads to imbalance, emotional dysregulation, and psychopathology. An example of disordered mental illness is manic syndrome, which is characterized by abnormally elevated arousal, affect, and energy level. In severe cases, mania may lead to overwhelming anxiety and violence. In chassidic terms, mania may be described as overwhelmingly intense light and/or insufficient vessels (psychological capacity and/or brain matter). In other words, the manic person's brain lacks the capacity to contain and process the intensity and speed of its own function. Using brain imaging, some studies have demonstrated that these patients have an increase of signal intensity in

their emotional centers¹⁰⁹ and a decrease in brain grey matter (decrease in capacity/vessel).¹¹⁰

An example of ordered mental illness is depression, which is characterized by low mood and energy, and loss of interest in normal activities, among other symptoms.¹¹¹ Depression represents slowed brain activity which can be demonstrated by functional imaging of the brain.¹¹² In chassidic terms, depression may be described as decreased light and/or coarse, dull vessels. The brain is pathologically ordered, quiet and dull.

¹⁰⁹ “Compared to normal volunteers, patients with bipolar disorder have overactive limbic areas, including the medial temporal structures (parahippocampal gyrus, hippocampus, and amygdala) and basal ganglia.” Chi-Hua Chen and John Suckling, et al., “A Quantitative Meta-Analysis of fMRI Studies in Bipolar Disorder,” *Bipolar Disorders*, 13 (Feb. 2011), 1–15.

¹¹⁰ T. William, J. Moorhead, James McKirdy, et al., “Progressive Gray Matter Loss in Patients with Bipolar Disorder,” *Biological Psychiatry*, 62, no. 8, (15 Oct. 2007): 894–900.

¹¹¹ *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th ed. rev. (DSM-V)*, (Washington, D.C.: American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

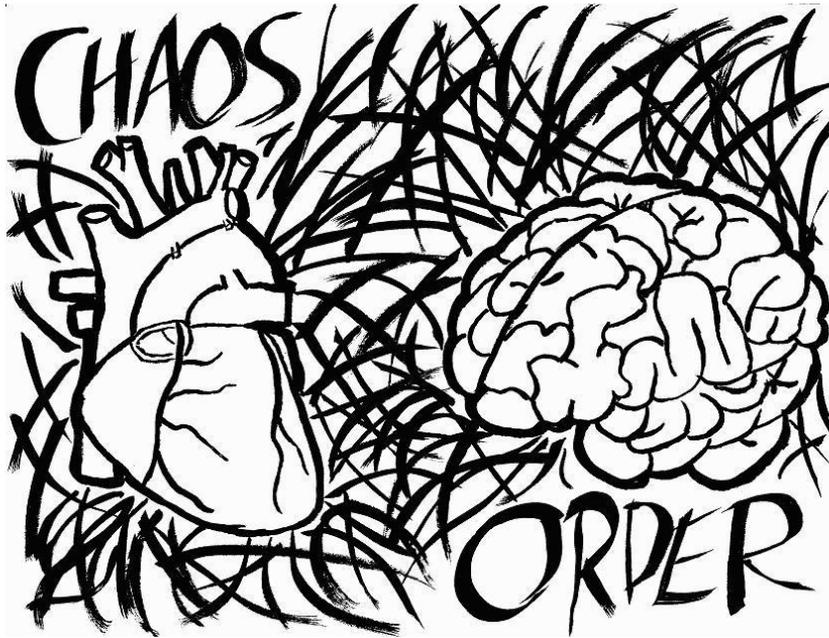
¹¹² DJ Oathes, B Patenaude, AF Schatzberg, A EtkiA, “Neurobiological Signatures of Anxiety and Depression in Resting-State Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging,” *Biol. Psychiatry*, 77, no.4 (2014):385-93.

Order and disorder also find expression on the atomic and molecular levels. Each atom has an electron cloud surrounding it.¹¹³ According to molecular orbital theory, molecules are formed through the hybridization of electron clouds of the atoms in that molecule.¹¹⁴ The new electron cloud formed surrounds the whole molecule and gives it stability and order. If the electron clouds fail to hybridize then the molecule is disordered, lacks stability, and falls apart.

Harnessing the energy of disorder and channeling it into the vessels of order is considered the middle way that leads to the rectification of humanity. This approach leads to an ascent along an individual's dominance hierarchy and provides the catalyst for the fulfillment of the promised divine utopia.

¹¹³ J Daintith, *Oxford Dictionary of Chemistry* (New York: Oxford University, 2004.)

¹¹⁴ Charles A Coulson, Charles, *Valence* (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1952.)



Everything

“Blessed are You, Lord, our G-d, King of the universe, who forms light and creates darkness, who makes peace and creates all things.”¹¹⁵ This prayer acknowledges and praises G-d’s wondrous ways of bringing into existence all spiritual and material reality.

The creation of all things, which includes the creation of darkness, light, and the peace between them, is brought into existence through the medium of G-d’s dynamic and perpetual anthropomorphic speech. Regarding this speech, Dovid *HaMelech* writes in *Tehillim*, “And the word of G-d shall stand forever”¹¹⁶ and, “And His words live and stand firm forever...”¹¹⁷ Rabbi Dovber of Mezherich said to Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi that in “the last three days before one restores his ‘deposit’—the soul entrusted into man’s charge—one sees that the word of G-d is the very essence of reality and matter.”¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵ Liturgy from the *Shema* section of the morning prayer.

¹¹⁶ *Tehillim* 119:89

¹¹⁷ *Yeshayahu* 40:8

¹¹⁸ Rabbi J. Immanuel Schochet, *The Great Maggid: The Life and Teachings of Rabbi DovBer of Mezherich* (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Kehot Publication Society, 3rd edition, 1998), 216–217.

A similar event is described about Rabbi Shneur Zalman himself: A few days before his *histalkus* (leaving of this world), the Alter Rebbe pointed to the ceiling and asked his grandson (the Tzemach Tzedek), “Mendel, what do you see?” Reb Menachem Mendel replied, “I see the beams in the ceiling.” To this, his beloved grandfather replied, “And I see the words of G-d that are giving them life.”¹¹⁹

The letters of G-d’s speech are usually concealed by the process of *tzimtzum* in order to allow for man’s independent existence, consciousness, and free will. The job of man is to transform the *tzimtzum* and reveal the underlying truth and reality of G-d’s immanence and transcendence.

The twenty-two Hebrew letters represent the foundational building blocks of spiritual and material existence. These letters antecede all forms of energy and matter and signify G-d’s mechanism for the revelation of His wisdom in creation, as it is stated, “Everything is created with His wisdom.”¹²⁰ An allusion to this is found in the first verse of the *Chumash*, “In the beginning, G-d created the heavens and the earth” (בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ). The first letter of every word in the verse adds up to twenty-two.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ Rabbi Sholom DovBer Avtzon, *The Tzemach Tzedek*, (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Avtzon Books, 2012), 118.

¹²⁰ *Mishlei* 3:19

¹²¹ Rabbi Isaac Luria, *Pri Etz Chaim*, “*Sha’ar Chag Shavuot*,” *perek aleph*.

The creation of the finite system of spiritual and material worlds involves the revelation of G-d's infinite wisdom and flow of divine information. This information transfer may be referred to as the revelation of G-d's names, *Havayah* and *Elokim*. It is the coordinated interplay of these two names that leads to the potential for the revelation of G-d's essence in the lowest physical world.

G-d uses the name *Havayah Ila'ah* (the upper level of the Tetragrammaton) to download infinite divine information, and He then uses the name *Elokim* to zip all that information into a metaphysical singularity. Subsequently, He unzips the singularity and allows for the download of finite divine information. This finite information transfer involves the interplay of the *Havayah Ta'tah* (the lower level of the Tetragrammaton) and *Elokim* in order to create multiple and unique spiritual states of being. Each spiritual world formed involves an initial singularity and subsequent inflationary expansion. This process is repeated until the formation of the physical world.

Human knowledge of the physical world is an evolving process which constantly changes based on new discoveries. As more information is revealed, man's understanding of reality is tweaked accordingly. Science's role is not to answer theological questions, nor does it exist to explain why things are the way they are. Scientific knowledge is an expression of the current understanding into the nature of perceived reality. Unlike divine revelation, which is universally true, scientific

knowledge must be frequently adjusted to reflect the latest developments.

The leading view of cosmologists today is that the physical universe began with a primordial gravitational singularity. This theoretical construct is based on the backward extrapolation of universal expansion using general relativity; it yields a finite point of infinite density and temperature.¹²²

From this infinitely dense, hot, dimensionless point, an outward explosion occurred which began the process of the universal expansion of space-time.¹²³ The processes that followed are best characterized as epochs of time which are marked by significant developments in the complexity of proto structures and elements.

¹²² SW Hawking and GFR Ellis, *The Large-Scale Structure of Space-Time* (Cambridge, U.K., Cambridge University Press, 1973.)

¹²³ This refers to the Big Bang. It is important to note that this theory has not been experimentally verified and is only the theoretical extrapolation of available evidence using general relativity.

The Big Bang, which marks the Planck epoch,¹²⁴ until the grand unification epoch,¹²⁵ demarcates an era where all is considered as one. There is no working theory or evidence about this era and its existence is speculative. Furthermore, there is currently no known way to investigate this era, which means that central concepts of modern cosmology are based on mystery and faith-based axioms. This era represents a state of being that may be the physical derivative of the idea that *Havayah* is *Elokim*. *Havayah* represents extroverted revelation of divine information, whereas *Elokim* represents introverted restraint of divine information. *Havayah* is *Elokim* represents a state of amalgamation were both names are unified in the divine creative purpose. Cosmologists from all around the world are actively engaged in trying to discover the

¹²⁴ In Big Bang cosmology, the Planck epoch is the earliest stage of the Big Bang—the length of which (in time) was 10^{-43} seconds after the Big Bang—after which began the grand unification epoch. There is no currently available physical theory to describe such short amounts of time, and it is not clear in what sense the concept of time is meaningful for values smaller than the Planck time.

¹²⁵ In physical cosmology, the grand unification epoch was the period in the evolution of the early universe following the Planck epoch, starting at about 10^{-43} seconds after the Big Bang. During this period, three of the four fundamental interactions—electromagnetism, the strong interaction, and the weak interaction—were unified as the electronuclear force. Gravity separated from the electronuclear force at the end of the Planck era.

theory of everything,¹²⁶ which, they hope, would explain the state of being in the Planck epoch. I suggest that this era is intentionally mysterious and will remain so because the theory of everything is that *Havayah is Elokim*.

When the universe was 10^{-43} seconds old, the grand unification epoch began. In this era, the force of gravity separated and began exerting its influence on the universe; the remaining fundamental forces stabilized into the electronuclear force,¹²⁷ known as the grand unified theory (GUT).

¹²⁶ The theory of everything is a hypothetical, single, all-encompassing, coherent theoretical framework of physics that would fully explain and link together all physical aspects of the universe. Finding it is one of the major problems in physics.

¹²⁷ This theorized electronuclear force is a composite that consists of elements that will later differentiate into the strong nuclear force and the electroweak force. The GUT has not been proven experimentally, it is a theoretical construct of very high-energy particle physics.

Gravity¹²⁸ is the weakest and most subtle of the four fundamental forces¹²⁹ found to exist in the physical universe.¹³⁰ The effort to develop a model that unifies gravity with the electronuclear force (the three remaining forces) has proven to be a formidable, if not samsonian task. I suggest that gravity is qualitatively different from the other forces and cannot be inter-included with the other forces unless there is a paradigm shift.

The strong nuclear force, the weak nuclear force, and the force of electromagnetism all share the common denominator of extraversion. In

¹²⁸ Gravity is most accurately described by the general theory of relativity (proposed by Albert Einstein in 1915), which describes gravity as a consequence of the curvature of space-time caused by the uneven distribution of mass. The most extreme example of this curvature of space-time is a black hole, from which nothing—not even light—can escape once past the black hole's event horizon.

¹²⁹ Fundamental forces are the interactions that do not appear to be reducible to more basic interactions. There are four fundamental interactions known to exist: the gravitational and electromagnetic interactions, which produce significant long-range forces whose effects can be seen directly in everyday life, and the strong and weak interactions, which produce forces at minuscule, subatomic distances that govern nuclear interactions.

¹³⁰ Gravity is the weakest of the four fundamental forces of physics, approximately 10^{38} times weaker than the strong force, 10^{36} times weaker than the electromagnetic force and 10^{29} times weaker than the weak force. Consequently, it has no significant influence at the level of subatomic particles. In contrast, it is the dominant force at the macroscopic scale and is the cause of the formation, shape, and trajectory (orbit) of astronomical bodies.

other words, these three forces radiate outwards and may be a physical metaphor for G-d's name *Havayah*.

In contrast, gravity is an introverted phenomenon in the sense that it causes energy or matter to be drawn towards the source of gravity through the curvature of space-time. In other words, gravity may be the physical manifestation of G-d's name *Elokim*.

I suggest that the theory of everything has proven to be elusive because gravity is an antipode to the three other forces. By way of analogy, *Elokim* is fundamentally different from *Havayah* and cannot be combined into a homogenized concept of *Elokim-Havayah* or *Havayah-Elokim*. Rather, a higher level of abstraction is needed in order to develop a theory of everything. This higher order abstraction requires a paradigm shift in which creation is viewed from the perspective of the Creator and not that of the creation. From G-d's perspective, *Havayah* and *Elokim* are the same in terms of their divine purpose in creation.

G-d creates the spiritual and material universes so that man can establish a dwelling place for His essence in the lowest physical world.¹³¹ This may only be accomplished by G-d's theory of everything, called "*Havayah is Elokim*." Even though *Havayah* and *Elokim* are polar opposite forces, they are nevertheless fundamentally the same from the perspective of His inter-inclusion of purpose. If G-d were to create using only *Havayah*, there would be revelation, but no world; whereas, if G-d

¹³¹ *Tanya, Likkutei Amarim*, ch.36.

were to create the world only with *Elokim*, there would be a world, but no revelation. Only through the coordinated interplay of the names *Havayah* and *Elokim*, could the divine will be actualized. *Havayah* is *Elokim*.

Free Will

Free will is a unique power of the soul that is closely related to human consciousness. Consciousness is the awareness of the self and the world around us. Only a conscious being, who is aware of the available choices, is in a position to exercise their free will. Consciousness is sublime in essence and is poorly understood. It has also proven difficult to localize it from a neurophysiological perspective.

Will is the faculty that moves a person's inner soul powers.¹³² The inner soul powers are embodied in specific areas of the anatomy¹³³ which are controlled by the nervous system. The nervous system is an amalgamation of innumerable sensory and motor nerves that radiate out of a central spinal column. This central column serves as the main route to and from the brain. The brain crowns the central column and it serves as the hub of the entire network. The nervous system is the embodied mechanism through which the lofty faculty of will exerts its influence over the inner soul powers and the body. For example, the power of movement is localized in a person's limbs, whereas the control of these movements is mediated by the nervous system.

¹³² *BeShaah SheHakdemo (Ayin Beis), "Chag HaShavuos," siman beis.*

¹³³ *Ibid., siman gimmel.*

As is known, not every physical motion in the body is a deliberate act. There are several levels of complexity in the movement of the limbs. Reflexes are simple movements that are independent of conscious control since they are hardwired into our nervous system. In contrast, a person's conscious decision to move a limb is a willful act. For example, a painter has an image in his mind that is transmitted via the nervous system to the power of movement in his hands. Then, the movement of his fingers transmits the image onto canvas. The power of movement is an inner soul power since it is permanently embodied in the limbs. Will is a transcendental soul power because it is transient and encompassing. Will is not embodied in any specific limb, but rather, it is temporarily revealed through the control of the inner soul powers and their corresponding body parts.¹³⁴ The same will simultaneously control multiple inner soul powers and limbs. For example, if I want to get close to G-d, then my intellect is directed to think about divinity, my mouth to speak properly, and my limbs to act in a charitable fashion. It is the soul faculty of will that influences multiple dimensions of a person simultaneously.

Free will is the ability to make choices without coercion. Most dimensions of human existence lack free will. A person has no control

¹³⁴ Ibid., *siman beis*.

over his genetics, biological needs, and environment during early development. Furthermore, historical and most societal factors are out of the control of the individual, and yet, they have a profound influence on the life of that person.

Historically, free will and divine predetermination were viewed as mutually exclusive concepts. The Talmud states, “Everything is predetermined by G-d except the fear of G-d.”¹³⁵ A person’s relationship with G-d is not predetermined and falls under the influence of free will. In contrast, Iyov states, “Master of the universe, you have created wicked people and you have created righteous people.”¹³⁶ This seems to

¹³⁵ *Berachos* 33b (Translation from Sefaria.org):

And Rabbi Chanina said: Everything is in the hands of Heaven, except for fear of Heaven. Man has free will to serve G-d or not, as it is stated: “And now Israel, what does the Lord your G-d ask of you other than to fear the Lord your G-d, to walk in all of His ways, to love Him and to serve the Lord your G-d with all your heart and with all your soul” (*Devarim* 10:12). The Lord asks man to perform these matters because ultimately, the choice is in his hands.

¹³⁶ *Bava Basra* 16a (Translation from Sefaria.org):

Although You know that I am not wicked, and there is none that can deliver out of Your hand” (*Iyov* 10:7). Rava says: Iyov sought to exempt the whole world from judgment, claiming that all a person’s actions are directed by G-d, and therefore one cannot be held culpable for his misdeeds. Iyov said before G-d: Master of the Universe, You created the ox with split hooves, making it kosher, and You created the donkey with closed hooves, making it forbidden; You created the Garden of

contradict the concept that a person has control over his relationship with G-d. It certainly seems that the implication of Iyov's statement is that G-d determines whether a person will be righteous or wicked.¹³⁷

To reconcile this apparent contradiction between the Talmud's teaching and Iyov's statement, it is necessary to understand the full spectrum of human potential in relation to an absolute and universal moral code. Any assessment of human behavior must be measured against an accepted value structure. Value structures are based on either a universal or a relativistic moral code. Universal values are those that transcend space-time and are applicable across all societies. These

Eden, and You created Gehenna; and similarly, You created righteous people and You created wicked people; who can restrain You? Seeing that You created people as either righteous or wicked, You cannot later complain about their actions.

¹³⁷ The Alter Rebbe objects to Iyov's apparent predeterminism: "For He does not decree [which persons are to be] righteous and wicked." (*Lessons in Tanya, Likkutei Amarim*, ch.1) The Gemara (*Niddah* 16b) relates that G-d decrees that a child about to be born will be wise or foolish, strong or weak, and so on. However, whether the child will be righteous or wicked, G-d does not say; this is not predetermined, rather, it is left to the individual's free choice. See *Tanya, Likkutei Amarim*, ch.2.

values are supra-rational in their source; they are absolute and based on a divine value structure. On the other hand, relativistic values are based on rationally derived morals. These values are reactionary by definition, spawned by the circumstances that led to them being incorporated into that culture. Obviously, this can result in two groups having values that are entirely different and it is easy to see how conflicts can arise between them. Naturally, there have been those individuals and groups who endeavor to “solve” what they subjectivize to be the underlying problem responsible for the conflict. Too often they advance in this endeavor by arrogantly surmising that the only way to structure a hierarchy of relative values across different societies is to “assess” which values provide a survival benefit. A rational person should immediately recognize the obvious flaw with having human beings arbitrarily “assessing” values since they can be easily exploited by those who have other agendas. Lamentably, this experiment has been tried multiple times throughout history and has always led to tyranny and mass murder.

Universal values based on a divine will and code provide an absolute measure of morality that transcends space-time and society. At this point, the usual criticism is that there are many religions that claim to know the will of G-d. The existence of a multiplicity of opinions does not negate the possibility that one of them may be true and more valid than the others. Truth is truth and people are obligated to search for it. Through intellectual honesty and emotional sensitivity, a person will be

able to discover the hidden truth of all existence. The other common criticism is that many historical atrocities have been committed in the name of G-d. This is true, but we should not confuse the will of G-d with the will of man. Man has frequently used the name of G-d to justify his own relativistic values and desire for power.

Once we accept a universal divine code, then it becomes possible to make assessments of the quality and morality of man. We define good as that which is consistent with G-d's will, and bad is that which is against G-d's will. As a person develops, he progressively becomes more conscious of himself and the world around him. According to Jewish law,

a person becomes fully responsible for his actions at the age of twenty¹³⁸

¹³⁸ In Bamidbar 16:27, Rashi quotes *Sanhedrin* 89b, that a person is only judged in Heaven for sins committed after the age of 20. The Mishnah (*Avos* 5:22) further confirms that 20 is the age of adulthood, saying that this is the age “to pursue” a livelihood. This Mishnah states that until 20, a young person should be wholly focused on Torah study and *mitzvot*. At 20, they are ready to enter the real world. The *Midrash (Bereishis Rabbah* 14:7) wonderfully ties it all together by stating that G-d created Adam and Eve as 20-year-olds. Based on this, it may be reasoned that in the World of Resurrection—like in Eden—people will inhabit their 20-year-old body, at the peak of their beauty and vitality.

The Arizal provides a deeper, mystical perspective (see the introduction to *Sha’ar Ha’Gilgulim*). While we often think of the soul as a singular entity, it is composed of several parts. The lowest is called *nefesh*, the basic life force, common to all living things (at least those with blood, as the Torah states in *Vayikra* 17:11). The next level is *ruach*, “spirit,” which encompasses one’s good and evil inclinations, along with their drives and desires. The third and, for most people, the highest level of their soul is *neshamah*. This is associated with the mind.

A newborn baby is imbued with *nefesh* and little else. As it grows, it attains more and more of its *ruach*, and has achieved it in full by bar or bat mitzvah age. By this point, a child has learned right from wrong, and understands their good and evil inclinations. It is only at age 20 that a person can access their full *neshamah*. This is when their mental faculties have developed and when they can truly overcome their evil inclination. Therefore, 20 is the minimum age of judgment in Heaven. It is also why 20 is the age of adulthood, and the age at which priests (and soldiers) can begin their service.

The Arizal explains that only at age 20 can a person access all levels of their full *neshamah* potential, called *mochin d’gadlus*. (See *Sha’ar HaKavanot*, “*Inyan shel Pesach*,” *derush* 2.)

because it is at this age that his consciousness becomes fully self-aware.

Man can be categorized into five different groups¹³⁹ in relation to the

¹³⁹ *Berachos 7a* (Translation from Sefaria.org):

A righteous person is clearly not punished for the transgressions of his ancestors. Rather, it must be that G-d said to Moses as follows: The righteous person who prospers is a completely righteous person whose actions are entirely good and whose reward is entirely good both in this world and in the World-to-Come. The righteous person who suffers is one who is not a completely righteous person. Because he does have some transgressions, he is punished in this world so that he will receive a complete reward in the World-to-Come. The wicked person who prospers is one who is not a completely wicked person. G-d rewards him in this world for the good deeds that he performed, so that he will receive a complete punishment in the World-to-Come. Finally, the wicked person who suffers is a completely wicked person. Since he performed absolutely no *mitzvot* and deserves no reward, he receives only punishment both in this world and in the World-to-Come (Maharsha).

Rosh Hashanah 16b (Translation from Sefaria.org):

Rabbi Kruspedai said that Rabbi Yochanan said: Three books are opened on Rosh Hashanah before the Holy One, Blessed be He: One of wholly wicked people, and one of wholly righteous people, and one of middling people whose good and bad deeds are equally balanced. Wholly righteous people are immediately written and sealed for life; wholly wicked people are immediately written and sealed for death; and middling people are left with their judgment suspended from Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur, their fate remaining undecided. If they merit, through good deeds and *mitzvot* that they perform during this period, they are written for life; if they do not merit, they are written for death.

universal moral code: 1) a righteous person with only a good inclination, 2) a righteous person with good and bad inclinations, 3) a perfect soldier, 4) a wicked person with bad and good inclinations, and 5) a wicked person with only a bad inclination. Most of humanity fits into the fourth category which contains within it a myriad of different levels. There may be a person who behaves in a not-good way only once a year and there may be a person that does good once a year. These represent the two extremes of the fourth category but there are a myriad of possibilities. The third category represents a man that still has both inclinations of good and bad; yet, he does only good, even though he must contend with the bad inclination. He is a perfect soldier who constantly overcomes his temptation to sin. It is precisely because of this incessant conflict that free will only exists in the third and fourth categories. A person may work hard and ascend the dominance hierarchy within the category of the “wicked person with bad and good inclinations” through doing good and turning away from bad. If he climbs to the top of the hierarchy, he can reach the level of the perfect soldier.¹⁴⁰

The first and second categories of the righteous man are not within the ability of a person to attain on his own. The righteous man is a person whose bad inclination has been, either partly or fully, removed from his soul.¹⁴¹ This person is like the perfect soldier in that he never sins.

¹⁴⁰ See *Tanya, Likkutei Amarim*, ch.12

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.* ch.10

However, the righteous man has less inclination to do bad. This removal of the bad inclination is only by divine decree and not within the capacity of the man to accomplish on his own. That is what Iyov meant when he said, "Master of the universe, You have *created* the righteous."

The fifth category, which is the wicked man that has only a bad inclination, is also not within the ability of a person to determine. This fully wicked man is a person whose good inclination has been fully removed.¹⁴² This removal of the good inclination is also only by divine decree. This man has allowed himself to become so thoroughly corrupt that G-d removes his ability to repent. The pharaoh of Egypt who refused to set free the Israelites was punished in this manner.¹⁴³ This is what Iyov meant when he said, "Master of the universe, You have *created* the wicked."

The Talmud states that everything is determined by G-d, except the fear of G-d. This means that free will is limited to whether a person will choose to live according to G-d's absolute moral code or choose to live by rationally derived moral relativism.

¹⁴² Ibid. ch.11

¹⁴³ *Shemos* 4:21: "The Lord said to Moses, When you go to return to Egypt, see all the signs that I have placed in your hand and perform them before Pharaoh, but I will harden his heart, and he will not send out the people."

Free will and consciousness are unique characteristics which are entrusted to man from the essence of G-d. G-d is self-aware and He has free will. There is no entity higher than G-d that compels Him to do anything. We are made in His image.¹⁴⁴



¹⁴⁴ *Bereishis* 1:27: "And G-d created man in His image; in the image of G-d He created him; male and female He created them."

G-d's Home

According to Jewish tradition and Chassidic thought, “The purpose of the creation of this world is that the Holy One, blessed be He, desired a dwelling place in the lower worlds.”¹⁴⁵ The implication is that there exist many worlds. According to Kabbalah, G-d created many worlds in the process of bringing about our physical state of being. The entire known and unknown physical universe or multiverse is considered the lowest world, the World of Action, or *olam asiyah*. All that can now or will ever be seen or measured, including dark matter and dark energy, is included in the world of *asiyah*.

In addition to this physical world, there are also spiritual worlds. These other worlds are referred to as the World of Formation (*yetzirah*), the World of Creation (*beriyah*), and the World of Emanation (*atzilus*).¹⁴⁶ These other worlds exist in spiritual “space” and cannot be measured or perceived in the traditional scientific sense.

These three spiritual worlds are differentiated by the degree of revelation of G-d's light, which is also referred to as divinity. Divinity is less revealed in the lower worlds; conversely, in the higher worlds, there

¹⁴⁵ *Tanya*, ch.36, quoting *Midrash Tanchuma*, “Parshas Nasso,” 16.

¹⁴⁶ Rabbi Isaac Luria, *Sha'arei Kedushah* III:1 and *Etz Chaim*, 1:4; Rabbi Moshe Cordovero, *Pardes Rimonim* 5:4; Rabbi Yosef Ergas, *Shomer Emunim*, 1:46.

is more revelation of the divine. To perceive and experience these other spiritual worlds, a person must possess the proper “receptors.” By way of analogy, the physical world possesses energy in the form of the electromagnetic (EM) spectrum. This includes visible light and other forms of radiation that are not visible to the naked eye. These different forms of EM energy are all characterized by variations in their wavelengths. They include X-rays, ultraviolet light, infrared light, microwaves, and radio waves. To perceive any of these forms of energy, a person must possess the appropriate receptor. The eye’s retina possesses sensory receptors that can absorb and perceive light waves. To capture radio waves, a specific type of antenna is required. To perceive any of the other forms of EM energy, the proper receptor is required.

To perceive the higher worlds, a spiritual antenna is required. It is unnecessary to travel to any specific location in the physical world when attempting to reach the spiritual worlds. Like radio waves, they are always everywhere; all one needs to do is to perceive the signal with their spiritual antenna. This spiritual antenna is developed by learning Torah, by proper observance of divine commandments (*mitzvos*), and through character refinement.

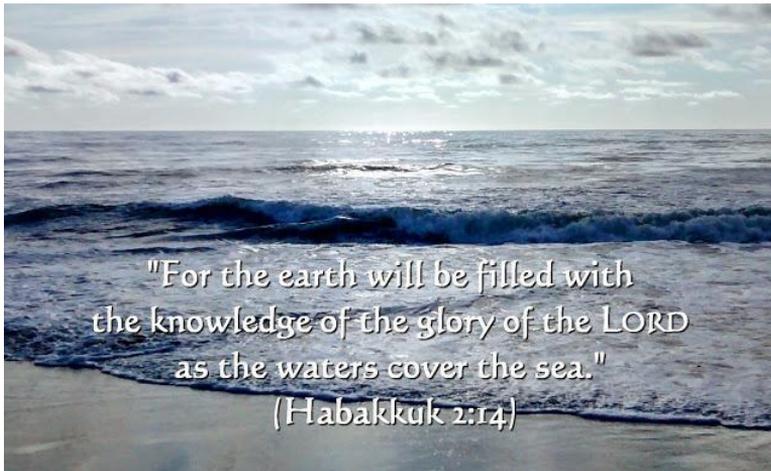
However, the purpose of creation is not the selfish perception and experience of spiritual phenomena. Rather, it is a person’s responsibility to understand and actualize G-d’s motives for creation.

When our Holy Temple existed in Jerusalem, the essence of G-d was revealed to the *Kohen Gadol* in the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur,¹⁴⁷ to one person, in one place and at one time. This singularly exalted responsibility and privilege was an ecstatic experience, and it demonstrated that spirituality and physicality can morph into one entity.¹⁴⁸ Through the cumulative efforts of all G-d's servants throughout the millennia, the physical world is refined and becomes a vessel for the absorption of divinity. This extensive refining process, which we refer to as human history, will culminate with every single person perceiving the essence of G-d, everywhere and all the time. This refining process is referred to as making a "dwelling place in the lower realms." G-d's reasons for wanting a dwelling place in this world are His alone. We can postulate that when a person uses free will to turn away from bad and

¹⁴⁷ *Vayikra* 16:33: "And he shall affect atonement upon the Holy of Holies, and he shall affect atonement upon the Tent of Meeting and upon the altar, and he shall affect atonement upon the *kohanim* and upon all the people of the congregation."

¹⁴⁸ See *Shemos Rabbah*, ch.12, and *Midrash Tanchuma*, "Parshas Vayera," 15. Before the Torah was given, G-d created a barrier that separated spirituality from physicality. After the Torah was given, this barrier was eliminated, and the physical world became a vessel for spirituality. When the physical world is used properly in the service of G-d, it absorbs and reveals spirituality in a permanent way.

do good, this is pleasurable to G-d. As it is stated in *Tanya*, G-d has pleasure when darkness is transformed to light.¹⁴⁹



¹⁴⁹ *Lessons in Tanya*, ch.36:

Rather, the purpose of *hishtalshelus* is this lowest world. All the higher worlds are merely steps in the descent of the divine creative power; in each of them the light is veiled yet further, until it is finally reduced to the minute degree of revelation that this physical world can receive. Thus, the purpose of the *hishtalshelus* is this world, for such was His will — that He find it pleasurable when the *sitra achra* is subjugated to holiness, and the darkness of *kelipah* is transformed into holy light, so that in the place of the darkness and *sitra achra* prevailing throughout this world, the *ohr ein sof*—light of G-d—will shine forth with greater strength and intensity, and with the superior quality of light that emerges from the darkness i.e., when darkness is transformed into light, the resulting light is superior to ordinary light; it will thus shine with greater intensity than its radiance in the higher worlds.

Holy of Holies

G-d desires a home in this physical world, as it is stated in the *Midrash Tanchuma*, “The purpose of the creation of the world is that the Holy One, blessed be He, desired a dwelling place in the lowest worlds.”¹⁵⁰ To actualize this desire, He created a system of finite worlds and men with free will.

The creation of the system of worlds involves the complex interplay of G-dly revelation and concealment. These pretemporal divine reverberations are represented by G-d’s names, *Havayah*¹⁵¹ and *Elokim*.

¹⁵² A dwelling place in this world can only be accomplished by the utilization of both names, marshalled in symphony. If G-d were to use

¹⁵⁰ *Tanya, Likkutei Amarim*, ch.36, quoting *Midrash Tanchuma*, “Parshas Nasso,” 16.

¹⁵¹ *Havayah* refers to G-d’s ineffable tetragrammaton name, *Yud-Hey-Vav-Hey*. This name represents G-d’s desire for revelation and is subdivided into *Havayah De’Liayla* (*ohr ein-sof/infinite light*) and *Havayah De’Litata* (*ohr ha’gvul/finite light*).

¹⁵² *Elokim* represents G-d’s desire for restraint and concealment. *Elokim* is synonymous with *koach ha’gvul* (power of limitation), *rishimo* (trace), or *osios harishimo* (letters of the trace). The *tzimtzum harishon* and the *tzimtzumim* in the *kav* are a manifestation of the power of *Elokim*.

only energy represented by the name *Elokim*, a system of worlds would be created, but there would be no revelation of divinity.¹⁵³ If G-d were to use only energy represented by the name *Havayah*, then that would result in revelation, but no worlds.¹⁵⁴ So it's only through the coordinated use of both names, that G-d's desire for a dwelling place in the lowest world can be fulfilled.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵³ *Elokim* has the numerical value (*gematria*) of 86 which is the same value as the Hebrew word for "nature" ("*hateva*"). Thus, G-d's use of energy, which is represented by the name *Elokim*, is used in the creation of the system of worlds that are governed by the laws of nature and finitude. The lower level of *Havayah De'Litata* must be involved with *Elokim* in the creative process, since its finite light (*ohr ha'gvul*) is needed to vivify the worlds. However, without the higher level of *Havayah De'Liayla*, G-d's desire for a dwelling place in the lower worlds would not be actualized. This name represents G-d's infinite light (*ohr ein-sof*) which reflects G-d's infinite potential. G-d's ultimate will is actualized when the infinite light is revealed in and through the finite system of worlds. This represents the fusion of the diametric opposites of infinity and finity. This fusion is brought about by the revelation of the hidden essence (*helem ha'atzmi*) of G-d which transcends both.

¹⁵⁴ *Havayah De'Liayla* represents the revelation of G-d's infinite light. Nothing finite can have perceptible and independent existence within it. Thus, without the prerequisite withdrawal of this light by way of the *tzimtzum harishon*, a finite system of worlds cannot exist.

¹⁵⁵ The system of worlds is created through the complex interaction of energies represented by *Elokim* and *Havayah De'Litata*. After the world is in existence, G-d creates man with consciousness and free will. When a person serves G-d through the observance of His Torah and *mitzvos*, the *Havayah De'Liayla* is drawn back into the world. Through man's cumulative efforts throughout the

G-d's desire for a dwelling place is interconnected with His want to give of His essence to man, as a reward for enduring or completing the exigent task of rectification.¹⁵⁶ G-d's essence is impossible to characterize, but it is self-evident that He is self-aware and has free will. There is no force greater than G-d, compelling Him to do anything.¹⁵⁷ Therefore, it is written, "the souls of Israel arose in G-d's thought."¹⁵⁸ His thinking the soul into being gives it both consciousness and the potential for free will.¹⁵⁹ These uniquely divine attributes are gifted to man.

millennia, the world is perfected and G-d's desire for a dwelling place is actualized.

¹⁵⁶ Rabbi Joseph Caro (1488–1575), author of the *Shulchan Aruch*, was frequently visited by an angel called the *Maggid* and he recorded his conversations with this angel in a book called *Maggid Mesharim*. The *Maggid* explained the following: Before the souls come into this world, they are compared to one who eats the king's bread without working for it. They come into the world to engage in Torah and *mitzvot*, in order to earn their bread and avoid shame (*nahama de'kisufa*).

¹⁵⁷ Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Sefer Madda, "Yesodei Ha'Torah,"* ch.1:

The foundation of all foundations and the pillar of wisdom is to know that there is a Primary Being who brought into being all existence. All the beings of the heavens, the earth, and what is between them came into existence only from the truth of His being.

¹⁵⁸ *Bereishis Rabbah* 1:4

¹⁵⁹ See *Iyov* 31:2. The soul of a Jew is considered truly a part of G-d above. The essence of the Jewish G-dly soul is derived from the essence of G-d and is considered a "chip off the old block." Therefore, G-d gifts His unique quality of

Human consciousness alone does not inexorably afford man the opportunity to exercise free will. Free will requires the existence of choices. For choices to exist, G-d creates the finite system of worlds in the following manner: He emanates the infinite light which contains within itself finite potential.¹⁶⁰ Then, He makes a metaphysical empty space within the infinite light (*makom panuy*) by withdrawing a portion of the infinite light back into His essence.¹⁶¹ By doing so, He teases apart the finite light from the infinite light and couples it together with the power of limitation (*koach ha'gvul*). He then emanates the *kav* (the coupled entity) into the empty space. This *kav* provides the vivifying

self-awareness and power of free will to the soul. This is self-evident from the Midrashic teaching, "With whom did G-d take counsel as to whether to create or not? He took counsel from the souls of future *tzadikim*." (*Bereishis Rabbah* 8:6.) It is obvious that if G-d takes counsel with souls, that the souls must possess self-awareness and free will.

¹⁶⁰ See essay, "Dominance Hierarchy." Infinity may be conceptualized as perfection. Perfection implies that all is included, and nothing is lacking. In other words, the infinite possesses within itself all possibilities including G-d's finite potential. If the infinite was to lack within itself finite potential, then it would not be infinite. Thus, the finite is one of the countless states of being within the infinite. See *Sefer Avodat HaKodesh* by Rabbi *Meir Ben Gabbai*, *sha'ar aleph, perek ches*; *Samech Vav, Samech Zayin and Ayin Beis* by Rabbi Shalom Dov Ber Schneersohn.

¹⁶¹ In *Etz Chaim, heichel aleph, heichel Adam Kadmon, sha'ar aleph, anuf beis, drush Igulim v'Yosher*, the Arizal refers to the cataclysmic withdrawal and concealment (*siluk ha'ohr*) of the infinite light into G-d's essence. This creates the metaphysical empty space (*makom panuy*) in which all finite creation exists.

energy for all finite creation and is the source of the system of worlds (*memale kol almin*).

The system of worlds (*sefer histalshelus*) consists of the following stages: *Adam Kadmon*,¹⁶² *akudim*,¹⁶³ *nikudim (tohu)*,¹⁶⁴ and *brudim (tikkun)*.¹⁶⁵ *Tohu* and *tikkun* exist in parallel and represent systems of

¹⁶² See *Samech Vav*, “*Pinchas, Tetain Emes L'Yaakov*,” 400. *AK* is also referred to *Adam de'beriyah de'klalus*.

¹⁶³ See essay, “Dominance Hierarchy.” *Akudim* is characterized by “ten lights in one vessel.” The Arizal explains that the formation of this one primordial vessel is from the light itself. He states that “from the thickening of the light, the vessel is formed.” This “thickening” of the light results from the effect of the power of limitation which has heretofore been dormant within the *kav*. This formed vessel is congealed light and is the source of the subsequent ten vessels in the lower worlds.

¹⁶⁴ The world of *tohu*, also referred to as *nikkudim*, is characterized by “ten lights in ten vessels,” which are referred to as the ten *sefiros*. The primordial vessel of *akudim* is further subdivided into ten vessels of *tohu* through the influence of the power of limitation. The structure of *tohu* is characterized by separation, lack of hybridization and instability. The ten *sefiros* are organized in a pattern of individuality and disunity. The lack of cohesion amongst the *sefiros* in *tohu* is by divine design and leads to entropy and chaotic disintegration. *Tohu* deteriorates into chaos and leads to the “shattering of the vessels.” This shattered state is the source of all disorder in the world.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.* *Tohu's* parallel and diametric state is the world of *tikkun*. *Tikkun*, which means rectification, is a world of order. G-d emanates a harmonizing force from the world of *AK* (specifically G-d's *shem MA* from the forehead of *AK*), which gathers the shattered vessels of *tohu* and hybridizes them into stable metaphysical structures. These structures are called *partzufim* and form the blueprint of stable existence. The stability of *tikkun* is based on the hybridized

chaos and order, respectively. The narrow path upon which man must tread is a tremulous balance beam set within a gauntlet thrown down by two competing realities, *tohu* and *tikkun*. This parallel existence of chaos and order provide the source for the choices of embodied man's free will.¹⁶⁶

Tikkun led to the creation of the material world. On the sixth day of creation, G-d created man in His image.¹⁶⁷ First, He formed him by taking

pattern of the *sefiros*. *Partzufim* can be conceptualized as stable, metaphysical and archetypical constructs that form the mechanism for the flow of divine energy into the worlds. They are also affected by man's actions. Acts that are according to G-d's will cause the *partzufim* to orient themselves "face-to-face" and unify, which allows for unobstructed flow of divine plenty into the world. *Tikkun* is the source of all order in the world.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid. The razor's edge between order and disorder is the metaphysical space where G-d's presence is most found and where He awaits man's choices. This is the quintessential point of man's existence. Maimonides explains that the right way to live is the middle way. Man needs to stay away from the extremes; instead he should attempt to extract and integrate the best of order and disorder. The Lubavitcher Rebbe, Menachem Mendel Schneerson, teaches that we must take the lights of chaos/disorder (*tohu*) and channel them into the vessels of order (*tikkun*). This implies that both order and disorder possess elements that are integral to and must be harnessed for the actualization of G-d's plan for the world.

¹⁶⁷ *Bereishis* 1:26: And G-d said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and they shall rule over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the heavens and over the animals and over all the earth and over all the creeping things that creep upon the earth."

the dust of the earth and enlivened it with an animal soul.¹⁶⁸ The animal soul gives life to man's dusty body and is the source of his self-sustaining biological needs. At this point, man is like a Neanderthal and has only the most basic level of consciousness. Second, G-d made man in His image by blowing into his nostrils the soul of life.¹⁶⁹ This refers to the divine soul that arose in His primordial thought. At this instant, the embodied man is gifted consciousness and free will. Man contains within himself opposing forces: the self-serving animal soul and the altruistic divine soul, which derive from chaos and order, respectively.¹⁷⁰ Man's

¹⁶⁸ In kabbalah, the animal soul (*nefesh habehamis*) is one of the two souls of a Jew. It is the soul that gives life to the physical body, as stated in *Tanya, Likkutei Amarim*, chapter 1. It is the source of animalistic desires, as well as innate Jewish characteristics, such as kindness and compassion. Although its initial desire is to seek out worldly, physical pleasures, it can be trained to desire spiritual pleasures instead through the guidance of the divine soul.

¹⁶⁹ In kabbalah, the divine soul (*nefesh ha'Elokis*) is the source of the good inclination, *yetzer tov*, and G-dly desires. The divine soul is composed of the ten *sefiros* from the side of holiness. It garbs itself with three garments of holiness, namely G-dly thought, speech and action associated with the 613 commandments of the Torah. Because its desire is to cleave to G-dliness, it is usually in conflict with the animal soul (*nefesh habehamis*) whose desire is, initially, for physical pleasures.

¹⁷⁰ The animal soul (*nefesh habehamis*) is derived from the chaotic energy that led to the Shattering of the Vessels in the world of *tohu*. The name of G-d that represents the energy potential of this world is *Havayah*. In its *meeluy* form of *BON*— הַה ,וּ ,הַה ,יִד . It has the *gematria* of 52, which is also the numerical equivalent of the Hebrew word for "animal" ("*beheimah*"). Thus, the animal soul is associated with and derived from the chaotic energy potential of the

conscious free will exists on the metaphysical boundary of chaos and order. Man must choose which force will have primacy over him.¹⁷¹

The nature of the divine soul is to oscillate toward the heavens,¹⁷² whereas the nature of the animal soul is to fulfill its self-serving,

world of *tohu*. The divine soul (*nefesh ha'Elokis*) is derived from order (*tikkun*) energy. This world represents G-d's rectification of the Shattering of the Vessels in the world of *tohu*. The name of G-d that represents the energy potential of this world is *Havayah* in the *meeluy* form of *MA*— *אָה, וְאֵל, אֱלֹהִים*. It has the *gematria* of 45, which is also the numerical equivalent of the Hebrew word for "man" ("*adam*"). The uniqueness of man is that he possesses a spark of G-d called the divine soul.

¹⁷¹ See *Tanya, Likkutei Amarim*, ch.9:

The main revelation of the animal soul (*nefesh habehamis*) is in the left ventricle of the heart. As it is written, "For the blood is the *nefesh*." Therefore, all lusts and passions originate in the heart, and spread throughout the whole body, including the brain. The internal dynamics of the animal soul are best characterized by the notion that the heart rules the brain. In other words, the animal heart desires, and its brain justifies that desire. But the main revelation of the divine soul is in the brain and from there it extends to all the limbs, including the heart. It is the source of man's intense love towards G-d. The dynamic of the divine soul is that the brain rules over the heart. The body is called a "small city" with two kings that wage war over it. Each king's objective is to dominate its inhabitants so that they obey him in all that he decrees for them. This is an analogy for the two souls—the divine and the animal soul—that wage war against each other to rule the body and all its limbs.

¹⁷² The divine soul is compared to a candle that constantly flickers upwards.

biological needs by focusing earthward. Man's free choice can overcome the nature of both these souls. His divine soul can be motivated and inspired to orient itself toward the animal soul and harness its potential, as it is stated, there is much produce from the power of the ox.¹⁷³ The animal soul can be motivated to look toward the heavens by accepting the yoke of the divine soul.¹⁷⁴ The animal soul benefits by having its chaotic potential harnessed and channeled for good, and the divine soul benefits by the intensification of its self-sacrifice and vigor for serving G-d.¹⁷⁵

The transformation of the nature of the divine and animal souls leads to the rectification of the physical world. When man partakes of the physical world and uses the derived energy to serve the Creator, he

¹⁷³ *Mishlei* 14:4: "Where there are no oxen, the manger is empty, but from the strength of an ox comes an abundant harvest."

¹⁷⁴ *Tanya, Likkutei Amarim*, ch.9.

¹⁷⁵ The divine soul is associated with energy represented by *Havayah* in the *meeluy* form of *MA*—הא, ואו, הא. The animal soul is associated with energy represented by *Havayah* in the *meeluy* form of *BON*—הה, וו, הה. The source of *BON* energy is from *SOG*—הי, ואו, הי, יוד—which represents the energy of *nikkudim* prior to the shattering of the vessels. *SOG* energy potential is much higher than *MA* energy. Thus, *BON*, which is rooted in *SOG*, imparts the animal soul with energy potential that far exceeds that of the divine soul. Therefore, when the divine soul interacts and controls the animal soul, the divine soul itself is benefitted by getting infused with the superior energy potential of the animal soul.

reveals G-d's presence in the world.¹⁷⁶ This leads to the sanctification of time, space and humanity.¹⁷⁷

When the holy temple existed in Jerusalem 2000 years ago, G-d gave humanity a glimpse of His ultimate desire for creation.¹⁷⁸ The holiest human being was the *Kohen Gadol*; the holiest time of the year was (and still is) Yom Kippur; and, the holiest place in the world was the Holy of

¹⁷⁶ It is man's duty to elevate the "sparks of holiness" from their fallen state. This process of extracting the sparks is called "*birur*," meaning "clarification." This is part of a larger cosmic plan of *tikkun*, the rectification or restoration of the broken vessels, and, consequently, the restoration of the proper cosmic order. When the sparks of holiness are extracted from the *kelipos* and are rebuilt into the vessels of *tikkun*, the lights that formerly illuminated the *sefiros* of *tohu* can once again be drawn down. But this time, the repaired vessels will be able to contain the light.

¹⁷⁷ *Chavakkuk* 2:14: "For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

¹⁷⁸ *Pirkei Avos* 5:5: "Ten miracles were performed for our forefathers in the *Beis Hamikdash*: No woman ever miscarried because of the smell of the holy meat. The holy meat is never spoiled. Never was a fly seen in the slaughterhouse. Never did the High Priest have an accidental seminal discharge on Yom Kippur. The rains did not extinguish the burning wood upon the altar. The wind did not prevail over the column of smoke rising from the altar. No disqualifying problem was ever discovered in the *omer* offering, the two loaves or the showbread. They stood crowded but had ample space in which to prostrate themselves. Never did a snake or scorpion cause injury in Jerusalem. And no man ever said to his fellow, My lodging in Jerusalem is too cramped for me."

Holies. On Yom Kippur, the *Kohen Gadol* would enter the Holy of Holies and beseech G-d for atonement of the Jewish people.¹⁷⁹

When the Jewish people actualize their full potential and serve G-d properly, this effectuates the exponential expansion of holiness in the dimensions of soul, time, and space. The completion of this process will be in Messianic times when every person will attain the holiness of the *Kohen Gadol*; every point in time will attain the holiness of Yom Kippur; and, every point in space will attain the holiness of the Holy of Holies. There will be a full revelation and harmonization of *Havayah* with

¹⁷⁹ *Vayikra* 16:32–34: “And the priest, who shall be anointed and who shall be consecrated to be priest in his father’s stead, shall make the atonement, and shall put on the linen garments, even the holy garments. And he shall make atonement for the most holy place, and he shall make atonement for the tent of meeting and for the altar; and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make atonement for the children of Israel because of all their sins once in the year. And he did as the Lord commanded Moses.”

Elokim.¹⁸⁰ The essence of G-d will be revealed in the world and G-d's desire for a dwelling place will be fully actualized.

¹⁸⁰ *Malachim I* 8:60: "So that all the people of the earth may know that the Lord is G-d (*Havayah Hu Elokim*): There is none else."

Ibid. 18:39: "And all the people saw and fell on their faces, and they said, '*Havayah Hu Elokim, Havayah Hu Elokim.*'"

These two verses describe the association of *Havayah* with *Elokim* through their connection to *Hu*. The "*Hu*" refers to the hidden essence of G-d (*helem ha'atzmi*), which possesses attributes of revelation (*Havayah*) and restraint (*Elokim*). Both attributes are diametric opposites but serve the same divine purpose. The revelation of *Havayah in Elokim* symbolizes the revelation of G-d's infinite light in and through the finite world and represents the revelation of His hidden essence.

Intermediates

G-d creates spiritual and material existence in a way that facilitates movement along a dominance hierarchy.¹⁸¹ This is predicated on a universal and absolute value structure. In order to ascend from one level to another, G-d creates intermediate constructs that share attributes and act as a bridge between both levels. These intermediates exist in both spiritual and material worlds.

The material world (the World of Action, *asiyah*) consists of four different qualitative levels: 1) inanimate, 2) vegetative, 3) animal, 4) human.¹⁸² In addition, there are intermediaries between each of these levels.¹⁸³ Inanimate objects such as stones, are lifeless. Vegetative creation is characterized by growth and its attachment to the medium that provides it a stable and nourishing environment—the ground. An example of intermediaries between the inanimate and vegetative

¹⁸¹ See essay, “Dominance Hierarchy.”

¹⁸² *Torah Ohr*, “*Parshas Vayigash*,” 43b.

¹⁸³ See Rabbi Shalom Ber Schneersohn, *Ranat* (sixth printing), “*Panim Bi Panim*,” 190.

domains are minerals.¹⁸⁴ Minerals are inanimate objects that also have the property of growth. The animal is characterized as deriving growth energy from eating. An example of an intermediate entity between the vegetative and animal domains is the Venus flytrap, a carnivorous plant.¹⁸⁵ It is attached to the ground (vegetative) and can consume and digest flies (animal). The human is characterized by a developed brain that is capable of self-awareness and speech. An example of an intermediate entity between the animal and human domains is a monkey. It has recently been discovered that monkeys are able to recognize themselves in a mirror. This requires a basic sense of self-awareness. Thus, a monkey is an animal that has some degree of self-consciousness,¹⁸⁶ which makes it an intermediary.

The spiritual worlds consist of three main worlds: the spiritual World of Action (*asiyah ruchnius*), the World of Formation (*yetzirah*), and the World of Creation (*beriyah*). Each of these worlds are further subdivided into a thousand levels.¹⁸⁷ Thus, three thousand levels exist within these

¹⁸⁴ H. Hardtdegen and J.B. Mullin, *Progress in Crystal Growth and Characterization of Materials*, 62, no. 2 (June 2016): 227-251

¹⁸⁵ Thomas Sumner, "Investigating the Venus Flytrap," [//www.insidescience.org](http://www.insidescience.org), (March 18, 2018).

¹⁸⁶ G.G. Jr. Gallup, "Chimpanzees: self-recognition," *Science* 167: 86–87.

¹⁸⁷ All of existence is constructed in the fractal pattern of *partzufim*. All *partzufim* consist of ten *sefiros*. Thus, each world has 10 x 10 x 10, etc., fractal levels. There is an infinite number of levels, but by convention we limit our

three worlds. Above these three worlds, is the World of Emanation (*atzilus*), which is a world of pure divinity; it is where souls assemble prior to their descent into a body (*malchus* of *atzilus* is also called *knesset Yisrael*). These three thousand levels form the construct of the Garden of Eden. After the soul separates from the body, it ascends into the system of the Garden of Eden. The Talmud teaches that Torah scholars find no rest in this world or in the world to come,¹⁸⁸ as it is stated that the soul travels from “strength to strength.”¹⁸⁹ This refers to the ascent of the soul from one level to another.

The ascent from level to level in the Garden of Eden requires an intermediate two-step process. First, the soul must immerse itself in the River of Fire (*nahar dinur*)¹⁹⁰ which burns off any vestige or perception of

description to three orders of magnitude. Thus, each world contains one thousand (10 x 10 x 10) levels.

¹⁸⁸ *Berachos* 64a: Rabbi Chiyya bar Ashi said that Rav said: Torah scholars have rest neither in this world nor in the World-to-Come, as in both worlds they are constantly progressing, as it is stated: “They go from strength to strength, every one of them appears before G-d in Zion.”

¹⁸⁹ *Tehillim* 84:8: “They go from strength to strength, every one of them appears before G-d in Zion.”

¹⁹⁰ *Daniel* 7:10: “A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him.”

Zohar, Parshas Vayikra: “The souls of the righteous bathe and cleanse themselves in the river of fire.”

the pleasure of the lower level. Second, the soul attaches itself to the Pillar (*amud*),¹⁹¹¹⁹² which elevates it to a higher level. Thus, the River of Fire and the Pillar form the intermediate constructs that facilitate the ascension of the soul to higher levels of sublime pleasure.

The Jew is an intermediate between the Creator and His creation. He is not bound by creation because his spiritual essence is derived from the essence of G-d: “The candle of G-d is the soul of man.”¹⁹³ This unique soulful connection with the Creator gives the Jew access to the highest levels of divine revelation and wisdom. The job of the Jew is to bring the knowledge of the Creator and His moral code into creation so that the whole world will be filled with the knowledge of G-d. This is a statement of responsibility, not arrogance or entitlement.

¹⁹¹ See *Tanya, Likkutei Amarim*, ch.39. The Alter Rebbe explains that by means of a Pillar, it is possible to ascend from the lower level to the higher level of the Garden of Eden.

¹⁹² In the famous letter of the *Bal Shem Tov* that was first published in 1781 as an appendix to *Ben Porat Yosef* by Rabbi Yaakov Yosef of Polnoye, it is written: When I returned to the lower Garden of Eden [one of the levels of the abode of departed souls], I saw innumerable souls, both living and dead, some whom I knew and others whom I did not. They were fleeting back and forth, going from one universe to another through the Pillar that is known to those who delve into mysteries.

¹⁹³ *Mishlei* 6:23

The Jewish soul is always bound with G-d's essence and, therefore, does not require an intermediary to connect with the Creator. However, there was a historical event that contradicts this statement. When G-d revealed the Torah on Mount Sinai, He initially spoke to the entire nation directly.¹⁹⁴ This resulted in the immediate death of everyone present because of the intensity of the revelation, as it is stated, "With every utterance their souls took flight." G-d had to resurrect the dead with the dew of the Torah.¹⁹⁵ At this point, the Jews turned to Moses and asked him to receive the Torah and then teach it to the nation. Moses was

¹⁹⁴ *Devarim* 4:35: "You have been shown, in order to know that the Lord He is G-d; there is none else besides Him."

Shemos 20:15: "And all the people saw the voices and the torches, the sound of the shofar, and the smoking mountain, and the people saw and trembled; so they stood from afar."

¹⁹⁵ *Shabbos* 88b (Translation from Sefaria.org):

And Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: From each and every utterance that emerged from the mouth of the Holy One, Blessed be He, the souls of the Jewish people left their bodies, as it is stated: "My soul departed when he spoke" (*Shir HaShirim* 5:6). And since their souls left their bodies from the first utterance, how did they receive the second utterance? Rather, G-d rained the dew upon them that, in the future, will revive the dead, and He revived them, as it is stated: "You, G-d, poured down a bountiful rain; when Your inheritance was weary You sustained it" (*Tehillim* 68:10).

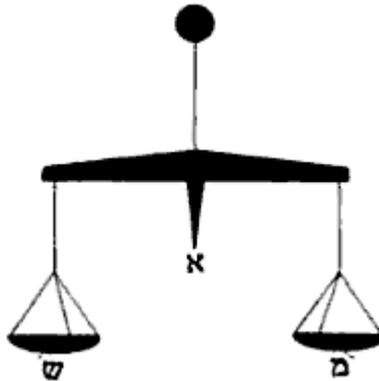
considered a uniquely G-dly man¹⁹⁶ who had the capacity to speak directly with G-d. This is what is meant by the words of the prayer, “the Jews believed in G-d and Moses His servant.”¹⁹⁷ This belief in Moses needs to be understood very carefully.

Moses was not a deity, but rather a very G-dly man. We consider him our teacher who helps us connect to G-d. Moses’ biggest desire was that a Jew would connect to G-d without him. Moses was a true leader who shunned codependency and, instead, motivated personal responsibility. He was a unique intermediary in that he wanted to remove himself from that role as soon as he could. Moses trained leaders, not followers. This is the intermediary, Moses, that we believe in.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁶ *Devarim* 33:1: “And this is the blessing that **Moses the man of G-d** blessed the children of Israel before his death.”

¹⁹⁷ *Shemos* 14:30-31: “On that day the Lord saved Israel from the hands of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dying on the seashore. And Israel saw the great hand, which the Lord had used upon the Egyptians, and the people feared the Lord, and they believed in the Lord and in Moses, His servant.”

¹⁹⁸ My nine-year-old son, Nochum Dovid, asked me to include the following idea in this book: In regard to G-d counting the Jewish people in the desert, they were asked to bring a half-shekel. “Half” is spelled in Hebrew as מחצית. The center letter of the word, צ, is read as “tzaddik,” which means “righteous person.” The letters adjacent to the tzaddik are ח, which spell the word “life.” The furthest letters from the tzaddik are מ ת, which spell the word “death.” The following lesson may be derived: When someone is connected to a tzaddik (righteous person), it is life-giving. When someone is distant from a tzaddik that may lead to death.



Jurisprudence

The second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence begins with the following statement: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.”¹⁹⁹

The source of all western law is based on the belief that every human being has intrinsic value and deserves respect.²⁰⁰ The basis of man’s

¹⁹⁹ The Declaration of Independence text was approved by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776.

²⁰⁰ *Bereishis* 18:25: Abraham even dares to tell G-d that His plan to destroy the city would violate G-d’s own justice: “That be far from Thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked, that so the righteous should be

value is that he is made in the image of G-d,²⁰¹ and that he has a soul derived from the Creator.²⁰² These are the foundational principles of moral absolutism and the divine rule of law.

Some argue that the United States of America, with all of its civil and human rights, its material abundance, military dominance and opportunities for intellectual and spiritual growth, could have been attained without the rule of law endowed by G-d. In other words, America can happen without G-d. They claim that our sense of morality and commitment to the rule of law, could have been developed through rationality alone and are thereby based on relativistic values. To them there is no absolute or transcendental truth. Unfortunately, their approach has been implemented multiple times in history with catastrophic consequences.²⁰³

as the wicked; that be far from Thee; shall not the Judge of all the earth do justly?"

²⁰¹ *Bereishis* 1:27: "So G-d created mankind in His own image, in the image of G-d He created them."

²⁰² *Mishlei* 20:27

²⁰³ In R. J. Rummel's book, *Death by Government* (1994), explains that about 110 million people, foreign and domestic, were murdered by communist democide. This includes the mass murder in Russia under Lenin and Stalin; China under Mao; Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge; North Korea under the Kim family.

The theological basis for the societal need of a legal system is derived from the seven Noahide commandments,²⁰⁴ ²⁰⁵ which are: 1) Not to worship idols; 2) Not to curse G-d; 3) To establish courts of justice;²⁰⁶ 4) Not to commit murder;²⁰⁷ 5) Not to commit adultery or immorality;²⁰⁸ 6) Not to steal; 7) Not to eat flesh torn from a living animal.²⁰⁹ According to

²⁰⁴ After the flood covered the whole world, it killed every surface-dwelling creature except Noah, his wife, his sons and their wives, and the animals that were taken aboard Noah's Ark. According to this, all modern humans are descendants of Noah, thus the name "Noahide Laws," which refers to laws that apply to all of humanity.

²⁰⁵ Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Melachim* 8:11 (Translation by Rabbi Eliyahu Touger): "Anyone who accepts upon himself the fulfillment of these seven *mitzvos* and is precise in their observance is considered one of "the pious among the gentiles" and will merit to share in the world to come."

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, *Hilchos Melachim* 9:14: "How must the gentiles fulfill the commandment to establish laws and courts? They are obligated to set up judges and magistrates in every major city to render judgment concerning these six mitzvot and to admonish the people regarding their observance."

²⁰⁷ *Bereishis* 9:5–6 explains, concerning murder and the courts: "And surely your life blood I will require; at the hand of every beast will I require it; and at the hand of man, even at the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man. Whoever sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of G-d man is made."

²⁰⁸ Nachmanides (Ramban) on *Bereishis* 34:13 deals with the legal basis for the response of Shimon and Levi to the assault of their sister, Dina.

²⁰⁹ *Bereishis* 9:4: "But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood still in it."

the Talmud, these laws were given to the children of Noah, and are therefore relevant to all humanity.²¹⁰

The prohibition of worshipping idols and of cursing G-d are essential to the belief in monotheism and lay the foundational principles for moral absolutism. The next four commandments—to establish a legal system, not to commit murder, not to commit immorality, and not to steal—are foundational principles of all stable societies and can be derived rationally. However, the recognition of the divine origin of these principles, results in the validation of these self-evident laws across societies and time. The final Noahide law of not eating flesh from a living animal represents G-d’s demand that we respect His creation. The whole universe is emanated, created, formed, and made by His word²¹¹ and

²¹⁰ *Sanhedrin* 56a (Translation from Sefaria.org):

These commandments may be regarded as the foundations of all human and moral progress. Judaism has both a national and a universal outlook in life. In the former sense it is precise, setting up a people distinct and separate from others by its unique religious law. But in the latter, it recognizes that moral progress and its concomitant Divine love and approval are the privilege and obligation of **all mankind**. And hence the Talmud teaches the seven Noachian precepts, by the observance of which all mankind may attain spiritual perfection. The last mentioned is particularly instructive as showing the great importance attached to the humane treatment of animals; so much so, that it is declared to be fundamental to human righteousness.

²¹¹ *Pirkei Avos* 5:1: “By ten divine **sayings** the world was created”; *Rosh Hashanah* 32a: “Rabbi Yochanan says that ten **utterances** were used to make

must be used for its intended purpose.²¹² By doing so, man reveals divinity through the conduit of the material world.

The Noahide laws reveal a level of divinity called *memale kol almin*,²¹³ which means “He fills all worlds.” In other words, the world is an objective reality, with defined parameters of time, space, and soul; it is simultaneously subject to divine providence from within.

The nature of people and the physical world is to degenerate into disorder, chaos, and conflict. *Ethics of the Fathers*²¹⁴ states that Rabbi Chanina, the deputy High Priest, said: “Pray for the welfare of the government, for were it not for the fear of it, men would swallow one another alive.” This is referring to a just government that adheres to the Noahide laws. These seven laws bring order to chaos and allow for a stable society to exist. This level of divine service, characterized by G-d filling the worlds, subjugates the physical world, but does not change the

the world”; *Tehillim* 119:89: “Forever, G-d, Your **word** stands firm in the heavens”; *Yeshayahu* 40:8: “The **word** of our G-d shall stand firm forever.”

²¹² *Lessons in Tanya*, ch.36: “The purpose of the creation of this world is that the Holy One, blessed be He, desired to have a dwelling place in the lower worlds.”

²¹³ See *Tanya, Igeret Hakodesh*, Epistle 3. “The mode of life-giving Divine illumination called *memale kol almin* (lit., “filling all worlds”), becomes integrated and manifests within the creatures it animates.”

²¹⁴ *Pirkei Avos* 3:2

nature of matter. If man would remove the yoke of the Noahide laws, creation would revert back into its chaotic state.

The observance of the Noahide laws cause a lower level of divine unity that is predicated on the separation of physicality and spirituality. The Midrash explains that before G-d revealed His law on Mount Sinai, a barrier existed that separated the higher realms from the lower ones. In other words, spirituality (the higher realm) was unable to merge with physicality (the lower realm) in any permanent way. When a person used an aspect of the physical world to serve G-d, divinity would be channeled through matter into the world, but the physical object itself or the person using it, remained unchanged. Spirituality and physicality would not “stick” to each other.

After the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai, the nature of reality changed fundamentally, as it is stated, “G-d descended on the mountain.” This “descent” symbolizes the nullification of the barrier that separated spirituality from physicality and the enabling of these two diametrically opposed realities to unify. When a person observes the Torah’s commandments, the physical world is permanently transformed into a vessel for the Divine. This represents a transcendental level of divinity called *sovev kol almin*.²¹⁵

²¹⁵ See *Tanya, Igeres Hakodesh*, Epistle 3. “These garments are drawn forth from the [infinite] light of the blessed *Ein Sof*. Since they derive from a source that is infinite, they enable the soul to cope with the infinite degree of revelation that it will encounter in *Gan Eden* from the level of *sovev kol almin*.”

The purpose and effect of the Noahide laws on the world is qualitatively distinct from the commandments given by the Torah. The Noahide laws bring order to chaos, facilitate stable societal living, and reveal G-d's dominion over the world. On the individual level, this represents the self-awareness of one's subservience to the Creator.²¹⁶ In contrast, the Torah laws reveal the reality that there is nothing but G-d.²¹⁷ The existence of the world is a mirage formed by the concealment of G-d's presence.²¹⁸ Once G-d's essence is revealed through man's observance of the Torah, this illusion is nullified. On the personal level, this represents total self-effacement that results in existential nullification into divinity.²¹⁹ G-d grants His beloved children the

²¹⁶ This refers to the concept of *bitul ha'yesh*, which means total self-negation and a conscious awareness of the ultimate nature of man. (Schochet, *The Mystical Dimension*.)

²¹⁷ *Devarim* 4:35: "You have been shown, in order to know that the Lord He is G-d; there is none else besides Him."

²¹⁸ In *Etz Chaim, heichel aleph, heichel Adam Kadmon, sha'ar aleph, anuf beis, drush Igulim v'Yosher*, it refers to the cataclysmic withdrawal and concealment (*siluk ha'ohr*) of the infinite light into G-d's essence. This creates the metaphysical empty space (*makom panuy*) in which all finite creation exists. See essay, "Dominance Hierarchy."

²¹⁹ This refers to the concept of *bitul b'metzius* (existential nullification) that constitutes the absolute form of *bitul* whereby one loses all sense of independent existence. This is the state of *bitul* in the world of *atzilus*, whose consciousness, permeated by the supernal level of *chochmah* (*abba mekanen b'atzilus*), is solely that of G-d's omnipresence. See *Zohar* Vol. 1, 18b; *Tanya*

paradoxical gift of consciousness of their own non-existence, which leads to knowing Him as He knows Himself.

Knowledge

A life worth living is one that involves the perpetual and dynamic struggle to actualize G-d's will in creation. This aim infuses a person's life with meaning and provides endless opportunities for self-actualization. Self-actualization is the mastery over one's own contrary and rebellious spirit so that it can then be harnessed to further fulfill the will of the Creator.

The sin of the first couple resulted in a cascade of imbalances that are rooted in the descent of the faculty of knowledge from its ideal structure and function.²²⁰ The intellect consists of three unique elements:²²¹ 1) the ability to bring forth an idea from the subconscious (*chochmah*, wisdom); 2) the ability to take this idea and develop it into its full

²²⁰ *Kisvi Arizal, sha'ar hapisukim, parshas Bereishis, drush gimmel, pagam gimmel.*

²²¹ *Lessons in Tanya*, ch. 3:

Just as the ten supernal *sefiros* are divided into two general categories, so, too, with the human soul and its ten faculties; they are divided into two general categories: *seichel* ("intellect") and *middos* ("emotional attributes"). The [category of] intellect includes the three all-inclusive intellectual powers *chochmah*, *binah* and *daas* (*ChaBaD*), whilst the *middos*, which bear the same names as their corresponding seven *sefiros*: *chesed*, *gevurah*, etc. represent the following emotions: love of G-d, dread and awe of Him, glorification of Him, and so forth.

potential (*binah*, understanding); 3) the ability to become one with the idea and generate a balanced emotional response to this idea (*daas*, knowledge). This third aspect of the intellect, *daas*, is the element that has been metaphysically dislocated from its proper place. For this reason, we pray to G-d, “You graciously bestow knowledge upon man, and teach mortals understanding. Graciously bestow upon us from You: wisdom, understanding, and knowledge. Blessed are You, Lord, who graciously bestows knowledge.”²²²

The faculty of knowledge (*daas*) has the potential to permanently engrave the contributions of wisdom (*chochmah*) and understanding (*binah*) onto the essence of one’s soul and to then balance the resulting emotional response. In other words our emotions, when balanced, are true products of and remain rooted in the intellectual faculty of knowledge (*daas*), which is itself the product of and rooted in the union of wisdom (*chochmah*) and understanding (*binah*). Knowledge (*daas*) is the essence of all the emotional attributes.

Emotional balance is characterized by the precise hybridization of giving (*chesed*) and withholding (*gevurah*). The effectiveness of *daas* is contingent on its positioning in the intellect-emotion schema. As stated above, *daas* is the essence of all the emotional faculties, but it is also the template for their perfectly balanced arrangement. When positioned near *chochmah* and *binah*, *daas* perfectly blends *chesed* and *gevurah*,

²²² “*Atah chonain l’adam daas. . .*” (*Amidah*, silent prayer).

which leads to emotional balance. If *daas* is dislocated from its rightful place, it will descend into the realm of emotion, resulting in the dysregulation of *chesed* and *gevurah*. Thus, *daas* is a dynamic link, bridging the intellect and the emotions.

The two distinct soul powers of *chesed* and *gevurah* manifest themselves in the world in the form of disorder and order, respectively. Unrestrained giving leads to chaos and the collapse of reality on the macro (societal) and micro (psychological) levels. Unrestrained restraint leads to ordered darkness and the eventual death of will and inspiration. Both extremes lead to immeasurable misery and human suffering. This cognitive dissonance can only be remedied, on the cosmic and individual levels, through the precise rebalancing of disorder (*chesed*) and order (*gevurah*), through the harmonizing influence of *daas*. This rebalancing is the pathway which leads to the actualization of the divine will, meaningful existence, and to the rectification of creation.

The purpose of man was to work and guard the ground of the Garden of Eden.²²³ In order to facilitate this, G-d personally taught Adam His wisdom and tasked him with the spiritual observance of His commandments. This work would reveal a path on the ground for the ascension of man from the Garden of Eden to Eden itself. Adam's

²²³ Contraction of two verses in *Bereishis*: "And there was no man to work the ground" (2:5); and "The merciful G-d took the man and placed him in the Garden of Eden in order to work and guard it" (2:15).

observance of G-d's commandments would earn man entry into Eden, the permission of eating from the Tree of Knowledge, and unity with the essence of G-d. G-d would allow man to know Him in the same manner as He knows Himself, as it is stated, "and the world will be filled with the knowledge of G-d."²²⁴

Adam and his wife prematurely partook of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge without the prerequisite work. The outcome of this unearned and premature use of the Tree of Knowledge resulted in the dislocation of *daas* from its ideal role. *Daas* got disassociated from *chochmah* and *binah* and descended into the realm of unbalanced emotion. The universe metaphysically lost its mind. This resulted in the dominion of unrestrained *gevurah*. This had to be the case since unrestrained chaos in the form of *chesed* would have obliterated all of existence. This chaos facilitates the mechanics of free will²²⁵ and entropy.

The result of unrestrained *gevurah* has profound ramifications for all levels of existence. Imbalanced *gevurah* leads to spiritual darkness and

²²⁴ *Chavakkuk* 2:14

²²⁵ See essay, "Free Will." The Talmud states that everything is determined by G-d, except the fear of G-d. This means that free will is limited to whether a person will choose to live according to G-d's absolute moral code or choose to live by rationally derived moral relativism. Free will and consciousness are unique characteristics which are entrusted to man from the essence of G-d. G-d is self-aware and has free will. There is no entity higher than G-d that compels Him to do anything. We are made in His image.

provides vivifying energy to the forces that oppose divinity.²²⁶ When attempting to observe the effect of dysregulated *gevurah*, we can begin to see how it influenced the soul nature of Cain. It begins to explain why he was the firstborn and why he murdered his brother Abel. Furthermore, the evil inclination, which is derived from dysregulated *gevurah*, enters a person from birth and has dominion over him. Therefore he is referred to as the “old and foolish king.”²²⁷ This persists until adolescence when the good inclination eventually begins to enter the subconscious of the person and the struggle for the coordination and integration of the psyche begins.

The evil and good inclinations are derived from *gevurah* and *chesed*, respectively. These two inclinations are also referred to as the emotive forces of the animal and G-dly souls. When a person reaches maturity, the animal and G-dly souls are both fully functioning and form the matrix of man’s subconscious.

²²⁶ G-d’s name *Elokim* represents His restraint of divine revelation through which a finite system of worlds and the laws of nature come into being. *Elokim acharim* (other gods) refers to the forces of impurity that derive vitality from the “backside” of holiness.

²²⁷ *Koheles* 4:13: “Better a poor and wise child than an old and foolish king who no longer knows to receive admonition.” The “king” refers to the evil inclination. He is considered “old” because he enters the soul of the child at the time of birth. He is considered “foolish” because he leads man away from the straight path in the service of G-d.

Man's subconscious can be conceptualized as the numerous interactions amongst a motley collection of dysregulated spirits. Each spirit is a composite of ten faculties that are derived from G-d's ten divine *sefiros*. The *sefiros* form the interface between the infinite and the finite. The *sefiros* represent G-d's infinite attributes that are directed into finite existence through ten distinct channels.

The finite decimal number system, also called base-10, has been sanctified by G-d, as it is written, "The tenth shall be holy."²²⁸ The ten holy *sefiros* form the metaphysical, archetypical blueprint for all spiritual and material existence.

²²⁸*Vayikra* 27:32: "Any tithe of cattle or a flock of all that pass under the rod, the tenth shall be holy to the Lord."

In *Megillah* 23b, the Gemara asks: "From where are these matters, i.e., that ten people are needed in each of these cases, derived? Rabbi Chiyya bar Abba said that Rabbi Yochanan said: It is as the verse states: "And I shall be hallowed among the children of Israel" (*Vayikra* 22:32), which indicates that any expression of sanctity may not be recited in a quorum of fewer than ten men. The Gemara asks: From where in the verse may this be inferred? The Gemara responds that it must be understood as Rabbi Chiyya taught: It is inferred by means of a verbal analogy [*gezera shava*] between the words "among," "among." Here, it is written: "And I shall be hallowed among the children of Israel," and there, with regard to Korach's congregation, it is written, "Separate yourselves from among this congregation" (*Bamidbar* 16:21). Just as regarding Korach the reference is to ten men, so too, the name of G-d is to be hallowed in a quorum of ten men."

The G-dly and animal souls in man each possess ten faculties that are derived from the ten divine *sefiros*.²²⁹ These two souls and their corresponding attributes form the matrix of the subconscious. The subconscious in most people is initially disorganized and lacks integration. The two contrary souls are only very loosely associated and, in most cases, fail to properly integrate with each other. This is the basis for most cognitive dissonance and the inconsistent behavior of man. The same person may be able to manifest the most noble behavior, and shortly after, commit the most egregious acts. This dissociative behavior is the direct expression of a disintegrated subconscious.

The mysterious journey from the subconscious to the conscious involves the transition from the ten soul faculties to the realm of thought, speech, or action. This is mediated by patterns of energy in the form of the twenty-two Hebrew letters. As it is stated, “The soul is full of letters.”²³⁰ The twenty-two letters and the ten divine *sefiros* form the thirty-two paths of wisdom mentioned in the *Book of Formation*.²³¹ The essence of the soul possesses a sublime and mysterious power to

²²⁹ *Tanya, Likkutei Amarim*, ch.3.

²³⁰ *Etz Chaim, heichel aleph, heichel Adam Kadmon, sha'ar hey, sha'ar Tanta, perek gimmel.*

²³¹ *Sefer Yetzirah 1:1*, commentary Reb Sa'adya Gaon.

organize the metaphysical letters into conduits that reveal the subconscious to the conscious.

Thought, speech, and action are considered soul garments²³² and form the matrix of consciousness. Thought is considered an inner garment since it is endlessly flowing and reveals the soul's faculties to oneself. Speech and action are considered external garments because they can be removed, and their function is to reveal the soul's faculties to other people.

Both the animal and G-dly souls want to reveal their faculties through the soul's garments and have dominion over man's consciousness. Yet, a person's spiritual and emotional growth is characterized by the harmonic integration of the subconscious matrix. Self-awareness and free will are actualized when the person develops awareness of his conflicted

²³² *Lessons in Tanya*, ch.4:

In addition to its ten faculties—every divine soul (*nefesh Elohis*) possesses three garments. The soul possesses three auxiliary powers, which are its instruments of expression. Like garments, they can be donned or shed at will. When the soul utilizes any of these three powers it is “clothed” in them; when it does not use them, it is “divested” of them. Also, just as garments give expression to their wearer's beauty and importance, so too, when the soul dons and utilizes these “garments,” its intellect and emotions find expression. They (the garments) are: thought, speech and action as they find expression in the 613 commandments of the Torah.

internal environment, where opposing forces battle each other for a territorial foothold in his conscious domain.

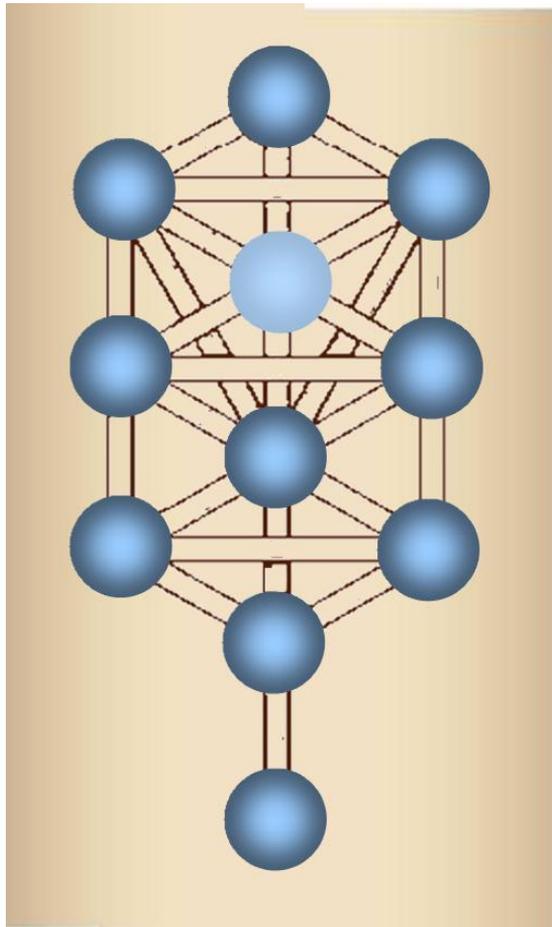
Man procures meaning and begins to fathom what his purpose is through the battle for control of his consciousness. The aim is to integrate both souls into one through the transformation of the nature of both souls. The nature of the G-dly soul is to be drawn upwards toward the heavens. This is an expression of its desire to return to a realm of revealed divinity. Man's job is to abate this escapist predilection of the G-dly soul, and persuade it to harness the ferociously passionate energy potential inherent in the animal soul. With sufficient persuasion, the G-dly soul can choose to reorient itself and integrate with the animal soul.

The nature of the animal soul is to pull downward toward the earth, which is the manifestation of its innate and self-sustaining drives. Man's job is to break this nature of the animal soul and harness its immense energy for the service of the Divine, as it is stated, "there is much productive potential in the power of the ox."²³³ This transformation occurs when the animal soul accepts the yoke of the G-dly soul and begins to pull upwards toward the heavens.

This rebalancing of opposing forces forms a new G-dly-animal hybrid entity that can successfully accomplish the regulation and integration that is needed in the subconscious matrix. The restoration of *daas* to its

²³³ *Mishlei* 14:4

rightful place in the intellectual-emotional archetypal scheme, brings about spiritual, psychological, and emotional balance. This defines true self-actualization and the resolution of disharmony in both the subconscious and conscious. This is the essence of what it means to lead a life worth living.



Ideal *Daas*

134

Life and Death

Initially, G-d created the world without death and the first couple was supposed to live forever.²³⁴ They were placed in the Garden of Eden²³⁵ and were told that they may partake of everything except for that which comes from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Bad.²³⁶ They were cautioned that if they were to eat from this tree, they would surely die.²³⁷ The implication is that good and evil existed *before* the primordial sin since there was a Tree of Knowledge of Good and Bad. Good and bad were clearly separate and easily discernible from each other. This was good, and that was bad. It was clear and obvious, without ambiguity. In

²³⁴ This is self-evident from the fact that Adam and Chavah were punished with death **after** the sin of eating from the Tree of Knowledge. Before the sin, they were destined to live forever.

²³⁵ *Bereishis* 2:8: "And the Lord G-d planted a garden in Eden from the east, and He placed there the man whom He had formed."

²³⁶ *Ibid.* 2:16–17: "And the Lord G-d commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the garden you may freely eat. But of the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat of it, for on the day that you eat thereof, you shall surely die."

²³⁷ *Ibid.* 3:3: "But of the fruit of the tree that is amid the garden, G-d said, 'You shall not eat of it, and you shall not touch it, lest you die.'"

addition, evil only existed outside of the first couple and did not have an intrinsic foothold in them.

Following the primordial sin, when the first couple partook from the forbidden tree, there was a cataclysmic and fundamental change in the fabric of existence. Good and bad became mixed up, so what was good and what was bad was no longer easily discernible. Furthermore, evil now entered the soul of man and continues to maintain an intrinsic presence in man's psyche.

In response to the primordial sin, G-d responded by expelling Adam and Chavah from the Garden of Eden.²³⁸ His rationale was simple: If they were to remain in the Garden, they might also come to partake from the Tree of Life and regain immortality.²³⁹ The obvious question is, why was G-d concerned if they would live forever or not? They could have repented and returned the world and themselves to the pre-sin state. The answer is that since good and bad were now mixed up and had an

²³⁸ Ibid. 3:23-24: "And the Lord G-d sent him out of the Garden of Eden, to till the soil, whence he had been taken. And He drove the man out, and He stationed from the east of the Garden of Eden the cherubim and the blade of the revolving sword, to guard the way to the Tree of Life."

²³⁹ Ibid. 3:22: "Now the Lord G-d said, Behold, man has become like one of us, having the ability of knowing good and evil, and now, lest he stretch forth his hand and take also from the Tree of Life and eat and live forever."

internal hold over man, eating from the Tree of Life would have resulted in evil living forever.²⁴⁰

Because of their sins, there was a fundamental change to existence. As a result, G-d expelled the first couple from the Garden and condemned them to death. The purpose of death is to ensure that bad and evil do not exist forever. G-d punished Adam with the need to “labor the earth and produce bread.”²⁴¹ This work was designed to purify the world. For this purpose, G-d eventually gave the Torah to the Jewish people. The Torah serves to clearly delineate good and evil. When a Jew “works” by observing the Torah’s commandments, he or she separates the good from the bad. Every *mitzvah* restores the world to the pre-sin state. Through the cumulative efforts of the Jewish people over thousands of years, good and bad will be separated from each other, and the evil within the soul of man will be expelled. This will usher in a new era of existence. Because of the restoration of clarity, G-d will remove the “spirit of inequity from the world.”²⁴² This will eliminate the need for

²⁴⁰ *Torah Ohr, “Parshas Bereishis,”* 10b

²⁴¹ *Bereishis* 3:17: “And to man He said, Because you listened to your wife, and you ate from the tree from which I commanded you saying, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed be the ground for your sake; with toil shall you eat of it all the days of your life.”

²⁴² *Zechariah* 13:2: “And it shall come to pass on that day, says the Lord of Hosts: I will cut off the names of the idols from the earth, and they shall no longer be mentioned. And, the prophets and the spirit of inequity I will remove from the earth.”

death, as the prophet states, “Death will be swallowed up forever.”²⁴³

Every *mitzvah* that we properly observe brings the end of death closer.

²⁴³ *Yeshayahu* 25:8: “He has swallowed up death forever, and the Lord G-d shall wipe the tears off every face, and the shame of His people He shall remove from upon the entire earth, for the Lord has spoken.”

Mothers

The *Midrash* teaches a parable regarding to the sanctification of the moon:²⁴⁴ A king gets engaged and sends his bride a few engagement gifts. When he arrives for the wedding and marries her, he gives her many gifts as is incumbent upon a husband.²⁴⁵ Similarly, G-d says to the Jewish people that in this world, we are engaged to Him.²⁴⁶ As an engagement gift, G-d gives His bride the moon, as it is stated, “This month shall be for you.” But in the days when *Moshiach* comes, then we

²⁴⁴ *Shemos* 12:2: “This month shall be to you the head of the months; to you it shall be the first of the months of the year.” Rashi explains that G-d showed Moses the moon in its renewal and said to him, “When the moon renews itself, you will have a new month.”

²⁴⁵ In *Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Ishus* 15:19, the Rambam further explains that our Sages commanded that a man should honor his wife more than himself. If he has money, he should increase her welfare according to his level of wealth. Regarding matters that pertain to her dignity, such as being sensitive to her feelings, buying her respectable clothing and accessories, complimenting her, and speaking to her in a respectful way that does not offend or belittle her, the husband must take care of her **more** than he takes care of himself.

²⁴⁶ *Hoshea* 2:21: “I will betroth you to Me forever, and I will betroth you to Me with righteousness and with justice and with loving-kindness and mercy.”

will “get married,” G-d will make us His wife.²⁴⁷ At that very moment He will give us everything (all that is His), as it is stated, “And the enlightened ones (those that are one with G-d) will shine like the brightness of the sky, and those who bring the multitudes to righteousness like the stars forever and ever.”²⁴⁸

The relationship between G-d and His people is analogous to a husband and wife. Thus, the relationship between the male and female is an archetype that is ubiquitous throughout all creation and is integral to the actualization of G-d’s innermost will.²⁴⁹ This is illustrated by the Torah’s account of the death of the seven Edomite kings.²⁵⁰ These seven

²⁴⁷ *Yeshayahu* 54:5: “For your husband is your Maker, the Lord of Hosts is His name, and your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, shall be called the G-d of all the earth.”

²⁴⁸ *Daniel* 12:3

²⁴⁹ *Bereishis* 5:2: “Male and female He created them, and He blessed them, and He named them man [Adam] on the day they were created.”

²⁵⁰ *Bereishis* 36:31–39: “And these are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the children of Israel: Bela, son of Beor reigned in Edom, and the name of his city was Dinhabah. **Bela died**, and Jobab, the son of Zerah of Bozrah, reigned in his stead. And **Jobab died**, and Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his stead. **Husham died**, and Hadad, son of Bedad, who defeated Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his stead. The name of his city was Avith. **Hadad died**, and Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead. **Samlah died**, and Saul of Rehoboth by the river reigned in his stead. **Saul died**, and Baal Hanan, son of Achbor, reigned in his stead. **Baal Hanan**, son of Achbor **died**, and Hadar reigned in his stead. The name of his city was Pau; his

kings represent the seven *sefiros* in the world of *tohu* that underwent the Shattering of the Vessels.²⁵¹ The eighth king, Hadar, did not die, as it is stated, “Hadar reigned in his stead, and his wife's name was Mehetabel (מְהִיטְבַּאֵל).” This verse has two nuances that are different from the preceding verses: 1) It does not mention the king’s death; 2) It mentions the name of his wife. Hadar represents the world of *tikkun*, and his wife represents the energy for the rectification of the Shattering of the Vessels.²⁵² The *Zohar* states²⁵³ that the verses describing the death of the seven kings (*sefiros*), represent only the female element of creation (*shem BON*—הַה, וּ, הַה, יוּד, **without** the counterbalancing male element (*shem MA*—הָא, וְאוּ, הָא, יוּד). It is for this very reason that the seven kings died.

The eighth king, Hadar, represents the male element associated with the *shem MA*, and his wife, Mehetabel (מְהִיטְבַּאֵל), represents the counterbalancing female element associated with the *shem BON*. This is alluded to within the name מְהִיטְבַּאֵל, which can be subdivided into מְהִיטְבַּאֵל

wife’s name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Me Zahab.”

²⁵¹ *Etz Chaim, heichel beis, heichel nikkudim, sha’ar ches, sha’ar drushi nikkudim, perek hey.*

²⁵² *Otzras Chaim, sha’ar brudim, perek gammel.*

²⁵³ *Zohar, Idra Rabbah, 135; Idra Zuta, 292.*

and יִטְבְּאֵל. יִטְבְּאֵל has the numerical value of 52 (*BON*). Thus, מְהִיטְבְּאֵל represents the unification of *MA* and *BON*.²⁵⁴ This unification of male and female energies leads to the rectification (*tikkun*) and resurrection of the dead kings (the shattered vessels of the *sefiros*), transforming them into stable *partzufim*.²⁵⁵

²⁵⁴ *Tohu's* parallel and diametric state is the world of *tikkun*. *Tikkun*, which means rectification, is a world of order. G-d emanates a harmonizing force from the world of *AK* (specifically G-d's *shem MA* from the forehead of *AK*), which gathers the shattered vessels of *tohu* and hybridizes them into stable, metaphysical structures. These structures are called *partzufim* and form the blueprint of stable existence. The stability of *tikkun* is based on the hybridized pattern of the *sefiros*. *Partzufim* can be conceptualized as stable, metaphysical and archetypical constructs that form the mechanism for the flow of divine energy into the worlds. They are also affected by man's actions. Acts that are according to G-d's will cause the *partzufim* to orient themselves "face-to-face" and allow for unobstructed flow of Divine energy into the world. *Tikkun* is the source of all order in the world.

²⁵⁵ The *partzufim* are as follows: 1a) The inner dimension of the *sefirah* of *kesser* was reconstructed into the *partzuf* of **atik yomin**; 1b) The blemish (*pagam*) in the outer dimension of the *sefirah* of *kesser* was reconstructed into the *partzuf* of **arich anpin**; 2a) The inner dimension of the *sefirah* of *chochmah* was reconstructed into the *partzuf* of **abba**; 2b) The damage (*bitul*) in the outer dimension of the *sefirah* of *chochmah* was more extensive and was reconstructed into a quasi-*partzuf* called **Yaakov**; 3a) The inner dimension of the *sefirah* of *binah* was reconstructed into the *partzuf* of **ema**; 3b) The damage (*bitul*) in the outer dimension of the *sefirah* of *binah* was more extensive and was reconstructed into a quasi-*partzuf* called **Leah**; 4) The shattering (*shevirah*) of the six *sefiros*—*chesed*, *gevurah*, *tiferes*, *netzach*, *hod*, and *yesod*—were all hybridized together to form the *partzuf* of **ze'ir anpin**; 5)

The dynamic between male and female elements is complex and depends on the depth of the interaction. From an external perspective, the male element is considered the giver and the female element is the receiver. From an internal perspective, the female is considered the giver and the male is the receiver. This dynamic is illustrated at a wedding. Initially, the groom approaches the bride and covers her face with a veil. She accepts the veil, which symbolizes her willingness to commit herself only to him. Afterwards, under the *chuppah* (wedding canopy), the bride encircles the groom seven times, while he willingly remains stationary and accepts her influence. Her willingness to accept his influence, unlocks her hidden superior potential²⁵⁶ and she becomes the giver and he the receiver.²⁵⁷

The shattering (*shevirah*) of the *sefirah* of *malchus* was reconstructed into the *partzuf* called **rachel** or **nukvah** of **ze'ir anpin**.

²⁵⁶ *Mishlei* 12:4: "A virtuous woman is the crown of her husband."

Bava Metzia 59a (Translation from Sefaria.org): "Rabbi Chelbo, who had emigrated from Bavel to Israel, said: "Always be careful with the honor of your wife, for the blessings of a man's home are only on account of his wife, as it states in *Bereishis* 12:16, when Avraham was showered with gifts and presents, 'Avram was treated well on Sarai's account.'" This is what Rava said to the people of Mechoza: 'Honor your wives so that you may become wealthy.'"

²⁵⁷ Externally, the male element of *MA* is dominant over the female element of *BON*. Internally, *BON* is dominant over *MA*. This is rooted in the fact that *BON* is derived from *SOG*, which is much higher than *MA*. Furthermore, the female

The primacy of the feminine element is alluded to in *Sefer Yetzirah*. To understand this esoteric text, creation needs to be viewed from the three dimensions of space,²⁵⁸ time, and soul. Furthermore, the Hebrew alphabet is itself divided into three dimensions: three Mothers, seven Doubles, and twelve Elemental letters. These Hebrew letters represent divine metaphysical channels to create different aspects of reality: the directions, the elements, the planets, the months of the year, etc. Each letter is a channel by which G-d creates a unique entity. In its discussion on the letters, *Sefer Yetzirah* draws a strong connection to the feminine principle, and it uses imagery that reflects this connection.

The Mothers are represented by the Hebrew letters *aleph*, *mem*, and *shin*.²⁵⁹ In the dimension of space, these three letters represent three of the fundamental elements: air, water, and fire, respectively. *Shin*

dimension is rooted in the inner of the inner aspect of *kesser* called *reisha de lo esyada (radlo)*, the head of the unknown. The male dimension is rooted in the more external aspect of *kesser*. Before the *tzimtzum*, the female element is rooted in the hidden essence of G-d (*helem ha'atzmi*), whereas the male element is rooted in His name (the infinite light that is within the essence of G-d.)

²⁵⁸ Even though modern physics considers space and time as one dimension of space-time, for the purposes of understanding this text, space and time will be addressed separately.

²⁵⁹ *Sefer Yetzirah* 3:3: "Three Mothers, *aleph*, *mem*, *shin*: The Divine engraved them, carved them, permuted them, weighed them, transformed them, and with them depicted three mothers."

represents fire, which forms the heavens.²⁶⁰ *Mem*, which represents water,²⁶¹ forms the earth,²⁶² as it is stated, “And G-d said, ‘Let there be an expanse in the midst of the water, and let it be a separation between water and water.’”²⁶³ *Aleph* represents air,²⁶⁴ which bridges fire and water, and creates the space for humans, animals and plants to exist.²⁶⁵

In the dimension of **time**, the three Mothers represent the seasons of the year in the following manner: The summer months of *Tammuz*, *Av*, and *Elul* are represented by the letter *shin* (fire); the winter months of *Tevet*, *Shevat*, and *Adar* are represented by the letter *mem* (water). Now *aleph* (air) represents two separate nonconsecutive seasons and their

²⁶⁰ Ibid. 3:9

²⁶¹ Ibid. 3:8

²⁶² Ibid. 1:2. *Pirush Ha’Ravad* (Avraham ben David, 1125– 1198 CE) explains that the earth (dust) is a derivative and composite of the three Mothers but is not considered one of them.

²⁶³ *Bereishis* 1:6

²⁶⁴ *Sefer Yetzirah* 3:7

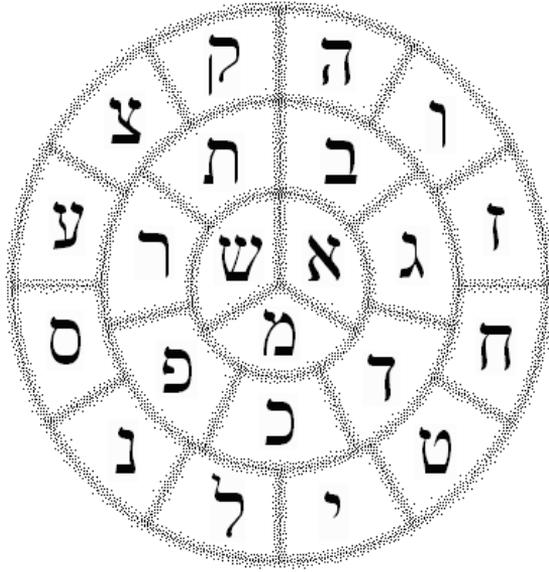
²⁶⁵ Ibid. 1:2. *Pirush Ha’Ravad* explains that in this world the order of the mothers is *shin*, *aleph*, *mem* (as is depicted as the horizontal lines in the tree of the *sefiros* diagram). However, in the more ethereal realms the order of the mothers is different.

corresponding months, the spring months of *Nissan, Iyar, Sivan*, and the fall months of *Tishrei, Cheshvan, Kislev*.²⁶⁶

In the dimension of soul (and the body), *mem* (water) represents the belly; *shin* (fire) represents the head; and *aleph* (air) represents the chest, which connects belly and head, circulating the air around the body.²⁶⁷ Thus, the three Mothers form the core structures of human experience.

²⁶⁶ Ibid. 3:5

²⁶⁷ Ibid. 3:6



Three Mothers
Seven Doubles
Twelve Elementals

In the last chapter of *Sefer Yetzirah*, it is stated:²⁶⁸ “These are the three Mothers and from them came out the three Fathers.”²⁶⁹ This may be referring to the relative hierarchy of the female and male elements, as they are in their source within the essence of G-d.

A diagrammatic representation of the above ideas is the sefirotic tree (sometimes referred to as the Tree of Life), which integrates the ten *sefiros* with the twenty-two Hebrew letters into the “32 paths of wisdom.”

These paths of wisdom will eventually lead the Jewish people to Eden.²⁷⁰ Eden represents the revelation of the essence of G-d to the essence

²⁶⁸ Ibid. 6:1

²⁶⁹ This is consistent with the concept that internally the feminine dimension is dominant over the masculine. This is rooted in the fact that the female element is derived from the hidden essence of G-d (*helem ha'atzmi*), whereas the male element is derived from His name.

²⁷⁰ *Berachos* 34b (Translation from Sefaria.org):

What is this reward about which it is said: "no eye has seen it"? Rabbi Shmuel bar Nachmani said: That is Eden, which no creature's eye has ever surveyed. Lest you say: Where was Adam the first man? Wasn't he there and didn't he survey Eden? The Gemara responds: Adam was only in the Garden of Eden, not in Eden itself. And lest you say: It is the Garden and it is Eden; two names describing the same place. That is not the case, as the verse states: "And a river went out from Eden to water the Garden" (*Bereishis* 2:10). Obviously, the Garden exists on its own and Eden exists on its own.

of the comprehensive Jewish soul (the reconstituted soul of Adam *Harishon*).²⁷¹ This process is actualized when the source of the feminine element²⁷² is revealed and elevates the male element to her—“A praiseworthy wife is the crown of her husband.”²⁷³

²⁷¹ Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson (The Rebbe), *On the Essence of Chassidus*, trans. Rabbi Heschel Greenberg:

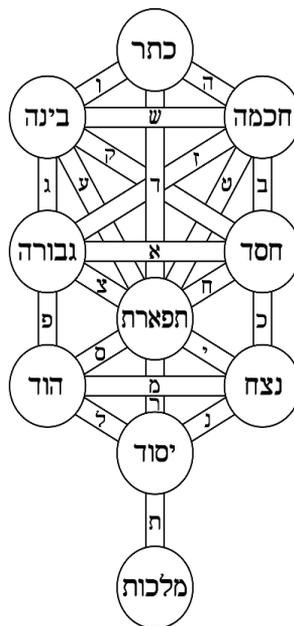
The Jewish people of all generations are considered as one big soul, which consists of all of them together. In this general soul, there are also those same five levels, each one of which is especially expressed by a certain *tzaddik*: *nefesh*—King Dovid, *ruach*—Eliyahu the Prophet, *neshamah*—Moshe our Teacher, *chayah*—Adam the first man, and *yechidah*—*Moshiach*. Just as in the individual souls, so too in the big collective soul, the first four levels are considered parts that branch out from the *yechidah*—the essence and heart of the soul. *Moshiach*—the *yechidah* within the collective soul—is the point of the essence of the Jewish people of all generations. *Moshiach* is the heart of the soul of the Jewish people, through which the purest possible connection to the G-dly infinity is accomplished. This causes not only a supra-temporal existence—*Moshiach* brings on the phenomenon of eternal life—but also boundless in quality and virtue. Therefore, he is the one who brings about the rest of the innovations of the Redemption, which will all be various facets of the revelation of that same perfect infinity.

²⁷² *Reisha de lo esyada (radlo), helem ha'atzmi*

²⁷³ *Mishlei 12:4*

32 Paths of Wisdom

Tree of the *Sefiros*



- The three Mothers (*aleph, mem, shin*) represent the horizontal lines.
- The seven Doubles (*beis, gimmel, dalet, kaf, peh, resh, and tav*) represent the vertical lines.

- The twelve Elementals (*hey, vav, zayin, chet, tet, yud, lamed, nun, samach, ayin, tzaddi, and qof*) represent the diagonal lines.

Nullification

G-d desires to give His children the ultimate gift in the ultimate way. The ultimate gift is divine consciousness; this represents knowledge of G-d to the degree to which He knows Himself. The ultimate way is in an earned fashion, which represents the negation of the concept of the bread of shame.²⁷⁴

For man to earn reward, G-d grants him consciousness and free will. For free will to exist, G-d creates two parallel systems of chaos and order and permits man to choose his own path. For these parallel systems to exist, G-d conceals Himself from creation through the process of the

²⁷⁴ Rabbi Joseph Caro (1488-1575), author of the *Shulchan Aruch*, was frequently visited by an angel called the *Maggid* and he recorded his conversations with this angel in a book called *Maggid Mesharim*. The *Maggid* explains the following: Before the souls come into this world, they are compared to one who eats the king's bread without working for it. In order to avoid shame (*kisufa*), they come into the world to engage in Torah and mitzvot, in order to earn their bread and avoid shame (*nahama de-kisufa*.)

*tzimtzum harishon*²⁷⁵ and *tzimtzumim*²⁷⁶ in the *kav*.²⁷⁷ G-d's concealment is only from the perspective of His creatures. From His perspective, there is no concealment, as it is stated, "I am G-d, I do not change."²⁷⁸

Man possesses an embodied soul in the physical world of action.²⁷⁹ As a result of G-d's concealment, man feels independent and unconnected from Him. It takes great toil to establish a conscious and sophisticated relationship with the Creator. This involves breaking through the darkness of the *tzimtzum* by harnessing and transforming our ingrained, self-serving instincts into instruments of the Divine.

An early stage of conscious expansion involves gaining awareness and mastery over space-time. In most cases, people are subservient to and

²⁷⁵ This refers to the abrupt and complete withdrawal (*siluk ha'ohr*) of G-d's infinite light from the metaphysical empty space (*makom panuy*) which facilitates finite existence. See the essay, "Dominance Hierarchy."

²⁷⁶ This refers to the gradual diminution of G-d's finite light (*me'ut ha'ohr*) in the *kav* that differentiates one spiritual world from another, i.e., *atzilus* from *beriyah*, etc.

²⁷⁷ This refers to the source of vitalizing energy for all finite creation. The *kav* is a hybrid of G-d's finite light (*ohr ha'gvul*) and His power of limitation (*koach ha'gvul*.) See the essay, "Dominance Hierarchy."

²⁷⁸ *Malachi* 3:6: "I the Lord do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed."

²⁷⁹ The World of Action (*asiyah*) refers to this lowest physical world that encompasses the observable universe.

imprisoned by space-time. However, through meditating on the source of one's soul essence and by the performance of G-d's commandments, a person gains mastery over and sanctifies space-time. This level of divine awareness exemplifies what it means to bring the physical world into a state of subservience to G-d. This is the lower level of divine unity referred to as *bitul ha'yesh*,²⁸⁰ and is the manifestation of G-d's indwelling presence in the world called *memale kol almin*.

An even higher and more distilled quality of consciousness is based on the level of reality referred to as "there is nothing else besides Him."²⁸¹ This is not a figurative statement, but a description of absolute reality. In other words, everything that He is emanating, creating, forming, or acting upon is considered naught. G-d does not effectuate any change in His essence, as it says, "I am G-d; I do not change."⁵ This is the higher level of divine unity referred to as *bitul be'metzius*.²⁸²

²⁸⁰ This term implies the tangible existence of the world and its simultaneous surrender to G-d's will and control.

²⁸¹ *Devarim* 4:35: "You have been shown, in order to know that the Lord He is G-d; there is none else besides Him."

²⁸² This term means that everything that is emanated from, created, formed, or acted upon by G-d, is as if it never was. He is existence and the life of life; there is nothing outside of Him. The illusion and mirage of existence is the product of G-d's complete concealment (*tzimtzum harishon*) and is only from the perspective of creation.

The aim of man's existence is to work on elevating his consciousness such that he achieves the absolute nullification of self. Man needs to peer through the mirage of the world and truly understand that he has no separate existence from G-d. In doing so, he can become completely absorbed within G-d's essence.

This concept of "there is nothing else besides Him" creates an interesting theological and philosophical question. When *bitul be'metzius* is attained, what happens to man's self-awareness and consciousness? Since there is no self, there should also be no consciousness. And, how is this different from G-d's most severe punishment of *kares*? The Torah assigns the punishment of *kares* for the most egregious sins.²⁸³ According to Maimonides, *kares* means that upon

²⁸³ The Mishnah, *Keritot* 1:1, discusses *kares* in detail:

There are thirty-six acts for which the Torah prescribes *kares* (excision) at the hands of Heaven. It is a punishment for: One who has relations with his mother, with his father's wife, with his daughter-in-law, with a man, or with an animal; or, a woman who has an animal have relations with her; or, one who has relations with a woman and her daughter, with a married woman, with his sister, with his paternal aunt, with his maternal aunt, with his wife's sister, with his brother's wife, with the wife of his father's brother, or with a *niddah* (a woman who has menstruated and is thereby impure). Other individuals who are subject to *kares* are: One who blasphemes (curses G-d), who worships idols, who sacrifices his children to *molekh* (a type of idolatry wherein one passes his child through fire or between flames); or, who is a necromancer, or is one who violates Shabbos, or is an impure person who eats consecrated food; one who enters the Temple when impure,

a person's death the soul is annihilated,²⁸⁴ it is as if it never existed. It is

or who eats forbidden fat, or who eats blood, or who eats *notar* (a sacrifice that becomes unfit due to being unconsumed past the permitted time), or who eats *piggul* (a sacrifice that becomes unfit due to the intention of the officiating priest while offering it, to consume it after its permitted time); or, one who slaughters a sacrifice outside the Temple precincts, or who offers up a sacrifice outside the Temple precincts, or who eats leavened bread on Pesach, or who eats on Yom Kippur, or who does *melachah*—a constructive activity forbidden on Shabbat and festivals—on Yom Kippur; or, one who prepares oil after the manner of the Temple's anointing oil, or who prepares *ketores* (holy incense offered twice a day on the golden altar inside the Temple), or who anoints himself with the anointing oil. Positive commandments whose neglect warrants *kares* are the Passover offering and circumcision.

²⁸⁴ Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Repentance 8:1:

The hidden good in store for the righteous is, life in the World to Come, which is a life connected with no death and a kind of good connected with no evil; such as is described in the Torah: "That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest prolong thy days" (*Devarim* 22:7), which was traditionally deduced to mean, "That it may be well with thee" in a world which is entirely good; "and that thou mayest prolong thy days"—in a world existing forever; and this is the World to Come. The reward of the just is, that they will acquire the sweetness thereof, to be in such goodness; and the punishment of the wicked is, that they will not share in such life, but will suffer excision and eternal death. And, whosoever does not earn such life, is to be dead, without coming to life forever; for he is severed from life by his iniquity and goes to oblivion like an animal. This is the meaning of excision described in the Torah, saying: "That soul shall utterly be cut off" (*Bamidbar* 15:31), which was traditionally deduced to mean, "utterly cut off," both in this world and

beyond repair and is not given the privilege of rectification by descending into the pits of hell. This soul's consciousness is completely extinguished and is as if it never was. From the perspective of consciousness, how is *kares* different from the self-nullification (*bitul be'metzius*) that is granted to a person who achieves the most noble and righteous status?

G-d is righteous, and it is self-evident that *bitul be'metzius* is entirely different from *kares*. G-d gifts the ultimate reward to the righteous in the form of divine consciousness. G-d permits man to be conscious of his own nonexistence and allows man to know Him in the way He knows Himself.

in the World to Come. As if saying: "That soul which was separated from the body in this world shares not in the life of the World to Come, for even from the World to Come is it cut off."



Ein Ode Milvado

There Is Nothing but G-d

(Art courtesy of Tzfat Gallery of Mystical Art; reprinted with permission:
www.kabbalahart.com)

One Stone²⁸⁵

The Torah states that the universe and everything in it was created in six days.²⁸⁶ On the sixth day, which was the first Rosh Hashanah, man was created.²⁸⁷ According to the Torah, the creation of man occurred approximately 5800 years ago. Some would say that this teaching is difficult to reconcile with the belief of modern-day scientists that the universe is around 13.7 billion years old.²⁸⁸

The creation of the world implies that there was a beginning. Until the mid 1960's,²⁸⁹ scientists generally believed that the universe was eternal

²⁸⁵ This essay was inspired by the work and writing of Dr. Gerald Schroeder.

²⁸⁶ *Bereishis* 1:31: "And G-d saw all that He had made, and behold it was very good, and it was evening, and it was morning, the sixth day."

²⁸⁷ *Vayikra Rabbah* 29:1

²⁸⁸ Planck Collaboration, "Planck 2015 Results," *Astronomy & Astrophysics* 594, (Oct 2016.)

²⁸⁹ In 1964/65, astronomers Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson were using a large horn antenna to map signals from the Milky Way when they serendipitously discovered the long sought-after Cosmic Microwave Radiation (CMB), believed to be an "echo" of the Big Bang. This unexpected discovery, offering strong evidence that the universe began with the Big Bang, ushered in experimental cosmology. Penzias and Wilson shared the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1978 in honor of their findings.

and lacked a beginning.²⁹⁰ Today, however, most cosmologists interpret a quality of starlight called the “redshift” as evidence that the universe is expanding,²⁹¹ in an accelerating fashion, in all directions. The implication is that there is some starting point to the universe, and that it had exploded outward from that starting point, in all directions. In the beginning, there was a Big Bang.

The nature of time is complex. Prior to Einstein’s theory of relativity, time was understood and perceived as flowing at a constant rate and as being independent of space. Einstein explained that time and space are interdependent; they are unified into space-time. He theorized that the measurement of time is dependent on the perspective of the observer and is affected by velocity and gravitational fields. This is known as time dilation. Time dilation is the difference in time measured by two

²⁹⁰ Dr. Gerald Schroeder, Ph.D., “The Age of the Universe,” [//geraldschroeder.com](http://geraldschroeder.com), (Oct. 2003):

In 1959, a survey was taken of leading American scientists. Among the many questions asked was, “What is your estimate of the age of the universe?” Several years ago, the response to that survey was republished in *Scientific American*— the most widely read science journal in the world. . . . The answer that two-thirds—an overwhelming majority—of the scientists gave was, in essence, “Age? There was no beginning. Aristotle and Plato taught us 2400 years ago that the universe is eternal.

²⁹¹ Dennis Overbye, “Cosmos Controversy: The Universe Is Expanding, but How Fast?” *The New York Times*, February 20, 2017.

observers, it is due to the relative difference in their respective velocities. Because of the nature of space-time, a watch sitting on the wrist of a moving observer will measure time slower than a clock that he perceives as being stationary.

Vayikra Rabbah, a midrash on the Torah that was written 1500 years ago, explains that the first day of the calendar begins on the sixth day. It divides creation into two timeframes: before and after the creation of man. On the day of man's creation, the flow of time is described in familiar, terrestrial terms. However, the six days preceding man's creation are described using relatively nebulous terms, "There was evening and there was morning." The Hebrew words for evening and morning can also be interpreted as disorder and order, respectively. The first six days of creation describe the emanation of disorder (metaphorical darkness) and the formation of order (metaphorical light.)

The Babylonian Talmud, in tractate *Chagigah*, explains that the Torah's description of the six days of creation may also be understood in allegorical terms. The time frame prior to creation of man is described by the expression, "Regarding the early days that proceeded you." Only after man is created does the Torah describe the passage of time from man's perspective. Prior to the creation of man, the Torah describes time

from G-d's perspective. As it is stated in *Tehillim*,²⁹² "For a thousand years are in Your eyes like yesterday."

Dr. Gerald Schroeder explains in one of his lectures on Torah and science the following:

The 31 verses in *Bereishis* that describe creation are as Shlomo *HaMelech* says in *Mishlei*,²⁹³ "Like apples of gold in dishes of silver, is a word well spoken." Maimonides explains that the "bowls of silver" represent the literal reading of the text, whereas the "apples of gold" represent the hidden wisdom that requires elucidation. In *Devarim*,²⁹⁴ Moshe says, "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations." *Nachmanides* explains that this verse refers to two separate timeframes: "Remember the days of old" alludes to the first six days of creation. However, "consider the years of many generations" represents the passage of time since man's creation. By delving into these two separate timeframes, a person will discover the fingerprint of G-d.

²⁹² *Tehillim* 90:4. It seems that this verse is saying that the perception of the flow of time is relative to the perspective of the observer.

²⁹³ *Mishlei* 25:1

²⁹⁴ *Devarim* 32:7

The Torah doesn't refer to the first 24-hour day of creation as the first day, but rather as day *one*. The term "first" is an ordinal adjective, as it assigns a number rank to a single entity that belongs to a group of entities; whereas, the term "one" is a cardinal adjective, it describes how many entities there are. In the description of creation, day one is unique in that there are no other days yet to compare it with. On day one, time was created. The next day is referred to as the second day, which is an ordinal designation. The second day takes its place behind day one, which can only now be described as "first," in this newly established hierarchy. In other words, once time is created, the clock can begin to flow into a second day, third day, etc. The Torah's narrative of the first six days illustrates to us that time is evolving and prospective. It is not retrospective since history hadn't yet occurred.

Returning to the scientific narrative, after the Big Bang expanded by way of the stretching of space itself.²⁹⁵ Since space and time are considered as interdependent, the stretching of space results in the stretching (slowing) of time. As space stretches, the distances between galaxies is increasing at an accelerating rate. This has profound consequences on the perception of the flow of time. From the Torah's perspective, time is described as flowing at a constant rate: day one, day two, day three, etc. Yet from the perspective of a stationary point

²⁹⁵ Outward expansion should not be interpreted as movement away from G-d. This process is occurring within G-d's essence, as it is stated, "There is no place devoid of Me."

embedded in stretching space, the time intervals between days are stretched into billions of years. This is known as the cosmological Red Shift.²⁹⁶

Based on Einstein's views on relativity, it's possible that from G-d's perspective, creation takes place in six days,²⁹⁷ whereas from the

²⁹⁶ In physics, redshift refers to a **shift** toward longer wavelengths of the spectral lines. These are emitted by a celestial object and are caused by the object moving away from the earth.

²⁹⁷ See *Genesis and the Big Bang: The Discovery of Harmony between Modern Science and The Bible*, by Dr. Gerald Schroeder. This book provides a deeper, mathematical analysis with amazing implications. An excerpt from Dr. Schroeder's book is as follows:

When we look back in time, we see approximately 14 billion years of history. But how would they be perceived from the Bible's perspective of time? Looking forward from when the universe was very small – billions of times smaller – the Bible teaches that six days passed. In truth, they both are correct. What's exciting about the last few years is that we now have quantified the data to know the relationship between the perception of time from the beginning of stable matter, the threshold energy of protons (their nucleosynthesis), looking forward and our measure of the history of the universe. It's not science fiction any longer. A dozen physics textbooks all bring the same generalized number. The general relationship of the stretching of space between the era of proton antiproton formation, that time near the beginning at the threshold energy of protons when the first stable matter formed, and time today is a million million. That's a 1 with 12 zeros after it. Space has stretched by a million million. So, when a view from the beginning looking forward says "I'm sending you a pulse every second," would we see a pulse every second? No. We'd see one every

perspective of man, creation may have started 13.7 billion years ago.²⁹⁸

Both perspectives may be true and presumably compatible with cosmology's current model. The Torah refers to the relativity of time in two verses in *Bereshis*: "These are the generations of the heaven and the earth, on the day that the Lord our G-d created the earth and the heavens",²⁹⁹ and, "This is the book of the generations of man on the day that G-d created man in the image of G-d."³⁰⁰ Both verses are using the

million million seconds. That's the stretching effect of the expansion of the universe on the perception of time. The biblical text shows us (and the Talmud confirms) that the soul of Adam was created five and a half days after the big bang creation. That is a half day before the end of the sixth day. At that moment the cosmic calendar ceases and an earth-based calendar starts. How would we see those days stretched by a million million? Five and a half days times a million million, gives us five and a half million million days. Dividing that by 365 days in a year, comes out to be 15 billion years. NASA gives a value of just under 14 billion years. Considering the many approximations, and that the Bible works with only six periods of time, the agreement to within a few percent is extraordinary. **The universe is billions of years old but from the Torah's perspective those billions of years compressed into five and a half, 24-hour days.** The five and a half days of Genesis are not of equal duration. Each time the universe doubles in size, the perception of time halves as we project that time back toward the beginning of the universe. "

²⁹⁸ From handwritten calculations by Dr. Gerald Schroeder. To view these calculations, see Appendix A.

²⁹⁹ *Bereshis* 2:4

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.* 5:1

same two expressions, i.e. “the generations’ ” and “on the day that... G-d created.” By all outward appearances, we have a discrepancy between “the generations,” evincing long periods of time, and “on the day that... G-d created,” specifying a single day. How could there be generations of heavens, earth and man on the day of their creation? It is tenable that G-d is alluding to the relativistic nature of time. From His perspective, the expansion of space-time takes a day; whereas, from our perspective, it takes billions of years. Both are true.³⁰¹ The Torah states the following:

And G-d said, ‘Let there be a firmament among the water and let it divide between water and water.’ And G-d made the firmament and divided the water that is below the firmament from the water that is above the firmament and it was so.³⁰²

The upper waters refer to divine wisdom as it is expressed in the Torah. The lower waters refer to human knowledge derived from the study of the universe and nature.³⁰³ The last 200 years have witnessed an

³⁰¹ Moshe Carmeli, *Cosmological Special Relativity: The Large-Scale Structure of Space, Time and Velocity*, second ed. (Singapore, World Scientific Publ. Co., 2002.)

³⁰² *Devarim* 1:6–7

³⁰³ *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 15, “*Parschas Noach*.”

exponential explosion of scientific knowledge and understanding of the universe.³⁰⁴ As human understanding increases, the lower waters begin to mirror and approach the upper waters. Divine wisdom is a universal and absolute truth and G-d has been waiting for human understanding to ripen and perceive that “everything is created with His wisdom.”³⁰⁵

This drive toward universal oneness is alluded to in Einstein’s name, which in Yiddish means “one stone.”³⁰⁶ Whether or not Einstein realized

³⁰⁴ *Zohar* 1:117a (Translation from Sefaria.org):

In reference to the following verses (*Noach* 7:11-12) In the six hundredth year of Noach’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the foundations of the great deep burst forth and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was on the earth for forty days and forty nights,” the *Zohar* explains that in the six-hundredth year of the sixth millennium both the waters from below and the waters from above will burst forth and flood the world in preparation for the coming of Moshiach. The sixth-hundredth year of the sixth millennium refers to the years 1740–1840 CE. During these one hundred years, every secular discipline experienced an explosion of knowledge. This period is referred to as the Industrial Revolution. During this same period there was a marked revelation of the inner dimension of the Torah’s hidden wisdom. This was manifest through the establishment of the Chassidic movement, which made the Kabbalah’s esoteric wisdom available on a mass scale.

³⁰⁵ *Mishlei* 3:19

³⁰⁶ Rabbi Yitzchak Ginsburgh, *Torah and Modern Physics*, (2013.)

it, he was a conduit for the revelation of the paradigm-shifting, conceptual understanding of the universe. Einstein did not create anything new, but rather discovered and revealed how G-d creates the physical universe. His theories of general and special relativity have brought the lower waters closer to the upper waters.

As mentioned earlier, one aspect of Einstein's theories was the conceptualization of space and time as one entity referred to as space-time. The upshot of space-time is that both space and time are nonlinear and curve in a concave fashion around an object with enough mass to generate a gravitational field. What this means is that under certain conditions, the extremes of distance (the edges of the inflationary universe) and extremes of time (past and future) may curve toward each other. This implies that the extremes of space and time are closer to human perception and experience than what was previously thought.

Sefer Yetzira states, "Two stones build two houses, three stones build six houses, four stones build twenty-four houses, etc."³⁰⁷ The "stones" refer to letters and the "houses" refer to words. Thus, two letters may form two unique words, three letters may form six unique words, four

³⁰⁷ *Sefer Yetzira* 4:16

letters may form twenty-four unique words, etc.³⁰⁸ While not explicitly stated, it can be deduced through this sequence that one stone builds one house.

This one stone may be an illusion to the foundation stone upon which the universe was founded.³⁰⁹ This one stone also refers to one letter,

³⁰⁸ This is an example of the principle of factorials. In mathematics, the factorial of a positive integer n , denoted by $n!$, is the product of all positive integers less than or equal to n . For example, $5! = 5 \times 4 \times 3 \times 2 \times 1 = 120$.

³⁰⁹ *Midrash Tanchuma* (on *parshas Kedoshim*), ch.10 (Translation from Sefaria.org):

As the navel is set in the center of the human body, so is the land of Israel the navel of the world..., situated in the center of the world, and Jerusalem in the center of the land of Israel, and the sanctuary in the center of Jerusalem, and the holy place in the center of the sanctuary, and the ark in the center of the holy place, and the **Foundation Stone** before the holy place, because from it the world was founded.”

Yoma 54b:

The Mishnah taught that a stone sat in the Holy of Holies and it was called the foundation (*shesiyah*) rock. A sage taught in the *Tosefta*: Why was it called *shesiyah*? It is because the world was created from it. The Gemara comments: We learned the Mishna in accordance with the opinion of the one who said that the world was created from Zion. As it was taught in a *baraisa* that Rabbi Eliezer says: The world was created from its center, as it is stated: “When the dust runs into a mass, and the clods cleave fast together” (*Iyov* 38:38). The world was created by adding matter to the center, like the formation of clumps of earth.

most probably the *aleph*, since it is the foundational letter of the Hebrew alphabet. As we have learned, the *aleph* alludes to G-d's essence.³¹⁰ I posit that Einstein ("one stone") may have been a

Zohar 1:231:

The world was not created until G-d took a stone called *even ha'shesiyah* and threw it into the depths where it was fixed from above till below, and from it the world expanded. It is the center point of the world and on this spot stood the Holy of Holies.

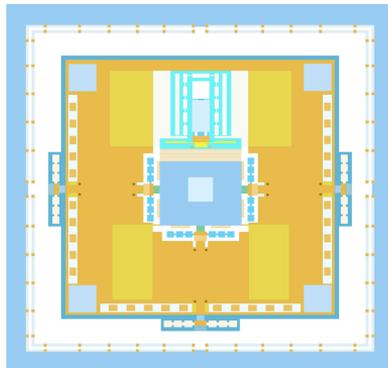
According to the Talmud, it was close to here, on the site of the altar, that G-d gathered the earth that was formed into Adam. It was on this rock that Adam—and later Cain, Abel and *Noach*—offered sacrifices to G-d. Jewish sources identify this rock as the place of the binding of Yitzchok, where Avraham fulfilled G-d's test to see if he would be willing to sacrifice his son. It is also identified as the rock upon which Yaacov dreamt about angels ascending and descending on a ladder and, consequently, the place he offered a sacrifice on.

³¹⁰ See this book's first essay, "*Aleph*." *Sovev kol almin* and *memale kol almin* are diametric opposites and represent infinite and finite energies, respectively. Both concepts are alluded to in the letter *aleph*. Thus, we may conclude that the *aleph* is representative of G-d's essence, which has the capacity to unify opposites. The *aleph* is the beginning of the Hebrew alphabet and the first letter of the first word that G-d spoke when He revealed himself to the nation of Israel on Mount Sinai. Contained within the *aleph* is the highest ideal of G-d's plan, which is the revelation of His essence through all of creation. When an *aleph* is introduced into a person's consciousness, he or she is exposed to the concepts of *memale kol almin*, *sovev kol almin*, and G-d's essence. These concepts are the essence of Judaism and life itself.

revelatory conduit to elevate the lower waters and bring creation closer to the divine wisdom of the upper waters, thus closer to G-d.



**Foundation Stone at the Site of the Future
Holy of Holies in the Third Temple**



The Third and Eternal Temple

(Art courtesy of Tzfat Gallery of Mystical Art; reprinted with permission:
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In order to be intellectually honest and thorough, I feel it is necessary to mention other relevant opinions regarding the age of the universe.³¹¹ Rabbi Nehunya ben haKana³¹² writes in *Sefer ha-Temunah* that our current time frame is just one seven-thousand-year Sabbatical cycle out of seven such cycles. Thus, the world is destined to exist for forty-nine-thousand years. His opinion is based on the Talmud which states that “the world will exist for six thousand years, and in the seven-thousandth year, it will be destroyed.”³¹³ According to one opinion, Adam *Harishon* was created at the beginning of the seventh cycle. In other words, the world was forty-two-thousand years old when Adam was born.³¹⁴ Rabbi Isaac of Akko writes in *Otzar haChayim*³¹⁵ that since

³¹¹ The following opinion is explained by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan in his book, *Immortality, Resurrection, and the Age of the Universe*.

³¹² First century *tanna* who is believed to have written the daily prayer beginning בנאבא, the initials of which form the forty-two-lettered name of G-d. He is also believed to be the author of the *Bahir*, *Sefer haTemunah* and of the *Sefer Hapeli'ah*.

³¹³ *Sanhedrin* 97a

³¹⁴ See *Livnat Ha-Sapir: Perush Midrash ha'Ne'elam ye'Tosefta le'Sefer ha'Zohar* by David ben Yehudah Hechassid, circa 1300's—manuscript available on microfilm at the JTS library.

³¹⁵ See appendix for translation of the pertinent text, *Otzar Hachayim*, 86b–87b.

the sabbatical (*shemittah*) cycles existed before Adam, their chronology must be measured, not in human years, but in divine years.³¹⁶ Thus, the world was forty-two-thousand **divine** years old when Adam was born. If we apply G-d's relativity principle—as stated in *Tehillim*, “For a thousand years in Your eyes are like yesterday”—then we may derive a very interesting conclusion. If one day, from G-d's perspective is 365,250 days (1000 years) from our perspective, then 1000 G-dly years equals 365,250 human years. If we apply the opinion that the world was 42,000 divine years old when Adam was created, then from our perspective, the world was around 15 billion years old (42,000 x 365,250) when Adam was born. This estimate was derived over 700 years ago by a famous kabbalist and student of the Ramban.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, also expressed his opinion on the issue of the age of the universe. In his correspondence with professor Cyril Domb in 1961, the Rebbe makes the following points:³¹⁷ 1) The Torah is G-d's absolute truth that transcends space-time; 2) Scientific theory is probabilistic in nature and based on observations and/or deductions that change with time depending on evolving information; 3) Therefore, science can never

³¹⁶ *Tehillim* 90:4

³¹⁷ For the full correspondence from the Lubavitcher Rebbe to Professor Cyril Domb, please see Appendix A.

challenge the veracity of the Genesis account from the viewpoint of evolutionary theory or any other theory. It would be just as "scientific" to accept the account verbally as to reinterpret it allegorically to harmonize it with any particular cosmological theory; 4) According to the *halachah*, our world came into being 5721 years ago (as of 1961), and the age of the world is reaffirmed on such Torah legal documents as *gittin*, and the like; Shabbos is the seventh day of the week, which the *halachah* connects with the six days of creation that preceded it;³¹⁸ 6) Unfortunately, the majority of rabbonim stand too much in awe of scientific theories, for they still adhere to the attitude of bygone generations, when science was regarded as an absolute truth, rather than the product of human intelligence and speculation.

³¹⁸ *Shabbos* 69b

Purim

G-d's name is not mentioned in *Megillas Esther*.³¹⁹ To the casual observer, the story of Esther seems to progress naturally without any mention of miracles, and yet Purim is considered by our sages to be miraculous. This is because the miracles of Purim are expressed through a series of serendipitous interactions between Persian political powers and Jewish leaders. Despite the unusually fortuitous nature of these events, they occurred without the overt violation of physical laws as was witnessed during the exodus. The events of Purim represent the fusion of infinity (miracles) with finitude (nature.) The fusion of polar opposite entities requires a force that is greater than both.³²⁰ Nature is governed by G-d's finite energy.³²¹ Miracles, such as the splitting of the sea,

³¹⁹ Esther is related to the word "*l'hastir*," which means "hidden." According to the *Midrash (Esther Rabbah 3:10)*, whenever *Megillas Esther* mentions "*hamelech*," ("the king"), this is referring to *Achashveirosh*, but the implicit reference is to G-d.

³²⁰ Only a force greater than both opposites has the power to integrate them into one entity.

³²¹ G-d's name *Elokim* represents His power of restraint and is the force involved in creating nature. *Elokim* has the *gematria* of 86, which is the exact numerical value of the Hebrew word for nature (*hateva*). *Havayah De'Litata* represents G-d's finite light. The coupling of *Elokim* and *Havayah De'Litata* forms the *kav*, which represents the mechanism through which G-d creates and manifests His Divine providence in the finite world.

represent G-d's infinite energy.³²² However, the essence of G-d transcends both the infinite and finite.³²³ It is within the capacity of G-d's formless essence to fuse and reveal miracles **through** nature. Purim represents the revelation of G-d's essence.

Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer teaches that before G-d created the world, all that existed was G-d and His name.³²⁴ It is not immediately clear what name Rabbi Eliezer is referring to. As is known, the name that is generally used to refer to G-d is the tetragrammaton, *ה-ו-ה-ו*. This is the name that G-d uses **after** He decides to emanate His infinite energy to create the world.³²⁵ It consists of letters that represent form. This emanated energy of G-d may be described as having an ethereal and infinite form. In other words, the tetragrammaton whose form is *ה-ו-ה-ו*, is the quintessential

³²² Miracles represent the breaking of the laws of nature by the revelation of G-d's infinite power, which is represented by His name *Havayah De'Liayla*.

³²³ The essence of G-d refers to His hidden essence, referred to as *helem ha'atzmi*.

³²⁴ Rabbi Eliezer Ben Hyrkanus, *Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer*, (circa 100-300 CE,) ch.3.

³²⁵ When G-d decided to emanate His infinite light, the light was revealed in an infinite form. His will for the light is considered the beginning of the light. Thus, the light has a beginning but no end (*ohr ein-sof*). This cannot be said regarding the essence of G-d since He has no beginning or end. Thus, the light **after** its emanation has some degree of defined form, which distinguishes it from the essence of G-d or His name **before** the arousal of His will to emanate.

representation of anything that has form. It represents the very concept of form.

However, **before** G-d decided to emanate, there was only G-d and His name, as it is written, “He is His name and His name is Him.”³²⁶ As it is a primary tenet of our faith, we know that G-d has no form. Therefore, any name that is limited by form cannot refer to His essence. An early Kabbalistic teaching³²⁷ is that the name of G-d **before** He decided to emanate the infinite light is ה-ו-ה-י **without** the letters ה-ו-ה-י.³²⁸ This formless name lacks letters and is thus more congruous to the formless essence of G-d.

³²⁶ Isaiah ben Abraham Horowitz (The Holy Shelah), *Shenei Luchos HaBris (1648)*, 4:2.

³²⁷ See *Ginnas Egoz (Garden of Nuts)*, pt 1, *Sha’ar Havayah*, by Joseph ben Abraham Gikatilla (circa 1248–1305.)

³²⁸ Form is a description of limitation. Even infinity is a limitation in comparison with the essence of G-d. Since the essence of G-d has no form, then His name (before His arousal to emanate,) which refers to His essence, must be formless. In this context, the formless name of *Havayah* without letters refers to G-d’s essence and His potential to create. From this perspective, His name is considered primordial like Him. This is what the Rambam means when he writes in *Mishneh Torah (Madda, Yesodei HaTorah)*, that: “The foundation of foundations and firmest pillar of all wisdom is to know that there is a First Being, that He caused all beings to be, and that all beings from heaven and earth, and from between them, could not be if it were not for the truth of His own being.”

We learn that in the future, all Jewish holidays will be nullified except for Purim.³²⁹ We also refer to the holiest day of the year as Yom Kippur,³³⁰ which may be translated as “a day like Purim.” The implication is that Yom Kippur is a day that is comparable to Purim. In other words, Purim is so lofty that the closest we can come to an understanding of its importance is to compare Yom Kippur to it. As mentioned earlier, Purim represents the revelation of G-d’s essence. The name that represents G-d’s essence lacks letters. That is why G-d’s name is not mentioned in *Megillas Esther*.

³²⁹ *Esther* 9:28:

And these days shall be remembered and celebrated throughout every generation, in every family, every province, and every city, and these days of Purim shall not be revoked from amidst the Jews, and their memory shall not cease from their seed.

The Rambam in *Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Megillah*, 2:18, explains that all the books of *Nach* will be nullified in the future except *Megillas Esther*, which will join the Torah and the Oral Law as that which never goes away.

³³⁰ The *Zohar* explained this relationship as follows: Purim is, in fact, on a higher level than Yom Kippur, since it can be translated as “a day like Purim,” (“*Yom (ha)Ki’purim*.”) The word “like” suggests that Yom Kippur is a less holy day than Purim because the “reality is always greater than the copy that is like it.” (See *Tikkunei Zohar, tikkun* 20 and 21.)

Quintessence

An infant is born with a preprogrammed knowledge of the rules of the game of being an infant. It knows how to nurse and how to cry when it needs something. However, as a child develops, he is confronted by the ubiquitous unknown and experientially intuit that the old rules of the game are inadequate. The child's mind is challenged to develop rules of higher order complexity that will incorporate the old rules with those that are required to gain mastery over the new anomaly.³³¹

This process of higher order abstraction and development is expressed across all dimensions of physical and metaphysical disciplines. Scientific progress is accelerated when an irregularity is encountered that is incongruous with current understanding and theory. This phenomenon was demonstrated when probing reality on the subatomic scale as well as the cosmological scale. When approaching reality at these two

³³¹ Saul McLeod, "Jean Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development," [//simplypsychology.org](https://www.simplypsychology.org), (June 2018). McLeod notes that "according to Piaget, cognitive development was a progressive reorganization of mental processes resulting from biological maturation and environmental experience. Children construct an understanding of the world around them, experience discrepancies between what they already know and what they discover in their environment, and then adjust their ideas accordingly."

obverse orders of magnitude, the laws of Newtonian mechanics³³² become ineffectual in the bid to explain reality. These anomalies sparked development of a higher order conceptual framework that modeled reality in a more comprehensive way. The development of Einstein's theories of special³³³ and general relativity³³⁴ provided a more wide-ranging understanding of the physical world. These new developments incorporated classical mechanics as a subset of the more complete theory of mechanics.

³³² Classical mechanics describes the motion of macroscopic objects, from projectiles to parts of machinery, and astronomical objects, such as spacecraft, planets, stars and galaxies.

³³³ Albert Einstein, *On the Electrodynamics of Moving Bodies – Special Theory of Relativity*, 1905. Special relativity corrects mechanics to handle situations involving motions at a significant fraction of the speed of light, known as relativistic velocities. Special relativity implies a wide range of consequences that have been experimentally verified, including length contraction, time dilation, relativistic mass, mass–energy equivalence, a universal speed limit and relativity of simultaneity. It has replaced the conventional notion of an absolute universal time with the notion of a time that is dependent on reference frame and spatial position.

³³⁴ Albert Einstein, *Foundation of the General Theory of Relativity*, 1916. General relativity generalizes special relativity and Newton's law of universal gravitation, providing a unified description of gravity as a geometric property of space and time, or space-time. In particular, the curvature of space-time is directly related to the energy and momentum of whatever matter and radiation are present. Widely acknowledged as a theory of extraordinary beauty, general relativity has often been described as the most beautiful of all existing physical theories.

Anomalies are also encountered in the spiritual realms of existence. These may take the form of miraculous occurrences on a personal level or on a national scale. Personal miracles are those that involve atypical events that are relevant on a small scale, such as a statistically improbable recovery from a life-threatening illness. National miracles are those that occur on a larger scale, such as the exodus from Egypt, the splitting of the Red Sea, the giving of the Torah, etc.

There are unfortunate events that are so jarring and traumatic that they can erode the structural integrity of a person's theological framework. In particular, the unexpected illness or death of a loved one, divorce, war, natural disasters, etc. These chaotic occurrences often leave a person caught up in an emotional upheaval, as they are beyond the current processing capacity of a person's cognitive orientation.

At this point, I want to share with you, the reader, a deeply personal story. In February 2018, my wife and I were blessed by G-d with a beautiful daughter. Shira is my seventh child and the first for my wife (this is my second marriage) who was over forty years old at the time. Her birth is miraculous in our eyes and is an obvious act of pure kindness from G-d.

Ten days later, I had open heart surgery, lost my right lung, and was diagnosed with sarcoma of the pulmonary artery. This is an extremely rare and dangerous form of cancer. In the next few months, I underwent chemotherapy, had trouble breathing, and suffered from severe pain. I

was unable to work and for the first time in my life, I was essentially home bound.

The birth of my daughter and my subsequent life-threatening illness caused me to experience a crisis of faith. I believe that G-d exists and that everything He does is good and just. Thus, the same G-d who blessed us with our beautiful daughter also gave me cancer. If I am to be consistent with my beliefs, then I am forced to conclude that both events are a manifestation of G-d's kindness. This represented a significant anomaly to my theological framework. I did not perceive G-d's kindness in giving me cancer.

My spiritual framework needed higher order abstraction in order to explain how the birth of my daughter and my cancer were **both** acts of G-d's kindness. After several months of deep thinking and soul searching, I did discover G-d's hidden wisdom and kindness for me in cancer. Here is an excerpt from my autobiography called *Metamorphosis*:

335

I thank G-d for giving me cancer. To explain this statement, I want to mention what Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Schneersohn said after being in prison, "I would never want to go to prison, but the fruits of being there I would never give up." I would never want to have cancer, open-heart surgery, lose a lung, experience a ridiculous amount of pain, or take chemotherapy. However, I would never give up the life

³³⁵ Vladimir (Zev) Zelenko, M.D., *Metamorphosis*, (New York, 2018).

lessons, emotional growth, and spiritual growth that I have gotten from getting cancer. I am happier now than I have ever been in my life. I enjoy the moment and thank G-d for every breath. Inner peace has been elusive my whole life. I have made many wrong detours and mistakes in trying to find inner happiness. Surprisingly, my illness has led me to a certain soulful tranquility that I have been searching for, for as long as I can remember. I have chosen to let go of anger, forgive, and ask for forgiveness. A successful life is defined by the degree of positive emotional and spiritual growth. Everyone is tested and challenged during their life. All new stages and experiences in life are initially faced with apprehension. How we navigate these turbulent waters determines and defines us as people. The universal solution to happiness is surprisingly simple when you finally find it. Let go of what you cannot control, place your faith in G-d for everything, and use your time and energy efficiently. "Efficiently" means to make sure that your thoughts, speech, and action are in line with G-d's will. Look honestly inward into your soul, identify your own personality flaws, and fix them. It is more difficult to fix an internal demon than it is to win an external war.

Encounters with the anomalies of chaos are inherent to the divine plan, because they further human development in the spiritual and material realms of existence. These events represent a nullification of an

obsolete state of being and replace it with a new, deeper level of consciousness. This two-step process involves the metaphorical immersion in the River of Fire³³⁶ and the subsequent elevation by way of the Pillar.³³⁷

Conceptually, both a river and fire are purifying entities; one purifies through washing, and the other, through burning. Thus, the River of Fire is an intensely refining force that cleanses the soul of the limitations of the old state of being. The River of Fire is the anomaly which prepares the soul to ascend to higher states of consciousness.

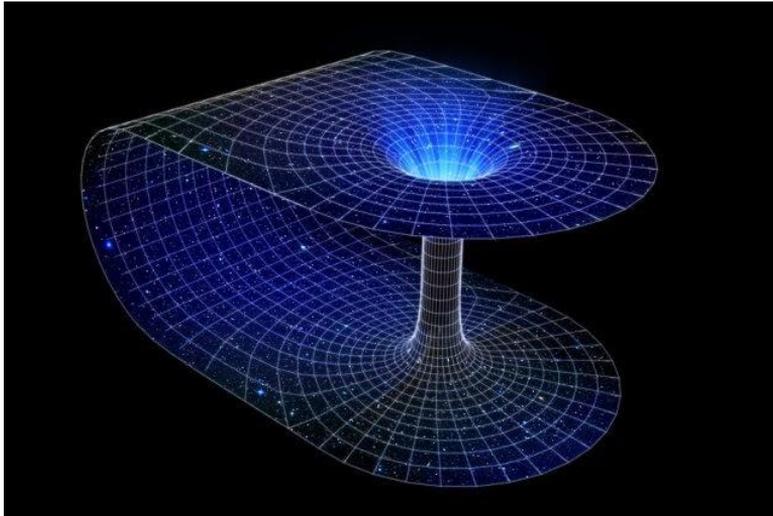
The Pillar is the metaphysical construct that elevates the soul to a higher state of consciousness. For those familiar with concepts in cosmology, the pillar may be represented by the concept of a wormhole.

338

³³⁶ It is written of that river, "A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him" (*Daniel* 7:10); and "The souls of the righteous bathe and cleanse themselves in it" (*Zohar* 1:40).

³³⁷ *Tanya, Likkutei Amarim*, ch.39; Rabbi Yisrael Baal Shem Tov in a letter written to his brother-in-law, Rabbi Gershon of Kitov, 1781.

³³⁸ A wormhole is a theoretical passage through space-time that could create shortcuts for long journeys across the universe. Wormholes are predicted by the theory of general relativity.



The purpose for man's encounter with chaos is the revelation of man's quintessence by the self-sacrifice required in gaining mastery over these anomalies. This leads to the Pillar that connects the four lower soul levels³³⁹ with man's highest soul level.³⁴⁰ Man's *yechidah* is a literal part of G-d above. Therefore, the revelation of every man's quintessence is a revelation of G-d's quintessence, which makes the world His dwelling place.

³³⁹ *Nefesh, ruach, neshamah, and chayah.*

³⁴⁰ *Yechidah*

Repentance

G-d is perfect. Man is not. Most human beings commit transgressions against the divine will. For existence to continue, G-d creates a mechanism that tolerates man's imperfections.³⁴¹ When a sin is committed, the entire system does not collapse; rather, G-d's Divine Presence is withdrawn, in proportion to the mistake.³⁴² This withdrawal

³⁴¹ *Pirkei Avos* 5:1:

The world was created with ten utterances. What does this come to teach us? Certainly, it could have been created with a single utterance. However, the world was created with ten utterances in order to punish the wicked and reward the righteous.

³⁴² Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Schneersohn, *Ma'amar Basi L'Gani*, *Yud Shvat*, (1950):

The main dwelling place of the Divine Presence was in the lowest physical realm. In response to Adam and Chavah's sin of eating from the Tree of Knowledge, the Divine Presence withdrew from the earth to the first heaven (the lowest of the heavens). In response to the sin of Cain killing Abel, the Divine Presence withdrew from the first to the second heaven. In response to the sin of Enosh, who initiated serving idols, the Divine Presence withdrew from the second to third heaven. In response to the corruption of the generation that suffered from the Flood, the Divine Presence withdrew from the third to the fourth heaven. This process continued until the Divine Presence reached the seventh heaven. Afterward, seven righteous individuals arose, who gradually returned the Divine Presence to its rightful place in this world. Avraham drew down the Divine Presence from the seventh to the sixth heaven. Yitzchok drew down the Divine Presence from the

is the mechanism that imparts the system with flexibility and continued existence. When a transgressor intends to correct his sin, the main element in the successful correction of it, is his resolution not to repeat the transgression again.³⁴³ This willful decision is the beginning of the reconciliation between G-d and man. More importantly, it allows for the correction of the transgression and the return of the Divine Presence.

When creation is functioning properly, G-d's name (ה, ו, ה, י) is complete and whole.³⁴⁴ This represents a plentiful and uninterrupted

sixth to the fifth heaven. Yaakov drew down the Divine Presence from fifth to the fourth heaven. This process continued until Moshe drew down the Divine Presence from the first heaven back to this world, which occurred at the giving of the Torah.

³⁴³ *Sanhedrin* 25b (Translation from Sefaria.org):

Regarding the expression, one who plays with marble dice (or any other type of gambling) is disqualified from being a witness. **And when is their repentance accepted**, so that they may resume being fit to bear witness? Once they break their gambling equipment and **repent completely, abandoning this occupation entirely**. The *baraisa* continues: The expression: One who lends with interest, is referring to both the lender and the borrower. Both are disqualified as witnesses. And when is their repentance accepted? Once they tear their promissory notes and repent completely, abandoning this occupation entirely.”

³⁴⁴ The name *Havayah* (ה, ו, ה, י) is associated with the world of *tikkun*. Each world is associated with one letter of *Havayah*: *atzilus*—י; *beriyah*—ה; *yetzirah*—ו; *asiyah*—ה. The name *Havayah* is also associated with the *partzufim* that exist in each world: *arich anpin*—koytz of the *yud*; *abba*—י; *ema*—ה; *ze'ir*

flow of divine energy into the world. Man's sins cause a fragmentation in G-d's name—the last letter (ה) is cleaved off from the first three letters (ו, ה, י) of G-d's name.³⁴⁵ This represents an obstruction to the flow of divine energy in the world.

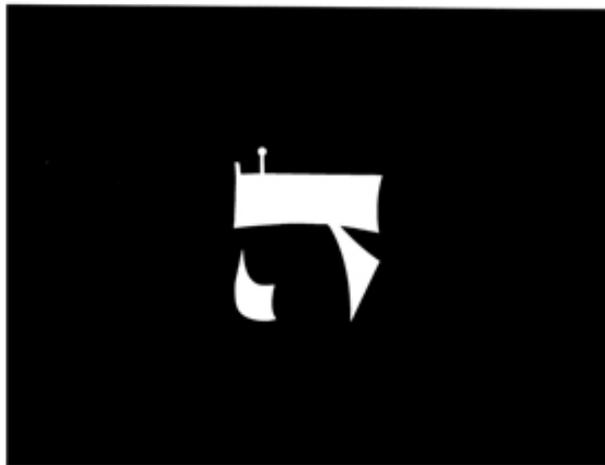
The Hebrew word for return is *teshuvah*, תשובה. It can be read as תשוב ה, return the letter *hey*. In other words, repentance leads to the

anpin—ו; *rachel (nukvah)*—ה. The observance of divine commandments effectuates the unification of the name *Havayah* when the following is stated before prayer or the performance of *mitzvos*: “For the sake of the union of the Holy One, blessed be He, with His *Shechinah*, to unite the Name *Yud-Hey* with *Vav-Hey* in a perfect union in the name of all Israel.” Proper observance of the divine will affects the *partzufim* in every world. First, *ze'ir anpin*—ו and *rachel (nukvah)*—ה, become oriented face-to-face and unify as one. This causes *abba*—י and *ema*—ה to orient face-to-face and unify in a deeper way. This causes an internal unity within *arich anpin* (*MA* on right and *BON* on the left). This causes an internal unity within *atik yomin* (*MA* in the front and *BON* on the back). This causes an arousal of *reisha de lo isyado (radlo)*. This process occurs in every world until either the *ohr ein sof* within the essence of G-d or the actual hidden essence (*helem ha'aztmi*) is reached. This causes a reciprocal arousal and effulgence of divine blessing upon the entity causing the unification below and the world around them.

³⁴⁵ *Tanya, Iggeres HaTeshuvah*, ch.6: “The root of man's soul is the second *hey*. Through his evil deeds and thoughts, he “pulls” and draws down the life-force issuing from the `hey into the chambers of the *sitra achra*.”

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.* When the sinner performs the appropriate penance, then he is able to remove the life-force he had “given” the *sitra achra* when he had committed the negative deed. Through his repentance, the proper flow of divinity is restored.

reunification of the letter *hey* to G-d's ineffable name (ה ,ו ,ה ,י). This represents the restoration of divine flow into the world. This divine exculpatory apparatus allays the fragmentation and advances the reunification, which allows for stability and the continued existence of creation.



Tashuv-Hey

Returning the *Hey*

(Art courtesy of Tzfat Gallery of Mystical Art; reprinted with permission:
www.kabbalahart.com)

Sacrifice

Only a human being, who is aware of the dimension of time, has the wisdom to make sacrifices in the present for the benefit of the future. In contrast to this is the biblical account of G-d's call to Avraham to sacrifice his only son. Avraham was willing to sacrifice his future, Yitzchok his son,³⁴⁷ for the sake of his present. The narrative of the events is as follows:

³⁴⁸

And it was after recent events, G-d tested Avraham and said, please take your beloved and special son, Yitzchok, and go to yourself, and elevate (sacrifice) him as a burnt offering, on one of the mountains that I will tell you. Avraham awoke the next morning, especially early, and unaided he loaded up his donkey, split the wood for the fire offering, and took Yitzchok to be

³⁴⁷ *Bereishis* 17:19, 21:

And G-d said, Indeed, your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you shall name him Yitzchok, and I will establish My covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his seed after him"; "But My covenant I will establish with Yitzchok, whom Sarah will bear to you at this time next year."

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 22:1–19

sacrificed. On the third day, Avraham raised his eyes and saw the place of sacrifice from afar. And Avraham took the wood for the burnt offering, and put it on Yitzchok to carry, and took a fire and knife in his hands. On the way to the sacrificial place, Yitzchok asked Avraham, here is the fire and wood, but where is the sacrificial ram? Avraham answered, G-d will reveal the sacrificial ram, my son. And the two of them walked together. And they came to the place that G-d told them, Avraham built an altar there, arranged the wood, bound Yitzchok, and placed him on the altar. Avraham took the knife in his hand to slaughter his son. And an angel of the merciful G-d called out from heaven and said, Avraham, Avraham. Do not extend your hand toward the youth, and do nothing to hurt him, for now I know that you fear G-d, since you did not withhold your special son from Me. Avraham raised his eyes and saw a ram, he took it and offered it as a burnt offering instead of his son. And the angel called out to Avraham from heaven a second time, and he said, the merciful G-d swears, that since you did this, and did not withhold your special son, you will be exceedingly blessed, and your offspring will be as numerous as the stars in the sky, and sand on the shore.

This passage from *Beresheis* is read every morning before prayer because this phenomenal biblical event represents the most meaningful, merciful, and conscious act in the history of humanity.

Avraham and his wife, Sarah, were miraculously blessed with a son at the age of 100 and 90, respectively.³⁴⁹ G-d promised Avraham that through this son, Yitzchok, a holy nation of G-d's people would issue forth. A short time later, G-d commanded Avraham to sacrifice Yitzchok. Not only was this command logically inconsistent with G-d's previous promise to Avraham, but it also went against Avraham's lifelong struggle against human sacrifice. In response, Avraham awoke extra early the next morning to fulfill G-d's command to sacrifice Yitzchok. Up to this point in Avraham's life, his relationship with G-d was based on reason and logic. Avraham began to discover G-d at the age of three,³⁵⁰ through

³⁴⁹ Ibid. 17:7: "And Avraham fell on his face and rejoiced, and he said to himself, Will [a child] be born to one who is a hundred years old, and will Sarah, who is ninety years old, give birth?"

Ibid. 21:5: "And Abraham was a hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born to him."

³⁵⁰ Rambam, *Mishneh Torah, Avodas Kochavim* 1:3:

After Avraham was weaned at the age of three, he began to explore and think. Though he was a child, he began to think throughout the day, wondering: How is it possible for the sphere to continue to revolve without having anyone controlling it? Who is causing it to revolve? Surely, it does not cause itself to revolve. He had no teacher. He was stuck in *Ur Kasdim* among the foolish idolaters. His

father, mother, and all the people were idol worshipers, and he would worship with them. However, his heart was exploring and gaining understanding. Ultimately, he appreciated the way of truth. He realized that there was one G-d who controlled the sphere, that He created everything, and that there is no other G-d among all the other entities. He knew that the entire world was making a mistake. What caused them to err was their service of the stars and images, which made them lose awareness of the truth. Avraham was forty years old when he became fully aware of his Creator. When he recognized and knew Him, he began to formulate replies to the inhabitants of *Ur Kasdim* and debate with them, telling them that they were not following a proper path. He broke their idols and began to teach the people that it is fitting to serve only the G-d of the world. To Him alone is it fitting to bow down, sacrifice, and offer libations, so that the people of future generations would recognize Him. It is fitting to destroy and break all the images, lest all the people err concerning them, like those people who thought that there are no other gods besides these images. When he overcame them through the strength of his arguments, the king desired to kill him. He was saved through a miracle and left for *Charan*. There, he began to call in a loud voice to all people and inform them that there is one G-d in the entire world, and it is proper to serve Him. He would go out and call the people, gathering them in city after city and country after country, until he came to the land of Canaan – proclaiming G-d's existence the entire time], as *Bereishis* 21:33 states: "And He called there in the name of the Lord, the eternal G-d." When the people would gather around him and ask him about his statements, he would explain to each one of them according to their level of understanding, until they turned to the path of truth. Ultimately, thousands and myriads gathered around him. These are the men of the house of Avraham.

intellectual analysis of the physical world. He reasoned that there must exist a divine consciousness that created and continues to create all of existence. However, Avraham also understood that there were severe limitations with the use of reason, when trying to connect to G-d. The intellect does not have the facility to grasp its own source. This was true even for Avraham, who may have possessed the greatest intellect in human history. Reason cannot be used to grasp the source of reason. In other words, since G-d transcends finitude, a finite approach to connect to G-d is inadequate. When G-d asked Avraham to sacrifice Yitzchok, he was driven by his spiritual exuberance and by the thought that he could finally connect to G-d in a transcendent way. Avraham set his rationality aside in order to fulfill G-d's command. Therefore, he didn't perceive G-d's command to sacrifice Yitzchok as something contrary to G-d's righteousness.

G-d's command to sacrifice Yitzchok was Avraham's tenth and final trial. His success in this trial was only possible because he had succeeded in the first one that G-d challenged him with: To leave the comforts of what was familiar to him and to follow G-d. As is known, in the first test G-d commanded Avraham to "Go to yourself, from your land, from the place of your birth, and from your father's house, to the land that I will show you."³⁵¹ The expression "go to yourself" indicates that G-d is telling

³⁵¹ *Bereishis* 12:1: "And the Lord said to Avram, 'Go forth from your land and from your birthplace and from your father's house, to the land that I will show you.'"

Avraham to connect with the essence of his soul.³⁵² This is partially accomplished by shedding off layers of consciousness wrapped up in worldly and even spiritual matters.³⁵³ Obliging G-d's command to "go to

³⁵² *Kli Yakar on Bereishis 12:1* (Translation from Sefaria.org):

Only when Avraham entered the future homeland of the Jewish people, was he prepared to behold visions of the Divine Presence. Beforehand, when he was still outside the land, he only heard an inner voice speaking of things. This is because G-d did not appear to him until he came to the land. Therefore, he called that place the ladder of *tzur* (*sulma shel tzur*) as it says in the *Midrash Yalkut Shemoni* on this portion, that once Avraham arrived at the ladder of *tzur* he said, "Let my portion be in this land." He certainly meant Mount *Moriah*, because that was the location of the ladder which Yaakov saw standing in the house of G-d (*Bet El*). Via that ladder souls ascend and descend, and there is the bedrock from which the body is hewn as it says, "...look at the rock whence you were hewn..." (*Yeshayahu* 51:1) because from that rock, which is called the foundation stone, the world in general was founded. Also, man, who is called a microcosm (*olam katan*), was fashioned from the place of that rock, which is also the place of the ladder for the soul.

³⁵³ *Lessons in Tanya, Iggeres Hakodesh*, Epistle 11:

The Alter Rebbe explains that a person's inner drive and desire should be for the spark of G-dliness that is found within physicality and not the physical object itself. Even if a person finds that he is lacking (G-d forbid) life's essentials, he should not be pained by their absence; rather he should rejoice in his belief that this is indeed for his good. The text of the *Iggeres* is as follows: To understand that desire for the "life of flesh," and children, and sustenance is not the way in which the

yourself,” led Avraham to eventually be able to fully shed all of his worldly attachments and go fully into himself, into his G-dly essence. This culminated in his willingness to sacrifice his son and resulted in his family’s priceless and eternal covenant with G-d. Superficially, this may seem callous, but really, it’s the most profound act of love that a person can manifest. This is because G-d loves the ones you love more than you love them.³⁵⁴

light of the Lord dwells. As our sages, of blessed memory, said: “make naught your will...” This means, one’s will should be nullified towards all worldly matters that are implied by “children, life, and sustenance.” When a person realizes that creation and all its creatures come into being *ex-nihilo* (*yesh me’ayin*) from His blessed wisdom every moment, how can he possibly think he has ever suffered, or had any afflictions related to “children, life, and sustenance,” or whatever other worldly sufferings.

³⁵⁴ Rambam, *Mishneh Torah, Avodas Kochavim* 1:3:

Avraham planted in the hearts of the people this great fundamental principle, composed texts about it, and taught it to Yitzchok, his son. Yitzchok also taught others and turned their hearts to G-d. He also taught Yaakov and appointed him as a teacher. Yaakov taught others and turned the hearts of all those who gathered around him to G-d. He also taught all his children. He selected Levi and appointed him as the leader. He established him as the head of] the academy to teach them the way of G-d and observe the *mitzvos* of Avraham. Yaakov commanded his sons that the leadership should not depart from the descendants of Levi, so that the teachings would not be forgotten. This concept proceeded and gathered strength among the descendants of

In response to Avraham's willingness to sacrifice anything for G-d's sake, G-d promised Avraham that He too, would withhold nothing.³⁵⁵ Avraham's willingness to sacrifice his future, established an eternal covenant with G-d for his progeny. This covenant led to the revelation of the Torah on Mount Sinai and the establishment of the Jewish people.³⁵⁶ Through the observance of G-d's will, the world is permeated by the

Yaakov and those who collected around them, until there became a nation within the world which knew G-d.

³⁵⁵ *Bereishis* 22:16-18:

And he said, By Myself have I sworn, says the Lord, that because you have done this thing and you did not withhold your son, your only one, that I will surely bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand that is on the seashore, and your descendants will inherit the cities of their enemies. And through your children shall be blessed all the nations of the world, because you hearkened to My voice.

³⁵⁶ *Shemos* 19:5-8:

And now, if you obey Me and keep My covenant, you shall be to Me a treasure out of all the nations, for Mine is the entire earth. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of princes and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the Children of Israel. Moses came and summoned the elders of Israel and placed before them all these words that the Lord had commanded him. And all the people replied in unison and said, all that the Lord has spoken we shall do! and Moses took the words of the people back to the Lord.

spirit and knowledge of G-d.³⁵⁷ This will culminate in the revelation of unrestrained Divine consciousness to all of humanity.



³⁵⁷ *Chavakkuk* 2:1: “For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord-as the water covers the seabed.”

The Sacrifice of Yitzchok

Truth³⁵⁸

Our most current scientific understanding of the physical universe is best described by Quantum Information Theory (QIT).³⁵⁹ This theory is counterintuitive because it insists that we surrender our usual perception and understanding of physical reality. The mathematics of QIT unambiguously proves that subatomic particles³⁶⁰ are not real. The particle-like behavior of quantum systems is an illusion created by the

³⁵⁸ The scientific analysis of this essay is based on the article, “Quantum Mysteries Disentangled,” by Dr. Ron Garret.

³⁵⁹ In physics and computer science, quantum information is information that is held in the state of a quantum system. Quantum information is the basic entity of study in quantum information theory and can be manipulated using engineering techniques known as quantum information processing.

³⁶⁰ In the physical sciences, subatomic particles are particles much smaller than atoms. There are two types of subatomic particles: elementary particles, which according to current theories are not made of other particles, and composite particles. Particle physics and nuclear physics study these particles and how they interact.

incomplete observation of a quantum entangled³⁶¹ system with a macroscopic number of degrees of freedom.³⁶²

The implication from QIT is that physical reality is not real, but information-theoretical reality is. We are not physical entities, but informational ones. We are not made of atoms, but we are made of (quantum) bits of information. Metaphorically speaking, what we call reality is a very high-quality simulation running on a quantum computer. Although, with this computer system we use thought, speech and action as an interface, instead of the more familiar screen, keyboard and mouse.

This is a counterintuitive view of the world, but the mathematics of quantum mechanics unambiguously proves this to be true. This is analogous to the mathematics of Einstein's theory of relativity, which proves that there is no absolute time and space.

QIT proves that our perception of reality is an illusion but does not address its philosophical and theological implications. What is the

³⁶¹ Quantum entanglement is a physical phenomenon that occurs when pairs or groups of particles are generated or interact in ways such that the quantum state of each particle cannot be described independently; instead, a quantum state must be described for the system as a whole. The mathematics of quantum entanglement proves that it is a form of measurement that affects the wave-particle behavior for quantum systems.

³⁶² C. H. Adami and N. J. Cerf, "Information Theory of Quantum Entanglement and Measurement," *Physica D*, 120 (1998), 62-81.

substrate for this illusionary quantum simulation? What is the source of the information that forms the basis of reality? What role does consciousness and free will play in a world of informational reality? Is there a purpose or meaning to life in a world of informational reality?

To answer these theological and philosophical questions we need to explore Chassidic informational theory. Chassidic understanding of reality is best summed up by the idea that there is nothing but G-d (*ein ode milvado*). This idea implies that all spiritual and material existence has the mathematical or philosophical value of zero. In other words, reality is G-d and everything else is illusory.

This illusion is formed within the matrix of divine information. Thus, divine wisdom forms the substrate for the simulation that we perceive as reality. This simulation is accomplished through the concealment of the Divine Presence. This concealment forms the highest quality virtual simulation of reality.

The purpose of this simulation is to endow man with the divine gift of consciousness and free will. The purpose of these unique divine gifts is to create the possibility for man to leave the simulation and morph into the simulator. In other words, if man uses his free will properly, he ceases to be an illusion and becomes real by being absorbed into divinity.

Unknown

Life is a beautiful mystery. The unknowable makes life an adventure and provides countless opportunities for the broadening of consciousness. The source of mystery is from the deepest dimension of reality.

Prior to the discovery of particle physics and quantum mechanics, reality was viewed from a Newtonian perspective (classical mechanics). Classical mechanics describes the motion of objects of the size and scale that are potentially observable to man without the aid of advanced technology, such as projectiles and astronomical objects—spacecraft, planets, stars and galaxies. The presupposition of classical mechanics is the following: If the present state of an object is known, it is possible to predict by the laws of classical mechanics how it will move in the future (determinism) and how it has moved in the past (reversibility).³⁶³ Classical mechanics provides very accurate results when studying large objects that are not too big and speeds that do not approach the speed of light.

However, the laws of classical mechanics are inadequate when the objects being examined are about the size of an atom in diameter. Then it becomes necessary to introduce the other major sub-field of

³⁶³ Herbert Goldstein, Charles P. Poole, John L. Safko, *Classical Mechanics*.

mechanics: Quantum mechanics.³⁶⁴ To describe velocities that are approaching the speed of light, special relativity³⁶⁵ is needed. General relativity³⁶⁶ becomes applicable when dealing with objects that are on a cosmic scale.

A basic conceptual tool used in the attempt to understand matter on the quantum scale is the uncertainty principle.³⁶⁷ This principle describes a fundamental limit to the precision with which certain pairs of physical properties of a particle, such as position and momentum, can be known. In other words, the uncertainty principle states that when making measurements on an extremely small object, the energy involved in making those measurements affects and changes the object that is being measured. This creates a limit in our ability to simultaneously know the position and momentum of an object that is on the atomic or subatomic scale.

The uncertainty principle of quantum mechanics negates the deterministic model of reality. In other words, Newtonian physics presupposes that if every detail of a system is known, the outcome could

³⁶⁴ Richard Feynman, *The Feynman Lectures on Physics*, (1999.)

³⁶⁵ Albert Einstein, *On the Electrodynamics of Moving Bodies – Special Theory of Relativity*, 1905.

³⁶⁶ Albert Einstein, *Foundation of the General Theory of Relativity*, 1916.

³⁶⁷ D. Sen, “The Uncertainty Relations in Quantum Mechanics,” *Current Science* 107 (2), (2014.)

be predicted with precision. With the advent of quantum theory, there is a fundamental limit to how much can be known and predicted for any given system. Philosophically, this represents a fundamental paradigm shift in our understanding of the essence of human knowledge. There is an absolute limit to what can be known, beyond which, the unknowable resides.

The unknowable may also be found within our souls. The essence of the soul is literally a part of the living G-d and it may correspond to what is referred to as the unconscious.³⁶⁸ Within the essence of the soul are nested five extraneous and distinct dimensions.³⁶⁹ The first two dimensions consist of the faculties of intellect and emotions; they represent the subconscious level of the soul. The intellect consists of three elements: wisdom, understanding, and knowledge.³⁷⁰ Emotions

³⁶⁸ In this context, the essence of the soul may be described as the unconscious, which has nested in it the subconscious (the faculties) and the conscious (the garments.)

³⁶⁹ Extraneous, in this context, refers to a source that is distinct and independent of the existence of the soul.

³⁷⁰ See *Tanya, Likkutei Amarim*, ch.3. The human soul possesses within it ten faculties that are subdivided into two general categories: *seichel* (intellect) and *middos* (emotional attributes). The category of intellect includes the three all-inclusive intellectual powers of *ChaBaD*: 1) the ability to bring forth an idea is called *chochmah* (wisdom), 2) the ability to take this idea and develop it into its full potential is called *binah* (understanding), 3) the ability to become one with the idea and generate a balanced emotional response to this idea is called *daas* (knowledge).

consist of seven unique elements.³⁷¹ The remaining three dimensions,³⁷² which consist of the garments of thought, speech, and action, represent the conscious level of the soul.

The garments serve the intellect and emotions in a revelatory capacity. Thus, there is an intimate relationship between the subconscious and conscious, in that the latter reveals the former. Both of these dimensions are derived from different sources and are then impregnated and nested into the essence of the soul.³⁷³

³⁷¹ These are the *middos*, which bear the same names as their corresponding seven *sefiros*: *chesed*, *gevurah*, *tiferes*, *netzach*, *hod*, *yesod*, and *malchus*.

³⁷² *Lessons in Tanya*, ch.4:

In addition to its ten faculties — every soul possesses three garments. The soul possesses three auxiliary powers, which are its instruments of expression. Like garments, they can be put on and taken off at will. When the soul utilizes any of these three powers it is “clothed” in them; when it does not use them, it is “divested” of them. Also, just as garments give expression to their wearer’s beauty and importance, so, too, when the soul utilizes these “garments,” its intellect and emotions find expression. The garments are: thought, speech and action.

³⁷³ The essence of the soul is derived from the hidden essence of G-d (*helem ha’atzmi*), as it is stated: “The candle of G-d, is the soul of man” (*Mishlei* 20:27); “The soul is a part of G-d from above” (*Tanya, Likkutei Amarim*, ch.2); and “The souls of Israel arose in G-d’s thought” (*Bereishis Rabbah* 1:4). The soul faculties of intellect and emotion are derived from the ten supernal *sefiros* (*Tanya, Likkutei Amarim*, ch.3). The soul garments are derived from the thoughts of the parents at the time of conception (*Tanya, Likkutei Amarim*, ch.2).

The essence of the soul (the unconscious) is derived from the hidden essence of G-d. G-d's thinking (with the twenty-two Hebrew letters) of the soul fills it with these letters, as it is stated, "The soul is full of letters."³⁷⁴ These letters, which represent distinct energy patterns, transcend the subconscious and conscious; they form the mechanism for the revelation of the soul's will.

The will of the soul is qualitatively different than its faculties (the ten soul powers). The latter are derived from the supernal *sefiros*, whereas the will is a manifestation of the soul's essence. Will cannot exist without the soul, which is not the case with the faculties.³⁷⁵ The Hebrew word for will is *ratzon*; this word consists of the same letters as the word for channel, *tzinor*. This implies that will is a channel that is derived from the soul itself.

Will is an encompassing soul power that has the capacity to rule over the faculties and garments, as it is stated, nothing stands in the way of power of will.³⁷⁶ Will is not embodied in any specific limb, but rather is revealed through the control of the inner soul powers and their

³⁷⁴ *Samech Vav, "BaYom Shemini Atzeres,"* 53.

³⁷⁵ The faculties are derived from the ten supernal *sefiros* and are independent of the existence of the soul. For example, wisdom exists regardless if the soul knows about it or not.

³⁷⁶ *Zohar* 2:162

corresponding body parts.³⁷⁷ The same will may simultaneously control multiple inner soul powers and limbs.

The inner dimension of will is desire and pleasure.³⁷⁸ A will for something is generated in order to satisfy an inner desire of the soul, which once actualized brings it pleasure. Thus, desire drives will, and will drives the faculties and garments.

The driving force of the soul's desire is a great mystery. Even though, desire is a manifestation of the soul's inner temperament, it isn't known why one soul desires something, and another soul takes pleasure in something completely different. Thus, the inner driving force of pleasure is a huge unknown.

Mystery is a ubiquitous archetype at all levels of existence. The source of mystery ultimately stems from the unknowable hidden essence of G-d. As it is written,³⁷⁹ "For He is wise—but not through a knowable wisdom—because He and His wisdom are one";³⁸⁰ and as Maimonides says,³⁸¹ "He is the Knowledge and the Knower... and this is not within the

³⁷⁷ *BeShaah Sheh-Hakdemo (Ayin Beis), "Chag HaShavuot," siman beis.*

³⁷⁸ *Samech Vav, "Tazria-Metzora," 547*

³⁷⁹ *Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, ch.2*

³⁸⁰ *Hakdama Tikkunei Zohar 12b*

³⁸¹ *Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah 2:10*

power of any man to comprehend clearly...as it is written, 'Can you, by searching, find G-d?'³⁸² And it is also written, 'For My thoughts are not your thoughts.'³⁸³

The mechanism for introducing mystery into the finite system of worlds involves G-d's uncertainty principle in the rectification (*tikkun*) of the inner dimension of the *sefirah* of *kesser*.³⁸⁴ This refers to the doubts of *atik* (*sveykus de'atik*) which are collectively known as *reysa d'lo isyada* (*radlo*), "the unknowable head."

With the above understanding it becomes self-evident that mystery represents the top of creation's hierarchy. This has profound psychological implications. As a human being traverses the uncertain sea of life, he or she is confronted with the unknown of chaos. Without the

³⁸² *Iyov* 11:7

³⁸³ *Yeshayahu* 55:8

³⁸⁴ In the world of *tohu*, *kesser* experiences a *pagam* (blemish) first. This blemish is rectified (*tikkun*) by the revelation of *shem MA Hachodesh* from the forehead of *AK*. The inner dimension of *kesser* is rectified first into the *partzuf* of *atik yomin*. The first part of *Atik* that is rectified is referred to as the three heads (*gimmel reishin* or *GAR*). *GAR* refers to *kesser*, *chochmah*, and *binah* of *kesser*. The rectification of these three heads involves the union of *shemos MA* and *BON*. The union of *MA* and *BON* of the three heads are unique because the exact details of the *tikkun* are unknown. The possibilities are known and described, but **how** it happened remains hidden. This is referred to as the doubts of *atik* (*sveykus de'atik*). The description of the *sveykus* is beyond the scope of this text.

proper spiritual, psychological, and intellectual framework, a person will invariably suffer from the pains of anxiety. The antidote to this anxiety is the realization that the unknown is of Divine origin and represents the highest state of consciousness. As it is written, “The pinnacle of knowledge is to know that you know nothing.”³⁸⁵ A similar concept is expressed regarding the obligations of Purim—a person must elevate themselves to the realm of *ad d’lo yoda* (“until you don’t know”).³⁸⁶ Both ideas refer to a level of consciousness that transcends rational intellect.

A person should run toward and embrace the unknown with joy. This is because *radlo* is the origin of a person’s pure, simple faith in G-d and faith begins where knowledge ends. Thus, the mystery of life brings immeasurable opportunities for the expansion of self-transcendent consciousness. This leads to ever-increasing unity with the essence of G-d and the revelation of His presence in this world.

³⁸⁵ Yediah ben Abraham Bedersi (c.1270— – c.1340), *Bechinas Ha-’Olam*, 13:45.

³⁸⁶ *Megillah 7b*

Virtue³⁸⁷

The twentieth century bore witness to the mass murder of more than one hundred million people in the name of utopia.³⁸⁸ Mass murder has been committed by diverse ethnicities and cultures. Although many of these societies are geographically and characteristically distant from each other, they all share the same flaw. The common denominator among these societies is the moral degradation of their citizens. Carl Jung explained that Hitler was the physical embodiment of the evil of

³⁸⁷ This essay was inspired by the teachings of Dr. Jordan Peterson who is a clinical psychologist and professor at the University of Toronto.

³⁸⁸ In R. J. Rummel's book, *Death by Government* (1994), states that about 169 million people, foreign and domestic, were murdered by communist democide. This includes the mass murder in Russia under Lenin and Stalin; Hitler's war against humanity; China under Mao; Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge; and North Korea under the Kim regime.

the collective German people.³⁸⁹ The collective contains within it the moral nature (or lack thereof) of its individuals.

When an individual becomes self-aware of his vulnerability in the face of the unpredictable, unknown of chaos, he becomes filled with an instinctive desire for self-preservation and hypervigilance. This is the starting point of the divine test of a person's morality.

The ideal approach in dealing with the fear of the unknown is to realize its divine purpose.³⁹⁰ The failure to do so will invariably lead to the moral

³⁸⁹ C.G. Jung, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, 455-456. Jung explains as follows:

Hitler was the exponent of a "new order," and that is the real reason why practically every German fell for him. The Germans wanted order, but they made the fatal mistake of choosing the principal victim of disorder and unchecked greed for their leader. Their individual attitude remained unchanged; just as they were greedy for power, so they were greedy for order. Like the rest of the world, they did not understand wherein Hitler's significance lay, that he symbolized something in every individual. He was the most prodigious personification of all human inferiorities. He was an utterly incapable, maladapted, irresponsible, psychopathic personality, full of empty, infantile fantasies, but cursed with the keen intuition of a rat or a guttersnipe. He represented the shadow, the inferior part of everybody's personality, to an overwhelming degree, and this was another reason why they fell for him.

³⁹⁰ See essay, "Unknown." With the above understanding, it becomes self-evident that mystery represents the top of creation's hierarchy. This has profound psychological implications. As a human being traverses the uncertain terrain of life, he or she is confronted with the unknown of chaos. Without the proper spiritual, psychological, and intellectual framework, a person will

degradation of the individual. A person who is vulnerable and anxious will look for a set of rules for life that will reduce his pain. One theoretical approach is for a person to look inside themselves, take responsibility for their personality flaws and poor choices, and take steps to refine their character. This will invariably lead to improved familial interactions, which may improve one's self-esteem and relationship with the transcendent. A person may even come to realize that the chaotic nature of reality is a hidden blessing, as it motivates the development of higher order intellectual and spiritual abstraction. A society full of such individuals would have a healthy and stable social structure. This is what G-d was highlighting to Cain when he accepted Abel's offering and rejected Cain's offering. Cain became angry and depressed. G-d asked Cain, why are you upset? Improve yourself and I will accept your offering as well.³⁹¹

invariably suffer from the pains of anxiety. The antidote to this anxiety is the realization that the unknown is of divine origin and represents the highest state of consciousness. As it is written in *Bechinas Olam* 13:45, "The purpose of all knowledge is to know that you know nothing." A similar concept is expressed regarding the obligations of Purim: A person must elevate themselves to the level of *ad d'lo yoda* ("until you don't know"). Both ideas refer to a level of consciousness that transcends rational intellect. A person should run towards and embrace the unknown with joy. This is because *radlo* is the origin of a person's pure and simple faith in G-d, since faith begins where knowledge ends. Thus, the mystery of life brings immeasurable opportunities for the expansion of self-transcendent consciousness. This leads to ever-increasing unity with the essence of G-d and the revelation of His presence in this world.

³⁹¹ *Bereishis* 4:3-6

The second theoretical approach for dealing with chaos and anxiety is for a person to perceive themselves as a perpetual victim of an unfair world, and then proceed to blame everyone and everything around them for their failings and failures. This pattern of thought and behavior eventually led Cain to murder his brother Abel.³⁹²

The tyranny and genocide of the twentieth century was the result of morally bankrupt societies, complicit in corrupting their citizens through the use of scapegoating, by engaging in divisive class warfare and identity politics. The root cause for the loss of virtue is the failure to take responsibility for one's problems, jealousy of the success of others, and the replacement of the belief in G-d with nihilism.

Nihilism undermined the basis of natural law and basic human rights. The loss of the belief that a person possesses a divine soul began the slippery slope toward dehumanization and barbarism.

The antidote for the plague, which has been consuming civilizations for millennia, is the restoration (on the individual level) of the belief in G-d's transcendence and immanence, perceiving every person as a spark of the divine, and the taking of personal responsibility for one's life.

³⁹² Ibid. 4:8

Wisdom, Understanding, and Knowledge

One of the central tenets of Chassidic philosophy is that the mind rules over the heart.³⁹³ When a person is born, his or her heart is filled with raw, untamed and unrefined emotions.³⁹⁴ As the person's mind matures, it develops the capacity to modulate and tame the raw emotions of the heart.³⁹⁵

The mind contains within it three unique intellectual powers.³⁹⁶ They are referred to as wisdom (*chochmah*), understanding (*binah*), and knowledge (*daas*). These three words in Hebrew form the acronym CHaBaD.

³⁹³ *Lessons in Tanya, Likkutei Amarim*, ch.17: "The mind in turn, by virtue of its inherent nature, is master over the left part of the heart..."

³⁹⁴ The *yetzer hara* (evil inclination) is called the old and foolish king. The reason is that the evil inclination enters the infant as it is being born. The evil inclination represents the emotive dimension of the animal soul. The animal soul is derived from the Shattered Vessels of the world of *tohu*. The world of *tohu* is characterized by unbalanced emotional *sefiros* that lack mature integration. Thus, when a child is born its emotions are unrefined and untamed.

³⁹⁵ The developing intellect has the capacity to soften and refine the emotions making them more integrated.

³⁹⁶ *Tanya, Likkutei Amarim*, ch.3

Wisdom or *chochmah* is a specific intellectual power that refers to the essence of an idea. It is like a bolt of lightning of inspiration. Contained within this seed of an idea is the potential of what (*koach MA*)³⁹⁷ will be revealed in the future. However, it is compressed and hidden in its initial emanated state.

This *chochmah* which has journeyed from the subconscious to the conscious realm of thought³⁹⁸ is derived from G-d's infinite reservoir of *chochmah*,³⁹⁹ which is independent of the person himself. As it is written, "G-d founded the earth with wisdom; established the heavens with understanding. With His knowledge, the depths were split, and the

³⁹⁷ *Koach MA* alludes to *shem MA*—אֵה, יוֹ, אֵה, יוֹ— which is the divine energy that rectifies creation and brings it to a state of *bitul* (nullification). *Shem MA* is alluded to in multiple other places: The name Avraham, which has the letters that spell the words "ever ma" (the extension or limb of *MA*); Moshe, which has the letters that spell the words, "*shem*" and "*ma*." Also, Moshe referred to himself and Aaron as "*anachnu MA*" (we are *MA*); Adam has the *gematria* of *MA*.

³⁹⁸ Thought is the innermost soul garment which serves to reveal (make conscious) the subconscious to oneself. Thoughts are formed by the combination of letters which are derived from the essence of the soul, as it is stated, "The soul is full of letters."

³⁹⁹ G-d's infinite wisdom is referred to as *chochmah ha'heyuli*. One of the properties of His wisdom is that no matter how much is withdrawn or revealed to humanity, it always stays full and complete. Once *chochmah* reaches the subconscious of man, it is called *kesser* of *chochmah*. Once *chochmah* is revealed on the conscious level of thought it is called *chochmah* of *chochmah*.

heavens drip dew.”⁴⁰⁰ Only if a person merits, will wisdom flow from G-d’s infinite reservoir of *chochmah* to the person.⁴⁰¹ Humility is the key attribute which makes it possible to merit the flow of wisdom from the heavens.⁴⁰²

Understanding (*binah*) is the second unique power of the intellect. *Binah* absorbs within itself the seed of *chochmah* and develops it. *Binah* develops wisdom by giving it dimensions of depth and breadth. It develops the intellectual seed into something with clearly defined details and parameters.

Chochmah and *binah* are referred to as “two friends that never separate.”⁴⁰³ They share a common purpose of revealing divinity from its hidden potential state. These two intellectual faculties reside exclusively in the mind but lack the ability to reach the emotional faculties on their own.⁴⁰⁴

⁴⁰⁰ *Mishlei* 3:19–20

⁴⁰¹ The power that draws down divine wisdom from *chochmah ha’heyuli* to a person’s *kesser* of *chochmah* is *chochmah* of *kesser* (*chochmah stimah*, hidden *chochmah*) also known as *koach ha’maskil*.

⁴⁰² Humility (*bitul*) arouses divine will (*ratzon*) to create a channel (*tzinor*) that allows for the flow of wisdom to the person.

⁴⁰³ *Zohar* 2:51a

⁴⁰⁴ *Tanya, Likkutei Amarim*, ch.3. *Chochmah* and *binah* are considered temporary delusions if they are unaccompanied by *daas*. It is *daas* that gives

The third unique intellectual power is called knowledge (*daas*), which is the power to integrate and unify the ideas developed by *chochmah* and *binah* with the essence of the soul. With *daas*, the intellectual product of *chochmah* and *binah* is permanently engraved into a person's being and is no longer discernible as something separate from the individual. *Daas* is the bridge that connects the intellect with the emotions. *Daas* consists of elements of the mind and heart.⁴⁰⁵

As a person matures, so do their intellectual faculties of wisdom, understanding, and knowledge. Only then can a person use the full power of the mind to modulate the chaotic impulses of the heart. The heart needs guidance. It wants what it wants without delay and without regard for inconvenient facts and other mitigating factors. By having intellectual clarity and maturity, the mind can impart the necessary guidance to the heart, which enables it to look past its own self-serving needs and experience self-transcendence. As we pray daily, "You graciously bestow knowledge upon man and teach mortals understanding. Graciously bestow upon us from You, wisdom,

permanence to the product of the intellect, thereby connecting the intellect with the emotions.

⁴⁰⁵ *Daas* is the third and most important aspect of intellect. Its inner structure consists of *chesed* and *gevurah* (five levels of each). Thus, *daas* serves as a bridge that links the intellect with the emotions since it is a composite of both.

understanding, and knowledge. Blessed are you, Lord, who graciously bestows knowledge."⁴⁰⁶

The target of divine service is not the mind but the heart, as we are commanded to "Love G-d with all your heart."⁴⁰⁷ The obvious question arises: How can we be commanded to love? Either you love or you do not love. A person cannot be forced to feel for another being, divine or otherwise. The answer is simple: We can be commanded to *know* G-d by using our wisdom, understanding, and knowledge. Once divine ideas are firmly affixed in the mind, the path to emotional divine experience, on demand, is wide open. A person can contemplate and meditate on divinity and generate sincere, emotional love and awe for G-d. This is known as the long-shorter way.⁴⁰⁸ This system of divine service takes

⁴⁰⁶ "*Atah chonain l'adam daas. . .*" (*Amidah*—silent prayer).

⁴⁰⁷ *Devarim* 6:5

⁴⁰⁸ *Eruvin* 53b (Translation from Sefaria.org):

What is the incident with a young boy? One time I was walking along the path, and I saw a young boy sitting at the crossroads. And I said to him: On which path shall we walk in order to get to the city? He said to me: This path is short and long, and that path is long and short. I walked on the path that was short and long. When I approached the city, I found that gardens and orchards surrounded it, and I did not know the trails leading through them to the city. I went back and met the young boy again and said to him: My son, didn't you tell me that this way is short? He said to me: And didn't I tell you that it is also

time and intense effort to develop, thus it is called the long way. But, once attained, it is possible to generate an intense emotional connection with G-d at will. Thus, it is also referred to as the shorter way.

BY *Wisdom*
A HOUSE IS BUILT,
AND *through*
understanding
it is established
THROUGH KNOWLEDGE
its rooms are filled with
rare and beautiful treasures
 *Proverbs 24:3-6*

long? I kissed him on his head and said to him: Happy are you, O Israel, for you are all exceedingly wise, from your old to your young.

X

If you, the reader, have made it to this part of the book, then “X” marks the spot for the expansion of your consciousness. The next essay deals with the world to come, and the last essay will integrate all the Chassidic and Kabbalistic concepts into a cohesive structure.

Yitzchok

In the world to come, we will call Yitzchok our father.⁴⁰⁹ This teaching refers to the primacy and superior quality of G-d's name, *Elokim*, over His name, *Havayah*. As we have learned already, the creative process involves the complex and dynamic interplay of G-d's names, as it is stated, "*Havayah*, (He) is, *Elokim*." This phrase may be read as "*Havayah* He is," and "He is *Elokim*." Both *Havayah* and *Elokim* emanate from His essence represented by "He." G-d chooses both of these names in order to actualize His inner will, which is the revelation of His essence in the lowest physical world. If G-d were to manifest only His name *Havayah*, there would be revelation, but no physical world. On the other hand, if G-d were to manifest only His name *Elokim*, there would be a physical world, but no revelation. Thus, G-d's manifestation of both names allows for the establishment of His dwelling place in the lowest realms.

⁴⁰⁹ *Shabbos* 89b (Translation from Sefaria.org):

The Jewish people began to say to Yitzchok: You are our father. Only Yitzchok defended the Jewish people as a father would and displayed compassion toward his children. Yitzchok said to them: Before you praise me, praise the Holy One, Blessed be He. And Yitzchok points to the Holy One, Blessed be He, before their eyes. Immediately they lifted their eyes to the heavens and said: "You, Lord, are our Father, our Redeemer, everlasting is Your name."

The Torah states, “And these are the offspring of Yitzchok the son of Avraham, Avraham fathered Yitzchok.”⁴¹⁰ This verse establishes an order to G-d’s methods: Yitzchok, Avraham, Avraham, Yitzchok. Yitzchok is associated with G-d’s attribute of *gevurah* (fear) which is also represented by His name *Elokim*. Avraham is associated with G-d’s attribute of *chesed* (love) which in this context is associated with His name *Havayah*. Thus, we can describe the creative process, from G-d’s perspective, as: *Elokim, Havayah, Havayah, Elokim*. From man’s perspective we can describe the multi-tiered hierarchy of divine service, as: fear, love, love, fear.

Divine service can be defined as a person, making G-d the primary focus of their thought, speech and action. The first two levels of divine service are called “lower fear” and “small love,” since the common denominator is the focus on the self. For example: A person will refrain from transgressing G-d’s will because of the fear of punishment; a person will fulfill G-d’s will because of the anticipated reward.

The second two levels are called “great love” and “upper fear” since the common denominator is the focus on G-d. For example: A person will fulfill G-d’s will because he wants to bring G-d pleasure; a person will refrain from transgressing G-d’s will because he fears causing G-d displeasure.

⁴¹⁰ *Bereishis* 25:19

Regarding the creative process, G-d begins to create through His name, *Elokim*. This is first manifested by bringing the Jewish souls into being, as it is stated, “The souls of Israel arose in His thoughts.”⁴¹¹ This process is difficult to categorize because it doesn’t fit any of the traditional creative processes, neither creation ex-nihilo nor the revelation of the hidden. Rather, it seems that G-d’s name, *Elokim*, causes a spark to be generated from His hidden essence from which the quintessence of the soul is formed. Thus, the soul may be conceptualized as “a chip off the old block” or as essence from essence.

The next phase of creation is characterized by the emanation of the infinite light (*ohr ein sof*) also referred to as the higher name of *Havayah*. The revelation of this light provides the substrate for the molding of the emanation. The same name, *Elokim*, that makes the souls, also acts on the infinite light to form the *eser sefiros ha’ginuzet* and create the *makom panuy* for the subsequent revelation of finitude.⁴¹² Thus, the first two levels of *Elokim* and *Havayah* are primarily concerned with the manipulation of infinite processes.

The next stage of creation is characterized by the emanation of the *kav*, which is referred to as the lower name of *Havayah*. The *kav* forms the finite system of worlds that leads to the creation of this physical world.

⁴¹¹ *Bereishis Rabbah* 1:4

⁴¹² It is self-evident that the name *Elokim* is more powerful than *Havayah* because *Elokim* is able to act upon and withdraw the infinite light, which is represented by the higher name, *Havayah*.

This process is facilitated by its interaction with the name *Elokim*, which acts on the light to thicken it and form vessels. Thus, the second two levels of *Havayah* and *Elokim* are primarily concerned with the manipulation of finite processes that lead to the creation of physicality (i.e. the body).

The creation of physicality involves the revelation of G-d's hidden essence through His name *Elokim*, since the material world could never be created by the process of cause and effect. A spiritual cause would only result in a spiritual effect. In order to create physicality from spirituality, the revelation of G-d's hidden essence through His name, *Elokim*, is required.⁴¹³ Therefore, all divine commandments are rooted within the physical world and its parameters of space and time, as it is stated, "The Torah is not in Heaven."⁴¹⁴ For this reason, the physical body is essential to G-d's plan. When the Jewish body is used to fulfil G-d's will, the primacy of its source is revealed. As it is taught, in the future, the body will nourish the soul.⁴¹⁵ The formation of physicality and the

⁴¹³ G-d's hidden essence is more closely associated with the name *Elokim* because *Elokim* contracts and withdraws G-d's *Havayah* light. Thus, *Elokim* is an introverted force and in this regard is more like G-d's hidden essence than *Havayah*.

⁴¹⁴ *Bava Metzia* 59b, regarding the teaching about the oven of *akhnai*.

⁴¹⁵ Chasidic writings state that unlike now, when the soul is the source of animation in man, at the end of time, the reverse will be true: the soul will derive its vitality from the body. For then, the essence of G-d will be manifest,

body involves the revelation of G-d's hidden essence through His name, *Elokim*, which is associated with Yitzchok. Therefore, in the world to come, we will call Yitzchok, our father.⁴¹⁶

and it will become obvious that all derives from His essence. Accordingly, the soul will derive its source from the body, which is the revelation of essence.

⁴¹⁶ *Likkutei Sichos, "Parshas Chayei Sarah, 24 Cheshvan, 5738"*:

A Jew may think to himself: True, Esav is no more than an extension of Yitzchok. However, when will this be seen and felt openly—in the future. In the meantime, Esav is an adversary: How can G-d ask of us, "Do not be afraid, my servant Yaakov," in the present? To this we answer: The name Yitzchok begins with the letter "*yud*," rendering it future tense, [and therefore suggesting that] the divine pleasure that "Yitzchok" refers to will only be experienced in the future. Nevertheless, he is also called Yitzchok in the present, because even now it is vividly apparent that the purpose of creation is "Yitzchok"—the divine pleasure. Even in the present, Esav acknowledges and even boasts the fact that he is of "the generations of Yitzchok," i.e. that he is no more than a means through which Yitzchok's ideal—the divine pleasure—will be realized. This can also be applied to the other relationship between Yitzchok and the future. In the future Messianic Era, we will especially call Yitzchok "our father," because it's he who will release us from our exile.

Z End Is in Z Beginning

Divine Framework of Creation Glossary of Concepts and Terms

Helem ha'atzmi: This refers to the hidden essence of G-d. His essence is formless and transcends all definitions. He has no beginning, which automatically implies He has no end.

Havayah without the letters Havayah: This refers to the idea that before G-d creates the world, only He and His name exists. His Name is considered primordial like He is primordial. This Name refers to G-d's potential of emanation **before** it arose in His will to do so. This Name is formless (no letters) and reflects His formless essence. This Name is a euphemism for G-d's potential, infinite light as it is within His essence, prior to the revelation of this light, even to Himself.

“The souls of Israel arose in His thought”: This refers to the first metaphorical movement of G-d's essence. This is the source of Jewish souls. The exact nature of the unity of the souls with G-d is difficult to

describe. It is not the revelation of what was hidden (*giluy ha'helem*) since only He and His Name exist. It is not creation of something from nothing (*beriyah yesh m'ayin*) since the souls are referred to as being part of Him: "The G-dly soul is a part of G-d above"; "the candle of G-d is the soul of man"; "the souls arose in His thoughts." We may say the souls are a "chip off the old block," essence from essence (*yechidah l'yachdach*). G-d bestows the souls with His unique powers of self-awareness and free will.

"With who did G-d take counsel? With the souls of the righteous": G-d asked the souls for advice whether to emanate, create, form, or act. The essence of the question is: Would you sacrifice yourselves for the service of G-d when you exist in a world of complete darkness? Our souls answer in the affirmative, and this results in the arousal of G-d's will to emanate.

Havayah with the letters Havayah: This refers to G-d's ineffable Name which has the form of letters. This Name applies only **after** it arises in His will to emanate the infinite light (*ohr ein sof*). The infinite light has the form of being infinite. Form can represent form.

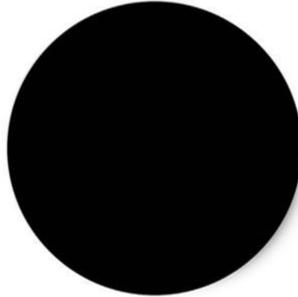
The infinite light (*ohr ein sof*): This refers to light that emanates from His Name. This light is revealed in two ways: As an infinite light that is revealed only to Himself—this becomes the source of *sovev kol almin* after the *tzimtzum*; as an Infinite light that has the capacity to be revealed to creation—this becomes the source of *memale kol almin* after the *tzimtzum*. Another conceptual synonym for this infinite light is *sefiros ein kaytz* (*sefiros* without end). This refers to G-d's ability to reveal Himself in an infinite number of ways.

G-d estimates what will be afterwards: This refers to the manifestation of G-d's power of limitation (*koach ha'gvul*) by way of His Name, *Elokim*. G-d chooses to limit the number of revelatory channels to ten. This is referred to as the *eser sefiros ha'ginuzet* (the ten hidden *sefiros*) as they are within the infinite light. These *eser sefiros ha'ginuzet* represent a differentiation within the light that is destined to be revealed to others (*ohr ha'gvul* that is found within the *ohr ein sof*).

***Tzimtzum harishon*:** This refers to the abrupt withdrawal (*siluk ha'ohr*) of the infinite light into its source within the name of G-d. This sudden withdrawal (not gradual) is caused by G-d's power of limitation (*koach ha'gvul*). This is the same force that formed the *eser sefiros ha'ginuzet* and is represented by G-d's name *Elokim*. The withdrawal of

the infinite light makes it possible for the finite light (*ohr ha'gvul*) and the power of limitation (*koach ha'gvul*) to exert their influence.

Makom panuy (chalal): This refers to the “empty space” that is created through the *tzimtzum harishon*. “Empty” does not really mean empty. It means that the infinite light is withdrawn; however, the essence of G-d, along with the *ohr ha'gvul* and the *koach ha'gvul*, still permeate the *makom panuy*.

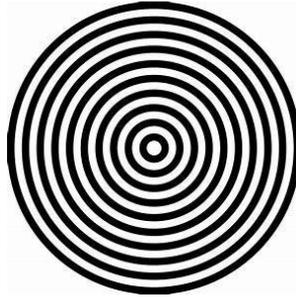


The finite light (*ohr ha'gvul*) is absorbed into the *nikudah* (point) of the *rishimo*: The *rishimo* is the power of limitation (*koach ha'gvul/Elokim*) that's revealed through the *tzimtzum harishon*. Prior to the *tzimtzum*, it is impossible for the *ohr ha'gvul* and the *koach ha'gvul* to associate with each other. Only after the nullifying effect of the *ohr ein sof* is withdrawn, does it become possible for the coupling of the

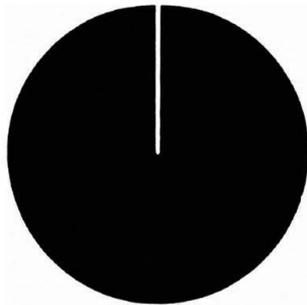
ohr ha'gvul and the *koach ha'gvul*. Thus, the *ohr ha'gvul* is absorbed into and concealed by the *nikudah* of the *rishimo*.

G-d reintroduces the finite light into the *makom panuy*: *The ohr ha'gvul* which is absorbed in the *rishimo* “breaks out” of its concealed state and is revealed in the *makom panuy* as a *kav* (thin straight line of energy). An important aspect of this process is that the *rishimo* imprints its energy potential (letters of the *rishimo*) onto the *ohr ha'gvul*. Thus, the *kav* is a composite of two diametric forces of revelation and concealment.

The *kav* creates *iggulim* (concentric circles) within the *makom panuy*: This creates a framework of concealed energy upon which the hierarchy of *seder hishtalshelus* is nested. These *iggulim* are called *nefesh* in the sense that higher levels of being are nested onto it, i.e. *yosher* or *ruach*. The *iggulim* are usually above revelation and function as an *ohr makif* for every point along *seder hishtalshelus*.

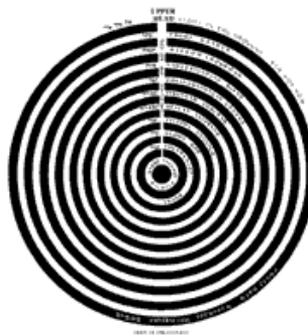


Seder Hishtalshelus: This refers to the chain-like descent of spiritual worlds between G-d and creation by way of the *kav*. Each spiritual world is a complete realm of existence, resulting from its general proximity or distance to divine revelation. The differential of revelation of divinity is the result of a process called *tzimtzumim* in the *kav*.



Tzimtzumim: This term refers to the gradual reduction (*meut ha'ohr*) of revealed light between any two realms in the *kav*.

The *kav* (after creating the *iggulim* system) creates the system called *yosher*: *Yosher* means straight and symbolizes hierarchy in creation. There is a top and bottom to the *kav*. *Seder hishtalshelus* is created and exists within the *kav*. *Yosher* is nested within *iggulim*, so that every point of the linear *kav* is associated with a corresponding *ohr makif* (*iggul*).



Adam Kadmon (AK): This refers to the first spiritual world that is created after the *tzimtzum harishon* and the reintroduction of the *kav*. AK is a world of pure finite light (ten lights without vessels). In other words, the *ohr ha'gvul* is fully revealed and the *koach ha'gvul* is completely concealed within a state of potential.

Akudim: This refers to the next realm in *seder hishtalshelus*. The main attribute of this world is the formation of the first vessel; here, ten lights exist in one vessel. This is the first stage in which the power of limitation (*koach ha'gvul*) is revealed within the *kav*. It is the *koach ha'gvul* that affects the *ohr ha'gvul* to “thicken” and form a vessel. It is taught that from the thickening of the light a vessel is formed.

Nikkudim (A.K.A. tohu): This refers to the next stage of development and complexity in *seder hishtalshelus*. *Nikkudim* is a complex world because G-d designed it to fail. In other words, the purpose of *nikkudim* is to disintegrate into chaos. Chaos is essential for the existence of free will since it creates the option for disorder. *Nikkudim* consists of ten lights in ten vessels (10 *sefiros*) in a pattern that lacks integration. This results in the Shattering of the Vessels.

Brudim (A.K.A. tikkun): This refers to the realm that G-d rebuilds after the Shattering of the Vessels in the world of *nikkudim*. This is accomplished by the revelation of a new reconstructive force called *shem MA hachodesh*, which emanates from the forehead of *Adam Kadmon*. The essence of the rectification is the creation of a new pattern of integration among the varying elements of this world. The shattered vessels of the *sefiros* of *nikkudim* are rebuilt into multiple layers of

partzufim. Each *partzuf* consists of ten *sefiros* in a pattern of integration. The *partzufim* are called (from internal to external): *atik yomin*, *arich anpin*, *abba*, *imma*, *ze'ir anpin*, *malchus*. All these *partzufim* make up the structure of the four distinct worlds of *tikkun*; *atzilus*, *beriyah*, *yetzirah*, and *asiyah*. *Tikkun* is essential for the existence of free will since it creates the option for order.

Free will: It is important to conceptualize *tohu* and *tikkun* as existing in parallel. Even though *tikkun* is formed from the reconstruction of the shattering of the *sefiros* in *tohu*, nevertheless they both exist in parallel and form the basis of free will. The ideal place for man to exist is on the metaphorical edge between chaos and order. In a sense, he should have a foot in both worlds and choose to utilize the best potential of each realm. It is taught that the ideal state of being is actualized when the energy of chaos is harnessed within the vessels of order.

Atzilus: *Atzilus* (World of Emanation) refers to the realm of souls and complete holiness. The root of the word *atzilus* is “*atzil*,” which means “proximity.” *Atzilus* is a world that is “near” to G-d. Its level of divinity is called “revelation of the concealment.” This refers to the revelation of the ten *sefiros* that were in a state of concealment before the *tzimtzum* as the *eser sefiros ha'ginuzet* (the ten hidden *sefiros*). The *sefiros* were

also in a state of obscurity in the higher realms of *AK*, *akudim*, and *nikkudim* due to the lack of vessels that were capable of revelation. The lights and vessels of *atzilus* are considered holy, as it is stated in the *Zohar*, “He and His lights are one, He and His vessels are one.” *Atzilus* is the first realm capable of stable and ordered revelation of divinity. This is made possible by the process of *tikkun* described above. The *partzuf of abba* is dominant as is the *shem ayin beis* (AB).

Beriyah: This refers to the world below *atzilus*. G-d’s Throne of Glory alluded to in Ezekiel’s vision of the Holy Chariot is associated with the *partzufim of arich, abba, and imma of beriyah*. It is considered the world of the *seraphim* (the fire angels). The *partzuf imma* is dominant. It is also referred to as the “upper garden of Eden.” *Shem samach gimmel* (SOG) is dominant. It is considered a realm of thought and of intellectual awe and love of G-d. The *Zohar* describes the *sefiros of beriyah* as “He and His lights are one, He and the vessels are *not* one.” *Beriyah* is the first realm where the forces that oppose divinity exist and are referred to as *elokim acharim* (other gods). These parasitic forces receive nourishment from the “backside” of the *partzufim of ze’ir anpin and rachel of beriyah*, which is represented by the name *Elokim*.

Yetzirah: refers to the world below *beriyah*. The angels called *chayos hakodesh* belong to this realm. Here, the *partzuf of ze'ir anpin* is dominant. It is also referred to as the "lower garden of Eden." *Shem mem hey (MA)* is dominant. It is considered a realm of speech and of emotional awe and love of G-d. This world represents a balanced realm of divinity and its opposing forces.

Asiyah: It is subdivided into spiritual *asiyah* and material *asiyah*. It is the world below *yetzirah*. The angels called *ophanim* reside in the realm of spiritual *asiyah*. The *partzuf of malchus* is dominant, as is *shem beis nun (BON)*. The physical realm of action is considered the world where G-d desires His dwelling place to be. In its current state, it is filled with mostly parasitic forces that oppose divinity. Man resides in this world and is tasked with sanctifying this realm through the observance of Torah and mitzvos.

G-d's dwelling place: G-d gave the people of Israel His Torah in this physical world. Our divine service is grounded within physicality and its parameters of space-time. Through the observance of His commandments, G-d fortifies the world with the capacity for the revelation of the infinite through the finite without the actual

nullification of the finite. Thus, this world becomes a dwelling place for G-d's essence.

Appendix A

Pertaining to the "One Stone" Essay and

The Age of the Universe

- Includes handwritten calculation by Dr. Gerald Schroeder, Ph.D.

- Translation of text from *Otzar Hachayim* 86b–87b, Rabbi Isaac of Akko (circa 1300)

- Letters from the Lubavitcher Rebbe pertaining to the Age of Universe

Handwritten calculations by Dr. Gerald Schroeder:

Gerald Schroeder

Bible: 6 Days at 24 hours each \longleftrightarrow Science: 14 billion years
 2 views of one reality
 looking forward \rightarrow \leftarrow looking back
 the most common relationship in the universe

$$A = A_0 e^{-\lambda t} \quad e = 2.71827$$

For the age of the universe calculation:

A = earth time in number of days
 A_0 = the instantaneous ratio of threshold rest energy of a proton
 (proton is the 1st stable matter that defines the element)
 to the current energy of space (as temperature)

$$\lambda = \frac{\text{natural log of 2} \rightarrow \ln 2 = 0.693}{t_{1/2}}; t_{1/2} = \text{one Genesis day}$$

t = time in Genesis days and goes from 0 to 6

$$\int A = \left(-\frac{A_0}{\lambda} \right) e^{-\lambda t}$$

$$\int A = - \left(\frac{10.9 \times 10^{12}}{3} \times \frac{1 \text{ day}}{0.693} \right) e^{-\frac{0.693}{1 \text{ day}} t} \Big|_0^6 \quad \text{actually } 0 \rightarrow 5\frac{1}{2} \text{ days since}$$

the soul of humanity, the
 meshonah, is put into Adam
 $\frac{1}{2}$ through day 6; 5 1/2 days

$$\int_0^{5\frac{1}{2}} A = - \left(5.24 \times 10^{12} \text{ days} \right) \times \left(e^{-\frac{0.693}{1} \times 5\frac{1}{2}} - e^{-\frac{0.693}{1} \times 0} \right)$$

$$\therefore \int_0^{5\frac{1}{2}} A = 5.12 \times 10^{12} \text{ days}$$

Converting days to years: $\frac{5.12 \times 10^{12} \text{ days}}{365 \text{ day/year}} = 14 \times 10^9 \text{ years}$ 2 views of one reality
 from 2 vastly different perspectives

See the main text of the "Age of the Universe" article
 for more details - especially the AZUSA suggested
 correction for the increased rate of the universe's
 expansion and its effect on the temperature of space

gerald_schroeder@alum.mit.edu

Otzar Hachayim 86b–87b, Rabbi Isaac of Akko (circa 1300):⁴¹⁷

I, the insignificant Isaac of Akko, have seen fit to record a great mystery that should be kept very well hidden. One of G-d's days is one thousand years, as it is written, "For a thousand years in your sight are a day" (*Tehillim* 90:4). Since one of our years is 365.25 days, a year above is 365,250 years below in our years. Two years on high is 730,000 years below. From this, continue multiplying to 49,000 years, each year consisting of 365.25 days, and each supernal day being one thousand of our years, as it is written, "G-d alone will prevail on that day" (*Yeshayahu* 2:11). "Who can speak of G-d's greatness?" (*Tehillim* 106:2). Blessed be the name of Him whose glorious Kingdom is forever and ever.

All this relates to what Scripture states. However, no matter how many times this picture is doubled, even thousands upon thousands, it would be not even a second to G-d. However, regarding the Infinite One, it is enough that He is called infinite.

⁴¹⁷ The only complete manuscript is in the Lenin State Library, Moscow (Guenzburg Collection, no.775).

Letter from the Lubavitcher Rebbe to Professor C. Domb

By the Grace of G-d
29th of *Tishrei*, 5722
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Professor C. Domb
37 Green Lane
Hendon, London N.W.4/

Sholom uBrocho:

This is to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your letter of 25th *Menachem Av*, in reply to my suggestion that you publish a series of articles, or a comprehensive monograph, on the subject of "Religion and Science." Pressure of my duties and the intervention of *Tishrei* compelled me to postpone my reply to your letter.

You mention your preoccupation with other Torah projects at this time and express the hope that you may perhaps find time on some future occasion to act on my suggestions.

Permit me, therefore, to observe that while the public dissemination of Torah merits a high priority, as the first *mishnah* of *Peah* states, I cannot share your view that this applies to the present instance. My authority for this view is the Gemara (*Moed Kattan* 9a,b) which rules that "A *mitzvah* which cannot be performed by others takes precedence over all else."

As I pointed out in my previous letter, and as you well know, the present state of confusion besetting the minds of so many of our brethren, a confusion which is not limited to theoretical issues, but which touches upon fundamental principles and attitudes, down to the very observance of the *mitzvot* in the daily life, urgently calls for an authoritative clarification by a recognized authority in the field of science. I am confident that if the cobwebs of misconception attending the advancement of modern technology could be cleared away, numerous misguided individuals would be induced to re-examine their position, while others still clinging to their beliefs and traditions, yet are troubled by doubts, would have their confidence restored.

I realize, of course, that the undertaking which I am suggesting requires time and attention. Nevertheless, I feel that the encroachment on other important projects would not be so drastic, and in the longer run, perhaps, it might even turn out to be a contribution rather than an encroachment, in the light of the Mishnah, "one *mitzvah* brings another in its train," especially a *mitzvah* that cannot be performed by others, and where there can be no fear of duplication or excess.

Now to refer to some points raised in your letter.

I am surprised that the Rov did not mention the fact that the very same phrase contains the unequivocal words – לבריאת העולם. In other words, this dating is **not** conventional, as for example, in the case of

"*Minyan Shtrot*," which was adopted and ordered to a certain convenient date in the past. Our annual dating is historic, beginning with the Creation of the world, and its use in legal documents explicitly substantiates its authenticity.

You cite certain Rishonim in this connection, but since I have not at hand these sources, I must withhold comment. However, you surely know that there is general agreement among our authorities of the essential point that this dating is based on the Creation. Whatever reservations have been made by some authority (on account of the Flood, or other adjustments – שנת המבול שנת תוהו) the whole difference in the date would not exceed 3 years. (The machlokes whether it was in *Nissan* or *Tishrei* that the world was created represents only a difference of six months.) The basic fact that our dating is related to the Creation of the world is not challenged by our authorities.

With reference to the view of "evolutionary cosmology," i.e. an evolution preceded by creation ex-nihilo, it is "difficult" to reconcile this view with the evolutionary theory, since it is impossible to cram within a period of 5722 years a process of evolution as conjectured by the evolutionists which, if it be true at all, would require millions and billions of years.

You mention the difficulty of understanding the account of creation literally, specifically how it is possible to define days before the sun was created. But I do not see the difficulty at all. The literal meaning of the words "And it was day and it was night" is inescapable, for the very

same words are used in the text before as well as after the sun was created, i.e. in each of the six days of Creation. It would surely be illogical to assume that the very same expression, used in identical context and in the very same section, should have different meanings! This still leaves the question, how is the passage of a day to be measured before the sun was created? But this question, too, has no basis insofar as the text is concerned. For we are told at the outset that G-d created light, and separated between light and darkness, that is to say, the Creator at once set the limits of the day and night. As for the source of this light, surely no one will claim that the sun is the only possible source of cosmic light, especially if we accept the view of science that light has to do with electro-magnetic waves, surely there could be other sources of light and energy besides the sun. Whether we accept the corpuscular theory of light, or the wave theory, or the theory combining the two, our position is not affected thereby.

One final remark, apropos of your mentioning that in these matters you do not rely on your own judgment but consult with Rabbonim, etc. Unfortunately, the majority of Rabbonim stand too much in awe of scientific theories, for they still adhere to the attitude of bygone generations, when science was regarded as an absolute truth, as something apart from human intelligence and speculation, in other words, that scientific laws are not produced, but merely "discovered" by the scientist, and are infallible and immutable. This attitude was fostered even by the *Moreh Nevuchim* that where "science" appears to contradict

statements in the Torah or Talmud, the latter must be reinterpreted to conform to the scientific "truth." So deep-rooted is this attitude, having received the sanction of such eminent authorities in the past, that even now, when scientists themselves recognize that they are dealing not with independent "truths" and immutable laws, but merely with theories, formulated only for the convenience of systemization, and classification advancement, — many a well — meaning Rov still finds it difficult to change his attitude in regard to science.

That is why I consider it so necessary in the present day and age to clear away these widespread misconceptions not only from the minds of religious skeptics, but also from the minds of believers.

I trust you will take the lead in this important task.

With blessing, [sig.]

Appendix B

The concept of Essence to Essence may be demonstrated by the well-known saying of the Alter Rebbe, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi:

I want nothing,
I don't want Your Garden of Eden,
I don't want Your World to Come,
All I want is only
YOU.

ב"ה

וכר היה נשמע הלשון
 ממורים ורבינו נ"ע בדביקותו
 שויה אמר בזה"ל

איך ווייל זען גאר צייט
 איך ווייל צייט דיין גוף עדיין
 איך ווייל צייט דיין עדה"ב
 איך ווייל מער צייט און דיך אליין

זיך מיטווייז

J. Fleck 10

Appendix C

Do you believe in mother?⁴¹⁸

In a mother's womb were two babies. One asked the other: "Do you believe in life after delivery?" The other replied, "Why, of course. There must be something after delivery. Maybe we are here to prepare ourselves for what we will be later."

"Nonsense" said the first. "There is no life after delivery. What kind of life would that be?"

The second said, "I don't know, but there will be more light than here. Maybe we will walk with our legs and eat from our mouths. Maybe we will have other senses that we can't understand now."

The first replied, "That is absurd. Walking is impossible. And eating with our mouths? Ridiculous! The umbilical cord supplies nutrition and everything we need. But the umbilical cord is so short. Life after delivery is to be logically excluded."

⁴¹⁸ Adapted from the 1980's short story, "Boy and Girl," by the philosopher, writer, and composer, Pablo J. Luis Molinero. It was published in his collection of four stories, *Morphogeny* (1982). Adaptation originally posted on Facebook in Hungarian by Útmutató a Léleknek, a Hungarian writer and poet, and was translated by Miranda Linda Weisz.

The second insisted, “Well I think there is something and maybe it’s different than it is here. Maybe we won’t need this physical cord anymore.”

The first replied, “Nonsense. And moreover, if there is life, then why has no one has ever come back from there? Delivery is the end of life, and in the after-delivery there is nothing but darkness and silence and oblivion. It takes us nowhere.”

“Well, I don’t know,” said the second, “but certainly we will meet Mother and she will take care of us.”

The first replied “Mother? You actually believe in Mother? That’s laughable. If Mother exists, then where is She now?”

The second said, “She is all around us. We are surrounded by her. We are of Her. It is in Her that we live. Without Her this world would not and could not exist.”

Said the first: “Well I don’t see Her, so it is only logical that She doesn’t exist.”

To which the second replied, “Sometimes, when you’re in silence and you focus and you really listen, you can perceive Her presence, and you can hear Her loving voice, calling down from above.”

Suggested Reading in English

From Infinity to Man: The Fundamental Ideas of Kabbalah within the Framework of Information Theory and Quantum Physics by Dr. Eduard Shyfrin

Genesis and the Big Bang by Dr. Gerald Schroeder

Inner Space: Introduction to Kabbalah, Meditation and Prophecy by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan

Lessons in Tanya by Rabbi Yosef Wineberg

Meditation and Kabbalah by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan

Mystical Concepts in Chassidism: An Introduction to Kabbalistic Concepts and Doctrines by Rabbi J. Immanuel Schochet

On the Essence of Chassidus by Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson,
translated by Rabbi Heschel Greenberg

Sefer Yetzirah: The Book of Creation by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan

Torah and Modern Physics by HaRav Yitzchak Ginsburgh

The Thirteen Petalled Rose by Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz

About the Author

Dr. Vladimir (Zev) Zelenko has been a family physician in Monroe and Monsey, N.Y., for the last fifteen years. He has been described by his patients as a family member to thousands of families. Dr. Zelenko has been active with Kiryas Yoel Hatzolah (volunteer EMS) during this period.

Dr. Zelenko was born in Kiev, Ukraine and immigrated to the United States in 1978. He grew up in Brooklyn, N.Y. While in medical school, Dr. Zelenko began to explore his Jewish roots with the help of *shluchim* of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

Dr. Zelenko's first book is an autobiography called *Metamorphosis*. In it he describes his spiritual journey toward Judaism, as well as dramatic events, such as life-threatening cancer and divorce. What becomes self-evident while reading this book is G-d's providence, infinite wisdom, and love.

Dr. Zelenko is married with eight children and lives in Englewood, New Jersey.

- For the intellectually minded Jew, for whom the interplay of divine wisdom and worldly wisdom are an endlessly fascinating dynamic, Zev Zelenko's *Essence to Essence* is a uniquely insightful, inspirational and authoritative guidebook into the sublime pathways that reveal the ultimate unity of both.

Arnie Gotfryd, Ph.D.

- Dr. Zelenko's most recent book, *Essence to Essence*, is a deep and interesting presentation of some of the deepest teachings of Kabbalah and Chassidus. It is a significant contribution to the dissemination of *pnimiyus haTorah* that paves the way and prepares us for the final redemption. Internalizing the transcendent message of this book will go a long way in preparing us for the time when the deepest secrets of *pnimiyus haTorah* will be revealed by our righteous Moshiach.

Rabbi Heschel Greenberg

- I urge all those who are interested in how Torah and Chassidus relate to our modern world to read *Essence to Essence*. As we await the Messianic era, Dr. Zelenko has given us a foretaste of the revelation of the depth of Torah and the essence of our existence that we will enjoy then.

Rabbi Chaim Dovid Kagan, Ph.D.

- Anybody who is on a similar journey can benefit from the hard work that Dr. Zelenko has put into this book. He reads and conveys our sacred texts authentically, through the eyes of a person who was schooled in western thought. While anyone can benefit from it, the book is ideally suited to a "seeker" who has had little exposure to Jewish wisdom and wishes to access a large amount of core information in a short period of time. The book also takes time to present Kabbalah and Chassidus as a worldview, discussing its philosophical, psychological and political implications.

Rabbi Chaim Miller

- "Essence to Essence" is a remarkable guide to uncovering the esoteric principles of Kabbalistic and Hasidic thought. Dr. Zev Zelenko combines his vast knowledge of metaphysical and spiritual concepts with extensive acumen in the worlds of science and medicine. *Essence to Essence* is an invaluable contribution to Jewish scholarship and timeless wisdom.

Rabbi Daniel Schonbuch, LMFT

- Dr. Zelenko has written a wonderful text that clarifies the basic concepts of Kabbalah. His writing is clear, entertaining, and erudite. I will need to reread his book many times. I hope you will enjoy the gift that he offers us.

Ed Yisroel Susskind, Ph.D.

