

The Path of Kabbalah

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Part One: The Beginning

Chapter 1.1 - The Great Illusion

“Thou shalt have no other gods before Me. Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor any manner of likeness” (Exodus 20, 3). Judaism forbids idolatry and any kind of fetishism. This prohibition hides behind it the most fundamental principle in Judaism, which states that everything we see is only a figment of our imagination.

Over the years, this principle has been consciously and sometimes unconsciously adopted by many of us after realizing that the ability to change our perspective might serve as a good tool in coping with our day-to-day problems. That perspective determines our reactions, our feelings, and ultimately our reality. What then is the actual reality around us?

After having been concealed for thousands of years by Jewry, Kabbalists can now state that there is no reality at all, but something called “His Essence,” the “upper force.” That force operates in such a way that one sees Him as an image of a certain reality, which we denominate “my world.”

One can see and feel varying images and sensations depending on one’s sensory organs and inner properties. All our sensations are subjective and exist only with regards to our feelings.

In the sensory organs of a different creature, such as an alien’s for instance, that world would appear completely different. It is possible that that creature’s sensory organs are so different to our own, that it might exist here, but in a different dimension, without colliding with us.

All this is stated only to stress the fact that all our sensations are personal and might change in time.

The closer one’s properties are to the properties of the upper force, the closer the imaginary image of ‘my world’ comes to the actual reality and the less distorted it is by one’s egoistic attributes. Since the property of the upper force is altruism, when one attains that property and bonds with the upper force, one learns to feel reality as it is.

The only way for us to approach the right perspective of reality is by studying Kabbalah, since it is the only study that deals with that part of reality that humanity has yet to attain.

But it is not enough to merely study the text, because we are reading about the unknown. We must also direct ourselves to the right vision, and be prepared for a truer and as yet concealed feeling.

Everything exists inside us. Outside us there is only the upper force, the Creator. We cannot feel Him in anyway. What we do feel is only how the Creator works on our sensory organs.

Only by the consequence of these sensations can we guess anything about the Creator. In fact, it is not about the Creator, but about how He appears to us, how He wants to be felt.

Hence, the study of Kabbalah must be correctly aimed; the thought must be focused on studying the inner attributes that we still cannot see in us.

All the world, *Partzufim*, *Sefirot*, names, everything the Kabbalah speaks of exists in us and will be revealed in us, depending on the degree of our correction. We will find our inner Moses and Aaron, King David and the angels, the evil, the righteous and the

degrees of attainment called “Jerusalem,” the “Temple” and more. Every word in the Torah speaks of our own forces and the levels of our sensation of the Creator.

That is the only thing that the Torah discusses. That is also the only thing we speak of in our daily lives, because we talk about our feelings. All we feel is the influence of the Creator. Every thing around us is no more than the influence of the Creator on each and every one of us.

Hence, in order to feel the actual picture of the world we must find what we read inside us, as we read, because every written word exists within us, it just hasn't been discovered yet.

We feel what the books speak of in accordance with our spiritual growth, hence the importance that is ascribed to the study from genuine sources of Kabbalah: the Zohar, the writing of the Ari, and the writings of Ashlag. This is the safest way to attain the correction of our feelings and attributes and spiritual ascent.

The one means for progress is the study with the thought that these books actually speak of me, that all this exists somewhere inside me. All these worlds and *Partzufim* are things that I must discover inside me, they are my own properties.

The more I acquire control over these attributes, the more I will feel how the Creator operates inside me. I will never be able to feel Him ‘outside’ me but only how He operates inside me, because “By your acts we know you.”

And since we sit together as a group, studying our (as yet concealed) real properties, we are collaborating in the study of the operation of the Creator inside us. We have a common goal and a common thought, and one experimentation field – our own feelings.

This results in a collective goal, thought and desire that in time creates the feeling of one body, common properties, a feeling that there are no separate entities, but only one, called “Man,” and before him, the one Creator.

The thought must be directed inwardly, toward changing our attributes in search of the Creator inside us. Instead of the ordinary reading in the Torah we discover the Torah “as a spice,” as a means for correction also named a “potion of life,” for it pours in us the sensation of the Creator, the light of eternity and wholeness.

People who study from the wrong books, are denied of this remedy and remain with their properties, they do not discover the Creator and their Torah becomes dry and conceals the purpose of creation even more than before.

Chapter 1.2 – Between Creator and Creature

The question “Who am I?” exists in everyone. But when that question can no longer be put aside, then it relates to the Creator: “Who is He?” because the Creator is inside us, He is the source of the human “self.” Hence, no matter how many times we ask ourselves “Who am I?” that question still relates to the Creator. The “self” is a consequence. Our desires, our every movement, everything we do is in fact, created by the creator. We cannot perceive that notion. Everything we say, think, even what we say about the Creator and ourselves, all these are the Creator’s operations. So where then is the “self?” There is no “self.” It is all the work of nature, created by the Creator. It clothes us and everything we do is actually His doing. The question “Who am I?” can only exist outside the Creator. We are different to the Creator only in wanting to resemble Him and attain His degree.

The will to receive is essentially the desire of the creature to enjoy, corresponding to the abundance and pleasure that come from the Creator. We feel that will to receive and the Creator wants us to enjoy it. If we feel an abstract will to receive, it is not a creature, it is nature, God. If it works according to nature’s guidance, it is like a beast that hasn’t even a spark of a Godly soul.

Only if we have an aim clothing our will to receive that tells us how to use it correctly, can we regard ourselves as creatures, created intentionally by the Creator, and not just another rock, an animal or a bird. But that depends on us.

Our desires to drink, eat, sleep, marry and have children, all those are natural and come from the Creator. We can’t escape or altogether change them. However, we can construct an aim over the will to receive and build a correct way to use that desire. The extent of this aim, its depth, depends solely on me and that is what we call “creation.” I have to search for the right way to use my nature, my desires. Nature comes from the Creator, and my job is to know how to use it. The point in the heart is the way we relate to the nature the Creator gave us and to our ability to use it correctly. The heart itself consists of our desires, our yearning for pleasure.

Anything that is not the Creator is regarded as the creature, limited by nature, divided by four degrees of desire: still, vegetative, animate and speaking (man). Man is the only degree that can use nature with a special aim that he creates by himself. It is called the “point in the heart.”

The first phase is the “fetus,” Root coarseness: when one nullifies oneself completely, melts, so to speak, in the Creator. After that, the creature must gradually rise to the degree of the emanator and overcome that difference that exists between them by himself.

Using the aim, we seemingly build the Creator within us, but all along we feel our “self,” because our “self” is really the Creator. By attaining the Creator and equalizing in form with Him, we attain our own “self.”

The Creator wants to create creation in such a way that when it feels the Creator, it will still remain independent, and by that there will seemingly be a ‘dual Creator’: the first being the Creator Himself, and the second, creation, operating precisely like the Creator.

The creature’s will to receive is completely identical to the Creator’s will to bestow, also named “bestowal in order to bestow.” The will to receive does not vanish, it is not lost, and the creature retains its independence by using the desires that it wants to return to the Creator. That is where they are equal. The purpose is for the creature to

attain complete wholeness, while retaining its nature. The Creator couldn't have created an incomplete creature, He had to create a creature that is equal to Him. And the way to do it is by creating a creature and give it the possibility to attain the degree of the Creator by itself.

That is the meaning of perfection. When that is attained, there is a clear sensation that there is nothing other than the Creator and the creature. The creature discovers that he doesn't exist without the Creator, but the Creator cannot be called a Creator if there isn't a creature, just like a woman cannot be called a mother if she doesn't have a child.

It is only possible to attain spirituality when there is a desire for it. But where do I find it if I don't even know what it is? Let's say that we are pushed a little to awaken in us an interest in spirituality, but in the end, the truth is that we still know nothing. If we did, and would still want it, at least to a certain extent and things would have been easier.

But it is purposely hidden from us. If we were to enter spirituality with our current will to receive, we would never be able to change it. In order to enter spirituality, we must want it. But wanting means knowing, trying, feeling how good it is. There is a law that states that "The expansion of the light and its departure, make the vessel fit for its duty." In order to attain spirituality one must turn to the Creator with a special prayer to discover spirituality, but not for self-gain, but for the will to bestow. After that, that desire must be used correctly through the group and the teacher.

Thus, there must first be a great desire for spirituality. It is not given as a choice, it extends from the Creator. There comes a time, when more and more souls will be ready for spirituality. Man always follows his desire. Before the study of the wisdom of Kabbalah one is led from above, and when he opens a book, the Creator seemingly steps away from him, like an infant whose mother teaches it to walk. At first she holds it, but she slowly backs off while it is pacing toward her. We approach spirituality in much the same way, gaining more and more independence.

There are things we can and cannot work with. I can't say that something doesn't hurt me when it does. I rely on my feelings and no philosophy will help me in this case. This is the limit of my "self." It is impossible to realize my desires if I only rely on my feelings, without any concrete basis. One's actions should correlate with one's state. When one attains spirituality, it is a different feeling altogether. We discover that our inner feelings are a consequence of the actions of the Creator, but in fact, man and the Creator are one and the same thing, there is no contradiction between them, they want the same thing, and there isn't even a cause and consequence. This is called the "unity of the degree." Yet we have to act as we actually feel. On the one hand, we read those beautiful essays that say, "He is one and His name is one", but we still have to act according to our current degree in our spiritual life.

It is impossible to behave in the group by the rules of the End of Correction, because we cannot live by these rules. Therefore, the framework must suit our exact state. We mustn't mix the desired with the actual. The purpose is for life in the group to promote spiritual progress. Otherwise we will ruin ourselves and the group. We have no choice. Life demands that we correct ourselves individually so as not to bring down the entire group.

Keeping the framework of the group too rigid will produce a collapse. We see it happen in many groups. There are groups all over the country and every one should have the knowledge for comparison and choice. Even if only five students remain, they should know that their place is here. We don't feel how our decline influences

the entire group, if we all follow the path of pain then there are still life-cycles ahead of us. We must place ourselves in a state of constant lack, which will produce the need for inner improvement.

For instance: if Baal Hasulam had any money left in his pocket at the end of the day, he would give it to others in order to get up the next day completely broke. Even at the immense height of his degree, the additional lack helped him advance. We do not understand how these things work in high degrees.

We should at least set a framework in our own degree, so that the limitations will promote us to spiritual advancement. Each new degree is built on the ruins of its former and the construction of the new; this is how it always works.

There is nothing missing in spirituality. When something leaves me, it still remains although it is no longer present in my current feeling. It is called “there is no absence in spirituality.” Any situation that is experienced remains and is stored until the end of correction. In fact, I am already at the highest degree, or the lowest, depending on my feeling. I cannot imagine any other situation, let alone feel it. Our beastly nature should know that redemption can only come from above. Then we can advance.

There is a typical example that the Ari writes of: He once told his students that if they would go up to Jerusalem today, it would bring the Messiah. The wives of one of the students wouldn’t let him go, another had a sick child and another had torn shoes. In the end they didn’t go and the Messiah never came. It can happen to us, and then another group would have to do it in our place.

We have a will to receive. That will comes from above and is constantly increasing, growing farther from the Creator, through the impure worlds and acquiring its final shape of egoism. That state is called “our world.” One begins his advancement within the impure system, acquires the aim to bestow and with it begins to correct his will to receive until he comes to his *Bar Mitzvah* age (thirteen years old, a certain spiritual degree).

The light comes from above depending on the correction of his desires and fills him. This means that the soul – the light of correction – clothes the body, i.e. the will to receive. The soul – light – passes through the holy worlds, and this is the time of correction. If we render pleasure to the Creator in the act of reception, it is called bestowal. The Talmud states that if a respectable man marries, he doesn’t have to give a ring to his bride. On the contrary, his willingness to marry her is how he gives her, because she respects him.

That kind of reception is tantamount to pure bestowal. If man works that way toward the Creator when he receives from Him with the aim to bring contentment to the Creator, it called “equivalence of form.”

At first, one restricts oneself, saying, “I don’t want to receive anything for myself, unless the Creator wants it and it pleases Him.” Only under that condition is he willing to receive pleasure. The desire that the Creator created and the pleasure that He gives serve as a condition, which the relationship with the Creator is based on. Man agrees to receive from the Creator only if he is certain that he will please the Creator by receiving from Him.

But in order to do that, we must first meet the Creator, feel Him, and build a connection with Him. There is an inconceivable difference between reception for self-

gratification and reception in order to bestow to the Creator. Such a contact is a gift of God.

Two things come from the Creator: body and soul, or light and vessel. The light helps the body receive the soul, becomes the giver, and turns the will to receive into bestowal, until the will to receive is filled with light. The situation one goes through over the 6,000 degrees promotes us at any given moment toward the end of correction. At the end of correction we will attain eternal and perfect pleasure and unity with the Creator. Without equivalence of attributes with the Creator we will only be able to experience pleasures of the “still” degree, but not of the “vegetative, animate and speaking” degrees. The impure system is necessary for increasing the will to receive so that afterwards, using the aim to bestow it will be filled with light precisely according to its intensity.

Chapter 1.3 – The Evolution of the Soul

A person in this world has no soul. There is only one thing to do if we want to understand and realize our true essence, and that is to embark on a spiritual quest, with all the zest, the eagerness and willingness to change we can recruit; a quest to discover the soul. The journey begins at the exact place where we felt our very first desire for spirituality. It is called the “point in the heart.”

That place is the embryonic soul that demands our return to our spiritual roots. The soul is drawn to the Creator and takes man along. We don’t know where we are being pulled because the Creator is as yet concealed from us. But this point in the soul urges us on somewhere, even though it is still not a ‘real’ soul.

When one begins to work on the spiritual side of himself, one’s point gradually expands and grows. However, it remains dark, because one feels a greater and greater desire for something, hence the darkness. And when this point finally grows to the right size, he acquires a screen to surround it, the aim to give, and then the light enters this point. The light sorts the desires in the point to five parts which correspond to the attributes of the light: *Keter*, *Hochma*, *Bina*, *Zeir Anpin* and *Malchut*. Thus one acquires a soul.

The smallest desire is in *Keter*, and the greatest is in *Malchut*. The attribute of reception is smaller in *Keter* and *Hochma* than in the other desires, therefore *Keter* and *Hochma* are considered ‘giving’ desires. When one is in that state it is called *Katnut* (smallness, infancy).

If a person in this world has no more than beastly and corporeal desires, then he lives like everything else on earth. His next state begins only when the point in the heart appears in him. Then he begins to feel some unexplainable attraction to spirituality that he cannot ease, although he does not know what spirituality is.

If he studies Kabbalah at that state, he crosses the barrier. This is the third situation. At that stage, he receives a screen with *Aviut Shoresh* (root coarseness) instead of the point in the heart. It is called *Galgalta* with the light of *Nefesh*.

That state is regarded as the “embryonic state.” Much like an embryo in our world, he doesn’t want anything; he just lies inside his mother’s womb, i.e. inside a higher *Partzuf* that raises him devotedly. After that, the embryo takes nine months to develop; meaning develops his own nine *Sefirot* in *Malchut*, from *Nefesh* of *Nefesh* (*Keter* of *Malchut*) to *Yechida* of *Nefesh* (*Malchut* of *Malchut*).

At this point he stops being an embryo, he is born and acquires a vessel of *Hochma* with the light of *Ruach* (*NRNHY* of *Ruach*) with *Aviut Aleph* (1st degree coarseness). This period is called “infancy”. It lasts two years, 24 months. By that the *Partzuf* attains a state called *Katnut*, or *Galgalta* and *Eynaim*, a complete screen in first-degree coarseness. The infant is different to the embryo in that the embryo wants nothing, but the infant sucks the light with his own independent desire, like the baby that sucks from its mother.

How does the milk become food for the baby? When menstruation stops, the mother’s blood is used for the development of the embryo. During labor the blood of labor pours out, it is an ‘impure blood’ that can’t be corrected. It becomes impure desires, denied of any desire to give, to bestow. But there is a part of the blood that turns into milk after labor. It rises from the *Sefira* of *Yesod*, where the womb is to the *Haze* (chest), which is in the *Sefira* of *Tifferet* of the *Partzuf*.

Every thing that happens in the spiritual world and all the spiritual laws automatically apply to our world. Thus, by studying the processes of impregnation, the evolution of the embryo and labor, as well as the infancy and the growing of the spiritual *Partzufim*, we can accurately understand the processes that occur in our world and their causes.

The state following the infancy is the state of *Gadlut* (adulthood). The *Partzuf* receives *Mohin* (light of wisdom) in its vessels of *Bina* in the *AHP* (*Awzen, Hotem Peh*) of coarseness 2, 3 and 4. They are filled correspondingly with the lights of *Neshama, Haya* and *Yechida*.

We needn't do anything, just stay out of the way and let the Creator do His work in us, regardless of what He does. We mustn't exit the boundaries of the Creator's government under any circumstances. If we can do that, then we have attained a state called the "spiritual embryo." In a state of infancy, a person can already make requests; have a dialog with the Creator. After two years of infancy, one needs the guidance and the education of the Creator and can receive some light of wisdom, the first of which is called the "light of *Neshama*."

The entire spiritual relationship between the Creator and the creature in the state of *Katnut* is built exactly like the corporeal relationships in our world between mothers and children. We can solve all the problems that arise in corporeal relationships by knowing the root relationships that exist in the spiritual world between the Creator and the creature.

The Creator sends us obstructions on purpose, so that we will begin to want to approach Him through our efforts. Without obstructions in our corporeal life, we would not feel any need and desire for Him and would never be able to advance.

If the soul of the First Man hadn't been broken, it would remain a single soul, uncorrected and with very little chance of correcting itself. The correction is the reunification of the broken pieces. Only after the unification will the pieces unite with the Creator.

The work is basically the correction of our approach to what we receive from the Creator, and the consequence of that work is the unification with the Creator, the justification of His every move.

A group of students can attain total unification between its students. They begin from the preliminary state, build a framework that is comfortable for 'egoists', meaning one that suits all those who come for the sole purpose of attaining connection with the Creator. No one should suffer because of this framework, it shouldn't be turned into a cage or a prison. The framework should keep changing and improve according to its members' inner state, and always support the goal. The tighter and stronger the connection between the members of the group, the stronger the foundation is for connection with the Creator.

When man begins to advance to spirituality, he loses the desire for it. It would be more correct to say that he is given additional egoism, such will to receive that he can no longer resist. In that case there is nothing he can do except time and again move the egoism from the corporeal to the spiritual level by studying and by the collective work with the group.

All our thoughts must be analyzed and marked as ones that came from the Creator. They must be cataloged and verified that they don't contradict the goal that we aspire for. I must ask myself: "Do I follow that thought or do I resist it?" Is the Creator now

calling me by this thought, or does He want to provoke me by rejection? There is a difference, but in both cases He still wants to bring me closer to Him...

Chapter 1.4 – The Awakening of the Point in the Heart

About body and soul

The study of the wisdom of Kabbalah is a research of man's relationship with the Creator, our every thought, desire and in fact, the entire reality we attain with our senses. Even in our world, below the spiritual world, there are degrees of attainment. At the start of the time of preparation for spirituality we begin to understand the connections and relationships between the spiritual objects, although it cannot be compared with the actual sensation once you get there.

When the Zohar says, "Go and ask Rabbi Shimon and Rabbi Abba" it means that you should ascend to their degree and ask why they present things the way they do. When the Zohar writes that a certain person met Rabbi Shimon it means that that person rose to the degree of Rabbi Shimon and because of that can see and understand what Rabbi Shimon can.

This is how a degree gets its name, and when a person climbs to it, he is called by that name. If he attains only a part of that degree he is regarded as a son to it. That is why we are considered the sons of Adam, because we are all parts of the degree called Adam, and our task is to attain that part individually.

A person who rises to a certain degree feels what happens in it. He attains its characteristics and sees the Creator accordingly. If he climbs higher, the picture that he saw in the previous degree changes too.

It is not like a movie theatre playing 125 different films, one for each degree, because there is only the upper simple light and the person rising to a certain spiritual degree. We acquire certain spiritual attributes and thus feel a part of the upper light. That part is what we denominate "world."

We can even feel a tiny part of the upper light in our egoistic attributes, which we call "our world."

All that really exists is the will to receive this or that attribute of the Creator. The acquired attributes present us with a certain image. Different people who attain the same attributes of the Creator see the same picture despite their different desires, but from different angles. It is like a debate where the number of opinions is equal to the number of participants.

Because of the different thoughts and ideas we also have different perspectives on the world. However, the general picture remains the same. It is also the same regarding the personal and different experiences we feel though we agree about the appearance of things.

We are unable to understand one another with our attributes or our will to receive, because we only grow farther from each other. We can understand each other only by the attributes of the Creator that we attain in spiritual degrees.

The First Man was created with nothing but altruistic desires, meaning vessels of bestowal. He tended to all the trees in Paradise because he could use all his altruistic desires. If so, then how could he have corrected his egoistic desires (vessels of reception), if he didn't have them, or to be more accurate, if he didn't feel them inside him?

The sin of the First Man was premeditated. He had to sin, to taste off the tree of knowledge and mingle with the egoistic desires (vessels of reception) in order to

create a complete mixture of the vessels of bestowal with the vessels of reception. Only afterwards will there be a gradual correction of the vessels of reception.

There seems to be no sin here, because it was premeditated. But in fact there is still a breach of the rules whether knowingly or unknowingly. Did Man know? No he did not. Did he want to commit a sin? No he did not. But did he break the law? Yes he did.

A corruption in spirituality is no coincidence, everything is always done for one purpose – to correct the egoism and unite it with the altruism. If an altruistic spark, a vessel that appeared there at the moment of the sin of the First Man would not be in every egoistic desire, the egoism would have been incorrigible and spiritual ascent made impossible. Thus, Man's sin was a necessity.

We live in complete spiritual darkness. The surrounding light shines on the outside and awakens the egoism, the will to receive, yet cannot penetrate the egoism. This is how we are awakened to spirituality.

To further awaken us, not necessarily to spirituality, but to any personal achievement, a part of the surrounding light must (seemingly) be inside us. For that purpose the “point in the heart” is inserted into our selfish hearts. This point is a gift from above. It is the lowest point of a higher spiritual object, the posterior of a higher *Partzuf*.

Looking from above, there is nothing but a vessel, screen and *Reshimot* (reminiscence). But if we look from below, we find that the soul has three lines: right, left and a middle line. Man must gradually overpower each of the lines and unite them. This process consists of the suffering of the left line, the ability to cope with it through the forces of the right line, and the reception of the light of the Creator in the middle.

There is a certain duality here. From the Creator's perspective everything is clear and foreseen, including the sin of the First Man and its detailed process of correction. Everything has its place and time. In fact, everything is already at the end of correction. But for us, it is all a secret. Man has yet to discover the regularity in the hidden. We must pace ahead with faith above reason with the unknown pressing and encouraging us to strain to find the Creator and maintain the constant contact with Him of our own choice.

But we and the Creator have opposite characteristics to the Creator, and because of the egoism we are afraid to connect with Him, because we don't know what the good inclination is, let alone pure altruism!

From the perspective of the Creator nothing ever changes – everyone is at the end of correction, delighting in the light of the Creator. What changes is the anguish that man begins to feel as a result of his egoism and his repeating attempts to correct it from the starting point, to the world of *Ein Sof*, from reception to bestowal.

If a person in our world does not get this altruistic point, this spiritual attribute from above, he cannot perform any spiritual acts.

It is written that at the moment of one's spiritual birth, he immediately gets the “posterior of the holy soul,” meaning the last (and lowest) degree of the soul, referred to as a “point” because of the restriction. It is placed in our hearts, in the midst of our selfishness.

Without that point people remain in the animate degree. Their desires do not reach beyond the level of this world. Such people can be attracted to pseudo spiritual ideas and philosophies, predict the future and be extremely sensitive, but there is nothing that connects them with spirituality. Only the point in the heart can bring us out of the

bestly state and raise us to the spiritual. These people may appear alike on the outside, but only if you have equivalence of spiritual attributes, when the point in the heart becomes a whole *Partzuf* can you see the differences between them.

Sometimes such a point can remain dormant in the heart for many lifecycles. If that point is absent, a person can study Kabbalah for years and be with a group, he can write everything down and do everything necessary, but to no avail. He might join a group to become a teacher, be proud of his knowledge and so on, but if he hasn't the inner desire for unification with the Creator, he will not last long, the group will push him out spiritually. Thus, everything depends on the presence of the point in the heart.

When Rabbi Laitman asked his teacher if the point in the heart could be acquired if it isn't there to begin with, his teacher replied that if a person enters a group and sees that everything revolves around a single desire to find the Creator, and sees people coming from afar, talking and studying only that, if they study only with the right books and the right teacher, that person can 'catch' the general desire, though he knows he doesn't have this point. However, it is known that an extremely strong desire can awaken the point in the heart. Even the Ari mentioned it.

In order for a single person to be included in the united desire of the group, he must be absolutely in agreement with it, because even when this point does exist, it is different in its attributes from person to person. For instance, it is known that Rabbi Yosef Karo, who wrote the Shulchan Aruch (the Jewish code of laws), a priceless piece of work, slept during the Kabbalah lessons with the Ari.

Of course, there were people who absorbed the Lurianic Kabbalah (the Kabbalah of the Ari) naturally, and there were people who could not understand it and had troubles disconnecting themselves from the Kabbalah of the Ramak (Rabbi Moshe Kordoviro). The Ari introduced a fundamental change in the method of the study of Kabbalah, which enables us to study Kabbalah from the perspective of the vessels, the souls, meaning from below. Ramak's method of study examined the world from the perspective of the lights, meaning from the perspective of the Creator, whereas we study it from the perspective of the screen, which helps the light expand. Rabbi Laitman says he studied Kabbalah with many teachers, but could find no answers until he was shown the books of the Ari and Baal Hasulam.

The upper degree is the Creator, my own future state. The lower degree is the creature in his current state. The degrees are like an accordion, they open up to us as we progress.

What is time? Is it a changing, living concept? And if so, how does it exist outside or inside us? Does each degree keep its own time?

The concept of "time" is a consequence of the work of the shells. A person continues to feel "time" just as long as he refuses to agree with the Creator about everything that happens to him. But time disappears after the complete correction, once the correction of man's soul is completed, when nothing further needs to be changed and everything is in complete peace.

The root of time is the discovery of the deficit and the need for correction. The first restriction created an empty space that is intended for correction. The restriction happened because the desire that is opposite to perfection and the contradictions cannot be reconciled immediately. That is what created "time" and "space" in our world. These two contradictions can be brought together by changing either time or space. Before the first restriction there were no "time" or "space."

If there were a special timer that could be connected to man's heart, we could see the axis of the spiritual life in different people. Some live a thousand years, and others live only for a minute. Our ordinary clock shows only the 'still' time, meaning the pace of progress of the still toward the purpose of creation.

Chapter 1.5 – Kabbalah as a Means

Kabbalah revolves around the spiritual worlds. Therefore, the student attracts spiritual lights during the study. Studying other parts of the Torah also awakens a certain spiritual illumination, but the intensity of the light during the study of Kabbalah is much stronger than when studying other writings.

However, one must make sure one is studying in the right path of instruction, otherwise he is liable to achieve the opposite result – the more he studies, the more he'll feel himself to be righteous instead of feeling his own evil (which is the desired result). That would make it easier for him: just imagine studying for several months, each month feeling that you become meaner and meaner, can you call that sensation pleasant? Not at all – but this is nonetheless the truth! If you keep feeling better about yourself, then you are learning a lie, a pleasant one, but still a lie. On that basis society can be divided to two opposing groups: “Homeowners” and “Torah Owners.”

Homeowners are those who study Torah and are content with the study. They feel that they accumulate merit for the world to come. This world already smiles at them and they are confident that they will be happy in the next life.

The Torah owners however, are people who wish to do something with themselves. These two groups are in complete opposition to one another. Though their outward appearance is the same. They consist of an entirely different spiritual filling, just as two computers can appear identical but use two different operating systems.

All religions relay on one's efforts for reception of reward in this world and the next. A Kabbalist however, can only be a person who ascribes no significance to reward but strives to find the truth. It is true that there are very few such people, but the numbers increase significantly with each passing generation. There are cases where one comes to a certain point in his quest for truth and then gradually leaves. The reason for that will be explained in further detail in the study of reincarnation.

All the worlds (this world included) are inner states inside us. We will find them nowhere outside us. In other words, it is not us who are inside the worlds, but the worlds are inside us. Outside us there is only the Creator, the simple upper light.

People in our world are convinced that they are inside some kind of existence, a reality that was created before we came inside it. But this is an illusion. There is nothing outside us but the light of the Creator. That light affects our senses in such a way that we feel it as solid, liquid or gas, as vegetative or as animate. Everything we can imagine and can see around us is built inside our own senses, making us feel as though everything exists outside us. But the truth is that there is nothing outside, only the Creator.

This world is the lowest point that a Kabbalist attains. It is the total opposite of the Creator and is denominated the “exile in Egypt.” The natural power that works on us in that state, the power of our egoistic nature, doesn't allow us to advance anywhere except to care for ourselves. This is called the state of Pharaoh.

The egoism doesn't let us feel the sublime and perfect state. It is the egoism, man's inner and vicious force called Pharaoh that the Torah speaks of at length, whereas the force that makes one exit that state is called Moses. Pharaoh, Moses and everything that is written about the exodus describe spiritual states and emotions.

Our current state is the lowest possible. It is a state of absolute slumber, unconsciousness. We have no sensation whatsoever of who or where we are. It is even

a lower state than “this world.” It is so low that we cannot feel any spirituality, not even as good or bad.

The Torah is not a historic epic, though there is a correlation between the text and human history. But this is only because the construction of the worlds is based on the same principle: everything that happens in one spiritual world is reflected in its adjacent lower world, down to our own.

Everything that humankind will have to go through during its ascent in the worlds must be felt by each and every individual in each of the worlds, especially our own. The ascent in our world is done in our current state and with our egoistic substance of this world.

There is a law for the spiritual nature that states that, “Every spiritual root must touch a corporeal branch.” This means that every spiritual origin, spiritual force, must hang down and build its final corporeal manifestation in our world. For instance: there is a negative force in the world of *Atzilut* named Pharaoh and a positive one named Moses. These forces must materialize at least once in our world.

In principle, everything that happened or that is happening in the spiritual world has already happened in ours, everything except the coming of the Messiah, the ascent and the exit to the spiritual world. This is all that still waits to happen. But the times to come before the ascent are also the hardest, darkest and most painful.

A person who ‘works’ on himself with Kabbalah enters a state called the “exile in Egypt.” During this process, he feels that he is declining in his virtues – that he was better before and now he has become worse. This is how he discovers his nature. As he continues to study and be influenced by the light and the correct study of Kabbalah, he develops a strong desire to cross this barrier and enter the spiritual world. He longs to resemble the Creator in as little as his smallest attribute.

Chapter 1.6 – Land Marks

A person might be amazed to find along his spiritual path that not only is he not evolving, but has come to a halt, or is even retreating. He will find that the chances to enter the spiritual are rapidly dimming. But it is at that precise stage when we feel our inability to cope with the obstructions that indicates an impressive progress. If we only stop for a moment, we will see that we are in fact advancing in a growing speed, but we are trying to measure our progress with senses that are only just beginning to evolve. Any correction and change that we perform brings us closer to the acquisition of the aim to bestow. But for that we need to go through a great many changes and in many different ways. We must discover what is our “self” and what exactly does it want from us, what is the will to receive, what is the substance of Creation and what is the meaning of life and death.

A person comes to the conclusion that life means feeling the light, and death is the sensation of darkness, the absence of the sensation of the Creator. We go through many different situations until we come to know what good and bad really are.

The barrier is a curtain that hides the light from our world. How is the barrier different to the screen? The attribute of the screen is completely different than the barrier in that the entire light stands before the screen and there is nothing that hides it but man who rejects it with the power of his desire to not receive for self-gratification.

The barrier-curtain, unlike the screen stands outside me, covering the upper light. The screen is something I put up inside me, as a result of an inner understanding and consciousness of the desire to not let the light enter in an egoistic form. And if I do let the light in, I want it to be with the aim to give to the Creator. When there is a screen there is no need for the curtain, because the screen can resist the light.

What is the division of the 125 degrees that our way consists of?

There are 125 degrees of attainment between our world and the world *Ein Sof*. But all we need for our correction is to reach the world of *Atzilut*, meaning the end of the second restriction. We have to cross the worlds of *Assiya*, *Yetzira* and *Beria*, each consisting of 2,000 years (states, degrees). Thus, the sum total of the corrections we have to go through is 6,000, after which we enter the corrections that belong to the first restriction.

Our soul consists of five parts: *Keter*, *Hochma*, *Bina*, *Zeir Anpin* and *Malchut*. They are divided by the intensity of their will to receive, and form two groups: *Galgalta* and *Eynaim* (*Keter* and *Hochma*), and *Awzen*, *Hotem*, *Peh* (*Bina*, *Zeir Anpin*, and *Malchut*). *Keter* is called *Galgalta* (skull), *Hochma* (wisdom) is called *Eynaim* (eyes), *Bina* (intelligence) is called *Awzen*, *Zeir Anpin* is called *Hotem* (nose) and *Malchut* (kingship) is called *Peh* (mouth). The structure of all souls is identical: the first part of the soul enjoys giving, while the second enjoys receiving.

We should only concern ourselves with correcting our *Galgalta* and *Eynaim* (*GE*), our vessels of bestowal, the desires to give. Our spiritual path begins with an ascent above our world. An ascent is a gradual correction of our *Galgalta* and *Eynaim*. By ascending to the world of *Atzilut* we confirm that our vessels of bestowal are corrected. We cannot correct our vessels of reception.

So what can we do? We can gradually raise our vessels of reception (*AHP*) from the worlds of *BYA* to the world of *Atzilut*. We first raise the *AHP* from the world of *Beria*, which is the *AHP* with the least amount of egoism. After that we raise the *AHP* from the world of *Yetzira*, which are more egoistic, and finally we raise the *AHP* from the

world of *Assiya*, the most egoistic of all vessels. We don't actually correct the vessel-desires, only connect them with their corresponding *GE*, and combine them with the altruistic desires.

After every correction we receive more light. The correction is called an "ascent." There are three ascents altogether, or better phrased, there is an ascent from each of the places of the worlds of *Beria*, *Yetzira*, and *Assiya*. The *AHP* that rise to the world of *Atzilut* are not 'real' desires to receive (vessels of reception), they are not our "self," our "stony heart." We are incapable of correcting that part. The only part we can correct is a small portion called *AHP DeAliyah* (raised *AHP*). But no greater correction is needed either. As soon as this correction is through, the Creator Himself will correct the stony heart.

In order for us to know what we must correct, we have to see and feel what it is that needs correction. For that there are ascents and descents that do not depend on us called an "awakening from above": they are the holidays, the Shabbat (Saturday, the seventh day of the week) and the beginnings of the month. Those are given to a person only for the reason that he has already corrected his vessels of bestowal, wants nothing for himself and is already in the world of *Atzilut*.

The first act – the ascent – will be the joining of the *AHP DeAliyah* of the world of *Beria*; the second will be done by adding the *AHP* of the world of *Yetzira*, and the third – the adding of the *AHP* of the world of *Assiya*. When a person has already climbed these three degrees, there is the correction of the stony heart, constituting the End of Correction.

We can either feel pleasure from receiving or from giving. The pleasure from giving is felt in the vessels of bestowal while the pleasure from receiving is felt in the vessels of reception. But both types of vessels are corrupted in us. The easiest to correct are the vessels of bestowal. The correction is that I give not for my own pleasure, but in order to please the receiver. Those vessels are easier to correct because the act (giving) and the purpose (for another) are in the same direction.

The vessels of reception allow us to enjoy only by an act of reception. They are much more difficult to correct because we have to please another by receiving. That correction demands a much tighter connection with the Creator because it runs through the core of the "self," the human ego.

For that reason, the *AHP* are corrected gradually following the correction of *Galgalta* and *Eynaim*. Thus, it is not so difficult to ascend to the world of *Atzilut* with vessels of corrected *GE*, as it is to add the *AHP* to them, because the correction of the *AHP* contradicts the aim.

All five worlds are like curtains that hide the light of the Creator. The lower the world, the more it covers the light. The world-screens end at the barrier, which hides the light completely from our world. Only a tiny spark called "minute light" enters our world. It is just enough to sustain life on earth. The Creator made it so we can live without a screen. In the absence of light and having only a minute light, there is no necessity for a screen.

That feeble light is divided to many particles. It turns the atoms, moves the molecules, creates every substance and promotes it to development and growth and revives every degree of existence, the still, vegetative, animate and speaking – our own degree.

And if we acquire a screen over even the smallest will to receive, through the study, the group and the teacher, a screen over root coarseness, then we are already able to resist the dimmest light – the light of *Nefesh*, that however small, it is still far greater

than the “minute light.” At that point we are able to stay in that light without receiving it for ourselves. The screen, in that case, functions like the barrier (the transition from this world to the spiritual world).

For example: if a person has been taught not to steal and we put a \$100 note before him, he will not steal it. But the minute we place before him a larger sum than the sum he’d been taught not to steal, he will not be able to resist the temptation; his education will be insufficient for that sum.

The same applies to spirituality: where there is the light of *Nefesh*, we work for the Creator without any difficulty, feel Him, maintain contact with Him and enjoy ourselves because we want to please Him. We have a sufficient screen for this degree that protects us from receiving for ourselves. That state is called the world of *Assiya*.

Then, as a result of the study and the additional efforts we make, we acquire a screen over a greater measure of egoism, that of *Aviut Aleph* (1st degree coarseness) and can now receive the light of *Ruach* in order to bestow. Accordingly, we have protection against stealing for a larger sum of money, say \$1000. In such a case we pass from the world of *Assiya* to the world of *Yetzira*. In the same way, when acquiring a screen for 2nd degree of coarseness, we ascend from *Yetzira* to *Beria*.

By passing from one world to the next, the curtain falls off the previous world and instead we place over it a screen that suits the coarseness of that world. The screen is swallowed inside and becomes redundant. When that happens, we become able to keep the law of the world we are in and therefore do not need the law; we rise above it and keep it of our own conscious decision.

Since our soul consists of five parts, we must acquire five separate screens in power, according to the coarseness of the egoism:

We cross the barrier when we acquire a screen of root coarseness, and attain the spiritual degree of the world of *Assiya*.

A screen for 1st degree coarseness raises us to the degree of the world of *Yetzira*.

A screen for 2nd degree coarseness raises us to the degree of the world of *Beria*.

A screen for 3rd degree coarseness raises us to the degree of the world of *Atzilut*.

And finally, a screen for 4th degree coarseness raises us to the degree of the world of *Adam Kadmon*.

Above *Adam Kadmon* the soul ascends to the world of *Ein Sof*. There are five *Partzufim* in every world, comprised of five *Sefirot*. Each time a person acquires five new *Sefirot*, he acquires a new degree, a new *Partzuf*. If it is in the world of *Assiya*, the first five *Sefirot* give us the ability to attain the *Partzuf* of *Malchut* of the world of *Assiya*. The next five *Sefirot* raise us to *Partzuf Zeir Anpin* of the world of *Assiya*. Five more *Sefirot* and we come to *Partzuf Bina* of *Assiya*, five more and we are in *Partzuf Hochma* of *Assiya*, and the last five *Sefirot* render us *Partzuf Keter* of the world of *Assiya*.

This is how the soul acquires the screens in the root coarseness of the world of *Assiya* and goes over to the first screen of the 1st degree coarseness of the world of *Yetzira*. The soul continues this way until it crosses all the worlds and all 125 degrees.

When we are in the world of *Assiya* with our root coarseness, our soul evolves through a number of degrees like a ‘fetus’ in its mother’s womb (*Bina*). The conception lasts ‘nine months’, the same time it takes for a woman in our world.

The birth of the soul is the transition from root, to 1st degree coarseness, from the world of *Assiya* to the world of *Yetzira*, which corresponds to the birth of a baby in

our world. In the world of *Beria* the soul undergoes a ‘two year’ phase of ‘sucking’, during which the soul evolves and receives light that gradually increases its screen.

But in the world of *Beria* the soul is still in a state of *Katnut* (meaning its only got vessels of *GE*). Beyond the world of *Atzilut* begins the gradual process of the growth of the soul, the acquisition of the vessels of *AHP*. The growth continues until the age of ‘thirteen’ the *Bar Mitzva* age, when the soul becomes independent in *Atzilut*, and has got the screens with which it can commence receiving in order to bestow, by adding the vessels of reception denominated *AHP DeAliyah*.

There are two *Partzufim* called *Zeir Anpin* and *Nukva (Malchut)* in the world of *Atzilut*. They relate to one another in various ways, depending on the situation of the soul (*Katnut* or *Gadlut*). These situations are called *Zivug* (spiritual mating).

The term *Eretz* (land) in the spiritual world refers to the place you are or the place you are headed for. The word *Eretz* comes from word *Ratzon* (desire). Our soul consists of one big desire (*Eretz*) with many smaller ‘lands’ inside it. There are desires called the “nations of the world” or “abroad” and there is the Land of Israel, which is the closest desire to the Creator. The neighbors of this *Eretz* – Jordan, Egypt and Seria want the Land of Israel because that is where the Creator is.

The correction process begins with the finest desires called “Israel” or *Galgalta* and *Eynaim*. On the one hand, they are the closest desires to the Creator, but on the other, they are the farthest. It happens because of the law of the oppositeness between lights and vessels.

For a person to return to the Creator, he must be the greatest egoist, because he must feel that there is something very important missing in his life. On the one hand, egoistic vessels are far from the Creator, but on the other hand, when he inverts his intentions, he will become the closest to Him.

When a person begins to study Kabbalah, he slowly learns to sort out his desires in order of coarseness. When the sorting is done, he determines which of the desires he can begin to correct. When he begins the work with his desires he begins to see where he is on the spiritual map.

Chapter 1.7 – From Above Downward

The study of the Kabbalah focuses on studying the structure of the worlds as they evolve from above down to our world. One would think that since we are in the corporeal world, we would be taught how to climb along the spiritual path from below upward, not the other way around. But the truth is, that it is the exact same path that the Kabbalists write about. A Kabbalist is a person who lives in our world, but has attained spirituality from below upward. None of the writings of Kabbalists speak of a person who hasn't attained spirituality. Our purpose is to build an additional sensory instrument, with which to feel the spiritual world and the Creator. That is how it was done before and that is what Kabbalists write about. There is no other revelation of the Creator to man. A person can feel the spiritual world and the Creator only by changing himself. That is what he can write about and convey to others.

The First Man wrote about his attainments, Abraham the Patriarch followed in his footsteps, which in turn was followed by Moses, who named his attainments of the Creator and creation – Torah. The Kabbalists that followed wrote their feelings and attainments in additional books – the Mishnah, the Talmud and so on. Every Kabbalist wrote about his research of our world and the way to enter the spiritual world. We call these books Holy Books, or in general we call them Torah, from the Hebrew word *Ohr* (light) and *Hora'a* (instruction), meaning instructions on how to enter the spiritual world.

The books didn't 'fall out of the blue.' They were not carved in stone by some upper power and were not written by the Creator on papyrus or anything of the sort. There was always a Kabbalist who sat down and put his spiritual research on paper. That research is done from below upward, from our world up.

The thing is that the ascent from below upward is personal and differs from one person to another. There are certainly common methods, general rules, degrees and phases in the ascent, but though the ways are common to all, each person experiences them differently. In order for this instruction to be suitable for everyone, Kabbalists wrote it from above downward, not from below. It is in fact the same road, but when looking from above, it is described in more general terms, more uniform.

Light descends from the Creator, building five worlds on its way– *Adam Kadmon*, *Atzilut*, *Beria*, *Yetzira*, *Assiya*. Below the world of *Assiya* there is the barrier – a partition that separates this world from the spiritual worlds. There is another partition between the world of *Atzilut* and the worlds below it. It is called *Parsa*. Between the world of *Ein Sof* and the world of *Atzilut* there is the restriction.

Thus, from the highest state – the world of *Ein Sof* – down to the lowest, where we are, there are five worlds - *Adam Kadmon*, *Atzilut*, *Beria*, *Yetzira*, *Assiya*, each consisting of five *Partzufim* and each *Partzuf* of five *Sefirot*. Thus, the total number of degrees that stand between our (necessary) future state and our present state is 125.

These degrees are not made of marble or stone, they are inside us. They are degrees of internal spiritual development. When a person changes something inside himself, he ascends by one degree. When he changes another, he climbs another degree and so on. All the degrees are levels of equivalence with the Creator.

The world of *Ein Sof* is a complete equivalence of form with the Creator. Our world is the complete opposite of the Creator. The degrees between our world and the world of *Ein Sof* are measurements of equivalence of man with the Creator, phases of closeness to the Creator.

The goal that the Creator set for us is that while being in this world, we will work on ourselves and gradually correct our inner properties, so that while being in a worldly body, we will be in the world of *Ein Sof* in our inner soul, our inner properties.

This means that we must resemble the Creator while living in this world. As long as we do not accomplish that, we will keep returning until we succeed. We will be pushed to it. This is true for each and every person and for humanity in general. This is the reason for the pressures and unpleasant situations we are faced with all the time, to make us understand that there is a reason for the anguish; that the suffering is not meaningless, and someone somewhere wants to do something with humanity.

Chapter 1.8 – Cause and Consequence

Our life is really a learning exercise. Sometimes the world appears so dark and bitter, that a person thinks the end of the world has come and there is no way out. But as he continues to study, he sees it isn't so, that these are only exercises sent from above. Those are very accurate and much needed exercises. It is only possible to understand and appreciate their necessity in the 'pre-correction' phase after some time.

For that reason we should endure as long as we can and stick with the purpose of our progress without 'losing our heads.' If we are given those situations when we feel we are in the middle of a fire and there is nothing we can do to save ourselves, it is only to show us once again that we are not the owners, that it is not us running the show.

There is no way around these situations, but they can be made much shorter and much less painful. For that we need to put ourselves in a group of students who work together, read more and study more. We must follow the verse "Whatsoever thy hand attaineth to do by thy strength, that do" (Ecclesiastes 9, 10).

How does a person who is concerned with inner work deal with his surroundings? Does his environment understand him? Sometimes, situations at work, in the family, make us feel hostile to the apparent source of the troubles and quarrel. We blame the boss, our colleagues, spouse, children and so on. We feel trapped, angry, and think we can't go on. But afterwards we realize that all this was given to us from above in order to experience a certain series of emotions.

We realize that it was us who took things in the wrong and exaggerated way, who took it as the worst thing in the world. Now it's all gone, but in a short time, new situations will come, and the sooner we escape these situations, tell the group about it, the better it is for us. The worst thing is to remain in the situation, to stay immersed in it, drowning in our own emotions.

When a person feels good he should remember that there were bad situations in his life, relate to them as cause and consequence, as good that comes after the bad etc. This brings man closer to completeness, and eternity. You begin to look at things, as opposite sides of the same coin, one cannot be without the other. We must take reality for what it is. Then the evil can also be accepted as good, because it is only in our corrupted vessels (emotions) that we feel it as dark. If our vessels were corrected (in order to bestow) we would perceive both good (light) and bad (dark) – as light.

As long as our natural attributes (pride, greed and desires for power and sex) don't disturb us, as long we are not ashamed of them and don't understand that they are in fact the barrier between us and the spiritual progress, these attributes will not perform the task for which they were created. There is no choice but to be ashamed of what we have inside and understand that until a force comes from above that enables us to be owners of our own desires we will not be happy. The important thing is to direct our desires in the right direction. There is not a single negative attribute in us, only the way they are used can be negative.

When we face a certain situation in life, the first thing we need to say to ourselves is, "look what the Creator is doing with me." That will maintain our connection with the Creator, meaning with the one who is really doing it. If we can hold on to that thought, the connection will not let us fall back to a lower degree. If the Creator disappears from our feelings, it is a fall. In that case, a person can connect with a book, do something for circulation or connect with the group. Within a short time he will feel a change for the better. But each and every situation should be taken as an

ascent to the next degree. If the time has come for the soul to correct, there is no escaping that. Any attempt only makes the pain worse.

All we can feel before we cross the barrier are beastly desires. As we approach the barrier, while in it and across it we discover the desires of the Creator. In none of those desires will we find man himself. The only desire in which we have free choice – is agreement with the Creator's providence.

The soul of *Adam HaRishon* (the First man) broke into 600,000 parts that are interconnected, but have a different coarseness, from the root to the 4th degree. From us to the Creator there are 6,000 degrees-years. In the first millennium the root degree souls are corrected. All they have to do is just live a little in this world; suffer some (wild animals, enemies, famine etc.). For them, attempting to escape the pain was enough to correct the root degree coarseness. In the second millennium the 1st degree coarseness was corrected in the souls. Then came the 2nd and the 3rd. At the end of the sixth millennium (our time) the time has come to correct the souls with the 4th degree of coarseness. This is a very general description. But today, when we are at the conclusion of the 4th exile, there is a return to the land of Israel; the time of the spiritual redemption begins – the time of the coming of the Messiah.

Chapter 1.9 – What is Between This World and the Next?

It is quite possible that there are other worlds that exist in the same space as ours that we simply don't collide with and don't make any contact with because these worlds are in a different dimension. But if we remain confined to the boundaries of our own nature we will never be able to discover them. These other worlds are probably where our roots are, the reasons for everything that happens in our world. There we will find the reasons for our own life and death, and perhaps the consequences of our actions in the world as well.

There are people among us who succeeded in acquiring a new sense. One that gives them the ability to feel a broader reality than we see today. The expansion of the limits of our senses allows them to skip the boundaries of time and see everything that happened before they were born and what will happen when they are gone. These people can remain outside the bounds of our emotions and see the general and real picture of creation. They have the ability to connect the causes and the consequences, while we are able to see no more than a tiny negligible part of it. We cannot see the reason for what happens to us, let alone the consequences of our actions.

These people are just as human as we are, but they have succeeded in developing additional sensory organs. They are called Kabbalists because they have an ability to receive the upper knowledge, eternal pleasure and the force of the Creator. The method that allows them to exit beyond the boundaries of our nature and its limitations is called the "wisdom of Kabbalah." It tells us how any person can understand the reality beyond our world and perceive the actual reality, the seemingly external one. Kabbalah is called the wisdom of the hidden because it is hidden to everyone who is confined to the framework of our five senses.

This method enables us to receive desire-properties in addition to the ones we're born with, and in them receive the actual sensation of reality. Although this method is complex, serious and profound, it is one that anyone can understand and implement. Further more, Kabbalists claim that before we attain the real sensation of our existence and reach beyond the boundaries of our physical world, we will have to be reborn into this world over and over again.

Kabbalists are people who live and feel our world and the spiritual world at the same time, and pass their knowledge and insights on to us. They say that there are many other worlds other than our own. These worlds are like circles that surround one another. Our world is at the innermost circle. We call this tiny circle our universe.

Each of the circles is a world. There are five circles altogether, five worlds. Each circle can sense itself and the lower ones, but not the upper ones. For that reason we, who are in the lowest circle, can feel only our own world. But if a person can ascend with his senses to the spiritual world, to a higher circle, he becomes able to feel that world as well as the worlds below it. Thus, Kabbalists live in several worlds at the same time, and are therefore aware of all the reasons for and the consequences of the events in our world. With the wisdom of Kabbalah and the additional sensory organs, a person begins to 'see' the broader picture in every feeling. His thoughts and acts become clear because he discovers their origin, their spiritual root.

We see a wider picture of reality in every new degree, which we call "this world," or "my world," because it becomes our world. Our "next world" is what we have yet to attain, meaning the segment of the picture to be discovered in the next spiritual degree. The name indicates that this is the picture we will attain in the next degree, which might be in the next instant.

The way to enter the spiritual world and understand it clearly is based on a single spiritual attribute: because there are no boundaries in the spiritual world, the difference between spiritual objects is measured in attributes. If two objects are identical in their every property, they unite and become one. Thus, the spiritual world is a world of attributes and desires. The separation or unity of two spiritual objects-desires is measured by their degree of identicalness.

The spiritual sphere is not a physical one, but one of desires, the highest being that of the Creator, and the lowest – its total opposite. There are five principal spiritual degrees between these antipodean desires, called “worlds.” One can traverse in them according to the changes in his attributes and desires. When his desires become identical with those of a certain spiritual degree, he immediately bonds with it in his feelings.

We are born in the lowest spiritual degree, one of absolute egoistic desires, called “this world.” But our goal is to climb all the spiritual degrees of the worlds and bond with the attributes of the Creator, the highest spiritual degree, while living in our physical, corporeal body. Thus, after having equalized in form with the Creator, we will contain all the worlds and desires inside us. Indeed, the purpose of creation is to be like the Creator.

Much like in the upper world, we too feel what happens ‘outside us’ by the principle of equivalence of attributes. In order to feel something external, an organ must have identical attributes to the phenomenon he feels. It is like a radio receiver where the wavelength in the radio must be the same as the wave that he wants to receive. He can only feel a transmission that has the same wavelength as his. Thus, we only feel the environmental phenomena that correspond to our sensory system.

Moreover, we cannot really feel anything outside us, only our responses to the external influences. For example: we cannot perceive the actual sound, only the movement of our eardrum that is a consequence of the pressure of the wave in the air that pressures our eardrum, coming from the generator of the sound. Therefore, it is not the wave itself that we feel, but the response of our eardrum to the pressure of the wave. All our sensory organs operate by reacting to an external stimulus. In the end, we only feel ourselves.

But in order to react to an external stimulus in such a way, we must have the same properties as the stimulus. For example: a person would respond to an insult, but a mouse would not, because a mouse doesn’t have the corresponding property to perceive this stimulus. Thus, if we acquire the spiritual attributes, we will immediately begin to receive the spiritual forces that correspond to the acquired spiritual attributes. A person can feel the new, spiritual world, only by receiving new spiritual attributes.

Chapter 1.10 – Faith Above Reason

A beginning of the month meal, December 1995

All that people want out of life is to satisfy their own needs, but when they are dissatisfied with their situation, they begin to want to reach the actual source of their state, meaning the Creator. One's desire for the Creator is the highest degree in one's desire to study himself. In order to attain it, he must stand face to face with his own egoism, which operates like a sophisticated obstacle between the Creator and himself.

In order to allow people to study themselves and attain it, Baal HaSulam was prepared to speak to anyone, if only to have more students. He even published a paper that later on became the basis for the book [Matan Torah](#) (The Revelation of Godliness), but there was hardly anyone who would listen. The irony of it is that in the past there were many Kabbalist teachers, but hardly any students, whereas today there are many who wish to study, but there are almost no Kabbalists. The situation we are in today is the first in history. There is a growing need and desire from below, while at the same time we are being pushed into deeper spiritual darkness. But in fact, this is a very good situation because it means that once we have the desire for real spirituality, we will receive an immediate favourable response from above.

The intensity of the love between a person and the Creator is determined by the agony of the longing. The agony is a consequence of the absence of the light from the vessel, and the longing comes from the sensation of the fulfillment with the light of the Creator when in adhesion with Him. Thus, if only one could collect the genuine desires, the appropriate answer would come.

The difficulty that faces people, who try to break through the barrier and feel spirituality through intellectual study, is that they do not mind the fact that the mind is but a product of our egoistic nature. That is why they are unsuccessful in their efforts to attain spirituality with their intellect. Most beginning students of Kabbalah tend to stride that path, because it is customary to think that we can attain spirituality using our intellect. But then when one learns to go 'above reason' one begins to understand that the egoistic vessel is basically a desire to enjoy every kind of pleasure, and not necessarily one that comes from the Creator. The spiritual vessel, on the other hand, is initially directed at pleasing the Creator through us.

We open a book, read it assiduously and try to understand it with our intellect. But it is impossible to feel what the book speaks of in the intellect. It is impossible to cross the barrier that separates the spiritual world from our own, with mere understanding.

All that the students can do is gather around the teacher, dedicate their desires to the collective melting pot and receive a unified desire that is dozens of times greater in return. Each member of the group must be considered as a valuable 'force' that can help us shorten the spiritual path by dozens of worldly lifetimes.

Baal HaSulam writes in item 155 of the Introduction to the Study of the Ten *Sefirot*, that only students who delve in the same book can extract from it that which their aching heart yearns for, and only if they understand what they want it for. Each of them must nullify himself before all the others. When they get together, during communal meals, they should always keep in mind what they are there for. That must be done in the very first stages of the construction of the group in order to create physical closeness between them, which would later on lead to spiritual closeness, just as great Kabbalists have done in the past. If each and every member of the group

longs to be together, and if that longing burns in each one's heart like fire, then that need will soon be realized.

Our brain and even our consciousness are only secondary. They only process and support the fulfillment of our desires. The mind is but an accessory. As soon as one understands that it is the feeling that should be cultivated, not the mind, he will immediately begin to see the path that leads to the spiritual world. The problem lies in our habits and our lack of trust.

We are not accustomed to rely on our feelings. We want to understand first, and only afterwards feel and operate. But if our brain is the obstacle, why then was it given to us? So that we develop it, but then go above it, above our reason, meaning take after our feeling. The 'above reason' route is based on trial and error. Everyone who starts to walk in it must stumble in it and rise again with his own strength, and begin to perceive the daily circumstances as assistance from above to one's spiritual progress.

There are many forces that were created by the Creator – such as the 'evil eye', slander etc. Their one and only one purpose is to teach us to control ourselves. The golden rule states: "walk humbly with thy God" (Micah 6, 8). One must hide one's goals even from his own egoism, let alone other people's. However, this does not mean that we should dress or act any different than is customary where we live, or refrain from contact with people. But when around strangers, conduct only general conversations (small talk). Not keeping this rule could lead to attraction of very negative forces.

Even when Kabbalah students gather, they should not talk about their love for the Creator and for one another. This way they would only express their personal feelings and own private opinion.

People, who study Kabbalah, get together with the help of superior forces, forces of the Creator. They obtain a collective goal to their lives and that goal becomes clearer and clearer every day. The only question that remains then is how to accelerate the attainment of that goal.

There is a very clear hierarchy between the Creator and us: we are at the bottom, and the Creator is at the highest point. We must climb the rungs of that ladder from our current location to that of the Creator's. There are different ways to ascend. One of them is called an Awakening From Below, where, through influence that comes from above, a person begins to want spiritual attainment and ascent by himself. He begins to read books, joins a group and so on. There is also another way: an Awakening From Above. That happens when the Creator Himself takes a person and lifts him.

The difference between those paths is that the awakening from above is the slow and steady ascent of our entire world, regardless of our personal ambitions. However, those who appear to have a personal desire are brought to study Kabbalah. If those people do not use what they are given, the upper forces begin to demand it of them. Consequently, one must take one's spiritual work that one is given from above very seriously.

There is something in us called the Stony Heart. That Stony Heart is our egoism. It can only be corrected when a collective light, called Messiah comes to our world. Only that light can correct it, but we must first crave the correction of that part of the egoism in our world. When there is such a desire, the phenomenon called the coming of the Messiah will occur instantly, and that state will deliver us forever from the torments of this world.

Chapter 1.11 – Freedom of Choice – To Operate Above Nature

There is no point discussing freedom of choice before a person acquires spiritual forces, and the ability to operate above his nature. Freedom of choice is the freedom to operate against one's desires. That is the only time one is able to decide freely.

The light that comes from the Creator created the desire for pleasure in four phases. Those phases constitute the creature. This creature then gradually begins to materialize until it comes to our world, where it is shattered into a multitude of little fragments. Each fragment is called a soul. As the souls ascend, they gradually change their attributes, using a special system that constantly moves the souls from one place to another, so that they will help one another correct.

The Torah and Kabbalah, and all the Holy Scriptures, were written by people who climbed the spiritual ladder and wrote their instructions from there. Many Kabbalists climbed these steps, but there are conditions that limit the amount of people permitted to write. There are only three Kabbalists who attained the very last degree and were permitted to describe the system. They are – Rabbi Shimon Bar-Yochay, author of the Zohar, the Ari, author of the Tree of Life, and Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag, author of the Sulam commentary on the Zohar and the Study of the Ten *Sefirot*.

These books were all written after their authors ascended to the degree of the Creator in every property and capability. If a person acquires the attributes of the Creator, he becomes free. Such a person is not limited in any way, he is above everything.

Kabbalah hardly ever mentions one's ascent in the degrees, though it is the most important thing for us. The books speak primarily of the descent of the worlds from above. It is described in detail in the Zohar, in the writings of the Ari, and the Study of the Ten *Sefirot*. We learn about the ascent from below from letters and articles that Baal HaSulam and Rabash (Rabbi Baruch Ashlag) wrote to their students.

There seems to be a shortage of material that describes the ascent. But the reason is that the complementary material should only serve to encourage a person to attain the state of "this world," and serve as a springboard for the ascent to the spiritual world. Once a person is in the spiritual world, the books that speak of the worlds from above downward, their structure, the *Partzufim* and the *Sefirot*, serve as 'manuals' for ascent, because the path from above downward and from below upward is the same.

If a person who studies the "Study of the Ten *Sefirot*" is at a certain spiritual degree, and that person learns about the attributes of a higher degree, it makes no difference to him if he is studying about the concatenation of the worlds from above or the ascent from below. The important thing is for one to study the attributes of a higher degree so as to know what to equalize with and aspire for it, what requires correction and so on.

A world is an empty state of the soul. Consequently – "this world" is only a concept. A world is *Malchut*, a vessel, a soul. The term "this world" indicates that the soul is completely empty, in utter darkness.

There are only five spiritual worlds. And although "this world" is not considered a spiritual world, it is however, a conscious, pseudo spiritual state that precedes the entrance to the spiritual world. In that state a person already acknowledges his irrelevance with regards to the spiritual world.

The most important is for man to push himself from his current state to the state of "this world," which is the descent to the state of Egypt. The acute sensation of that state is called the "exile in Egypt." Once there, a person will already push himself into

the spiritual world. Once in spirituality, his troubles are over because he will have the Creator to guide him. At that stage he will already have a tight connection with the upper force; he will be in close contact with it and connect with it as we connect with each other in this world. All the questions of this world disappear instantly the minute we cross over to the spiritual world.

Each degree poses new questions. The answers to those questions come in the form of knowledge and strength. The problems of this world disappear once a person attains the first spiritual degree. It is written – “One’s soul shall teach him.” This means that the soul teaches us how to advance. From that point on there is no darkness; we have a ‘map’ to guide us in the ‘spiritual country.’

The word *Olam* (world) comes from the word *Ha'alama* (concealment). It is the inner state of the soul. There is nothing in reality except the soul, my “self” and the Creator. Every thing that I perceive as ‘real’ is only a reflection of my corrupted attributes on my senses. If my attributes were corrected, I would feel nothing but pure light filling the vessel. This is the state of *Ein Sof* (infinity).

A world is a transition phase, when the soul is only partially corrected. It feels the Creator according to its measure of correction. Its corruption makes it feel that there is something that can go against the Creator. This apparent ‘power’ or ‘influence’ is called the *Sitra Achra* (other side). In such a state, the soul is seemingly trapped between two forces – pure and impure.

This state is called *Olam* – meaning concealment. That happens when the Creator is only partially revealed. This partial revelation is necessary because there cannot be a sensation of concealment if there is not some disclosure, there is no way to know you’re in the dark without knowing there is light.

The greater the disclosure, the greater the sensation of the Creator; the greater the concealment, the greater the sensation of the *Sitra Achra*. If the Creator is totally concealed in our world, then all our forces turn against Him. The truth is that these forces are very weak compared to the spiritual impure forces. Our egoism, our evil force is tiny. The higher we climb and the greater the disclosure the Creator becomes, so grows the force that opposes the Creator. These dark forces continue all the way from this world through the world of *Atzilut*. The pure forces (the Creator’s) and the impure forces (the *Sitra Achra*’s) remain parallel throughout the climb from bottom to top.

Chapter 1.12 – Questions and Answers

Question: Why study Kabbalah?

Answer: To answer that, we must read not only the explanations of the Kabbalists regarding the upper worlds, but also the connection between the upper world and ours.

There seem to be two separate parts to Kabbalah: the first speaks of the creation of the creatures as a consequence of the thought of the Creator (the thought of creation) and the evolution of the worlds. That part relates to the emanation of the light from the Creator – the only power existing in the world. That light builds a vessel for itself – a will to receive, that wants to take pleasure in the light. The relationship between the light and the vessel constitute the basis for the entire creation. The only thing that was actually created is the vessel, and the light keeps working on it, changing it in order to bring it to the best possible state.

Why then did the Creator not build a complete vessel to begin with? Because in order to be in a perfect state, we must first feel that state, and feeling it is only possible if we experience the complete opposite, the most incomplete state.

Thus, each creature consists of two parts: The first is a descent, an estrangement from completeness, from the Creator, the lowest possible state, which is our world. But here in our world is where we find the best conditions for attaining the purpose of creation: If a person is created with the worst possible properties, the complete opposite of the Creator, then with a little bit of free choice, and with the help of the wisdom of Kabbalah he begins the ascent in the exact same degrees by which his soul descended.

We will continue to explain below which, if any, freedom of choice we actually have, how to use it and who possesses it. We will see below that in fact, we are all servants of our own egoism and only the Kabbalists who climb the spiritual degrees have real freedom. Furthermore, the more they correct themselves, the greater is their capability to lead the world.

We learn about the descent of the light from the Creator down to our world in the Study of the Ten *Sefirot*, in the Zohar and in the writings of the Ari.

The other part, which talks about our ascent from our world back to the degree of the Creator is described quite vaguely in the books. This work is called the “work of God” – a work by which we equalize our form (properties) with those of the Creator.

Q: Is Kabbalah the only way to feel the Creator, and if so, how can that be proven?

A: Yes, it is. But you want me to show you the Creator and then decide which way to go. You are asking me, how do I know about this way?

I checked it on myself and saw that this is the only way. But you don’t have to believe me. Start studying and you will see that there is nothing as logical or scientific that provides a fuller picture of our world, and places all the sciences and other ‘wisdoms’ in their place. There is nothing more realistic than Kabbalah. Thus, precisely now that science has reached a dead-end, the only true wisdom of creation appears from above. That is why Kabbalah is referred to as the “wisdom of truth.”

Q: Will Kabbalah save the world?

A: The Zohar states precisely that. What is Kabbalah? It is a spiritual force that rules our world. We will attain correction only if we draw the force down here for that purpose. We cannot pull ourselves out of the mud by our own hair.

Q: Certain mystical things are in fact, a certain kind of drug that people try to use in order to escape the problems they are faced with. Drug addicts are normally very quiet people, but the entire world seems to be against them. Why?

A: The reason is that drugs cut a person completely off the purpose of his life. They prevent one from reaching one's destination. A person completely denies his existence in this world, cuts off from it, from the very place he was put by the Creator. The Creator wants to lead every person in a unique way, and drugs detach him from it. There are many questions involved in this issue. For example: if this is so, why then does it happen to a person? Why did the Creator make things the way they are and placed these choices in our hands? There is another question: why do we have the ability to rid ourselves of problems through ordinary medicine, instead of resolving our problems only through Kabbalah?

But because there is a purpose to our being here, drugs and other elements that detach people from the purpose of creation will never be accepted by mankind.

Spiritual Evolution

Q: What are the situations that a person goes through during his spiritual evolution?

A: The Creator created the creature in only one state, called *Ein Sof* (No End, infinity). That state exists forever in the same form and never changes. The creature merges perfectly with the Creator in that state. However, from the perspective of the creatures, meaning from the point of view of the creatures' feelings, that state discloses itself in a gradual process, consequently consisting of a beginning, middle, and an end.

The beginning is considered the existence of that state at the moment of creation. The intermediate situation is the concealment of the Creator, and the final – the complete disclosure of the Creator before the creatures. Those situations are numbered respectively as 1, 2, and 3.

In situations No. 1 and 3, there is no room for any appearance of evil. The absolute good prevails as the sole attribute of the Creator with regards to the creatures. In the 2nd state the creatures feel there is evil, although it is in fact only disguised good.

The good appears gradually in the intermediate state, but not through the revelation of additional good, but quite the contrary, through the revelation of greater evil than before, its rejection and the discovery of the good that actually stands behind it. That system is applied because the revelation of the ultimate good is possible only through the discovery of the lowness and harm of the evil.

Q: What are the degrees of one's spiritual development?

A: A person's spirituality evolves the (spiritual) degrees of still, vegetative, animate and speaking.

1. Still: the desire for physical pleasures, such as food and sex.
2. Vegetative: the desire for money and wealth.
3. Animate: the desire for respect and power.
4. Speaking: the desire for science, self-awareness and to learn about the surrounding world.

5. The spiritual: that is the degree where the desire for spirituality appears. In fact, this is no longer a degree, but a ‘super degree’, because the object of the desire is outside this world.

Q: How is the progress in spirituality expressed?

A: Spiritual progress consists of being in two opposite situations: right and left intermittently. It is as though a person walks on his legs, stepping on his right leg and then on his left. Each step provides him with further knowledge and faith. (In Hebrew, the word *Raglaim* means legs, but it also comes from the same root as the word spy, meaning one who provides information).

Q: What does the degree of one’s spiritual attainment depend on?

A: The degree of one’s spiritual attainment depends on one thing only: one’s willingness to endure in order to achieve one’s goal. There are no shortcuts.

Q: How can I change my current spiritual degree, and what happens with my soul afterwards?

A: Regardless of the name you give it – creation, soul, man – the preliminary state is always uncorrected. The soul must be corrected by itself, and ultimately attain the spiritual degree of the end of correction. Imagine a state where you have a broken tool that you are supposed to work with. The first thing you’d do is correct it. Only afterwards would you be able to use it. The Torah explains exactly how to correct that broken vessel, which is the soul that we received from the Creator.

During the process of correction, one lives in two worlds, the upper and the lower. During that process, the soul obtains the knowledge and the experience necessary for it, and most importantly – one begins to feel new feelings and obtain different spiritual attributes. Thus, when one completes the process of his correction, he is equipped with spiritual properties that enable him to enter and remain in the upper world in a state of calmness, eternity completeness and peace.

That spiritual degree (of the end of correction) is not described anywhere in Kabbalah or the Torah, simply because it is indescribable in words. There is no parallel to it in our language. Beyond the end of correction there is a realm that is not described anywhere. It is there that we find the ‘secrets of Torah’.

There are subtle hints to that in the Zohar and in the Talmud. That spiritual state is called *Maase Merkava* and *Maase Bereshit*. But those are all very subtle hints. It is in fact impossible to describe these spiritual feelings in words because the words and the letters in our language, are valid only in the correction zone (until the world of *Atzilut*), since that is where they are taken from. We cannot feel anything above the system of correction, and it is therefore impossible to describe those feelings in words and define it in terms and concepts that we understand.

The first verse in the Torah speaks of heaven and earth. The two terms relate to two properties, an egoistic and an altruistic property. The egoistic property of “earth” (the soul) is corrected through the altruistic property of “heaven”. The entire process of correction is performed in seven spiritual degrees called “seven days”. Of course, this name does not refer to our earthly days, nor does the text relate to earthly nights and days or light and darkness as we normally interpret them. The terms relate to spiritual degrees, spiritual sensations that one feels when one experiences the phases of the correction. It is a system that corrects our soul, when it is still in an ‘earthly’ spiritual degree.

The soul must be raised from the degree of *Malchut* to that of *Bina*, meaning the egoistic trait of *Malchut* must be turned into the altruistic trait of *Bina*. That process occurs through seven gradual corrections called the “seven days of the week.”

Q: Will everyone eventually have to come to Kabbalah?

A: Absolutely, if not in this life, in the next, so why wait? Our lives are not sweet enough for us to keep returning here.

Q: What is the reason for suffering?

A: Suffering exposes the lowness of the situation. It forces us to look for a solution, grow smarter and reassess the situation. A person who has everything seeks for nothing. When that happens the pains come and turn the apparent fulfillment into emptiness and hunger. A person grows wiser as a result of the suffering; they begin to show him where to go and what to do with his life. But if the same result can be reached without the pain, then why suffer?

Kabbalah points to the way to approach the Creator, through the keeping of the spiritual laws. It is what we call the “path of Torah”. It is not a physical keeping of *Mitzvot*, but keeping the spiritual laws of creation. All we have to do is to choose it.

Q: Must He send us pain in order for us to think of Him?

A: Yes. There is no other way for Him to make us do it.

Q: What do I do if I feel that a certain situation is being forced on me?

A: There are clear rules with regards to that situation: if someone threatens you, you should react accordingly, but absolutely not in the Christian way, meaning by giving the other cheek. Never wait for the second hit. For as long as you are here in this world, you should behave according to the acceptable rules in society. Those rules are a revelation of the Creator in our world. There is no shame with matters that concern the basic livelihood. If a person is dying and needs a piece of bread in order to survive, he will feel no shame, not in how the Creator relates to us, or in how we relate to the Creator. I was created that way and it is not my fault that I have to have my thousand calories a day. There is no shame in what concerns the elementary livelihood. However, with anything that goes beyond the necessary, the shame appears automatically. Here is where one is compelled (willingly or unwillingly) to take society, family and himself into consideration.

The highest spiritual degree is that of reciprocal love between man and the Creator. But it can be attained only if a degree of fear precedes it. It is called the *Mitzva* of fearing God. The last and highest *Mitzva* that is built on top of the fear is that of the love of God. One cannot exist without the other. Because we are made of a single egoistic desire that conducts and moves us, only fear can force the egoism to do anything in such a way that it will not carry out its desires without consideration.

Q: Can a person be pushed into studying Kabbalah?

A: No. It can only be done passively. Give that person something to read.

Q: How does the recognition of evil appear in me? Is it different in a person who has committed a crime?

A: In an ordinary criminal, the evil inclination appears as a negative desire that is not connected with anything else. But Kabbalah portrays your evil in comparison with the good. Because of that you begin to feel your evil inclination as such. If you speak to a murderer, or a rapist, you will always find a person who thinks that what he did was just. If you think a certain person is evil in your eyes, that is still not considered the recognition of evil. The recognition of evil is when a person sees *himself* as evil.

When he compares himself with the Creator, meaning when he can already feel the Creator to a certain extent through reading special texts that awaken on him the surrounding light, and that sensation is what produces the recognition of evil. A person who begins to understand himself more deeply will not become a felon. He does find seemingly appalling attributes in himself, but he regards them as obscene and wicked, and not as ones that he would like to realize. He is presented with the obscenity in him as if on a screen before his eyes, but at the same time he understands that it is the Creator who plants them in him. He is presented with creation as it is inside him.

Q: Is there not a paradox here? On the one hand, the Creator wants to give us delight and pleasure, but on the other He sends us pain!

A: Take Abraham for example: we see that he did not want to go down to Egypt; meaning a person doesn't want to occupy himself with spiritual development. He thinks: "What do I need it for? It is hard, unpleasant, and goes against my ego." A person can be pushed only by hunger, just as the famine forced Abraham to go down to Egypt. The spiritual famine, the physical famine and the agony are the only things that compel one to act. That is what the Creator is waiting for. It is said in the Torah: a path of Torah or a path of pain, meaning a good way or a bad way. In fact, the entire Torah and the entire wisdom of Kabbalah were given to us only so that we would advance in the good way. But if we do not follow the good way, then the bad way will be our way to advance, meaning the natural way.

If a person identifies himself with the soul, while being in this life, then he belongs to the Creator and connects to Him. If he does not identify with the soul, then he does not bond with his soul after death. If you haven't corrected even a single desire and made it equal in form with the Creator, then what makes you think that doing good or bad on earth entitles you with any spiritual ascent, just because you spent the last seventy years on earth?

Q: Is reality actually what we see around us?

A: We are captive in a picture of the universe that changes to match the changes in our inner properties. Our perception of the world changes only due the inner changes in us. But nothing really changes outside. There is only the uniform, simple light around us, called the Creator. We discern only a tiny fraction of it with our senses, which we denominate Our World. This means that this world is the smallest degree of the sensation of the Creator. If we intensify our senses, we will begin to feel the improved world alongside the sensation of this world, because the Creator would become more and more apparent. These very words were said by Kabbalists who ascended high in the spiritual degrees, came near the Creator and described their feelings and what they attained when they approached Him. The purpose is to enter that very source; only then will we feel the actual reality!

Q: What is life for?

A: Life is a certain form of existence. It is joined with the lowest, most egoistic form or existence. But life was given to us so as to try and rise precisely from that lowly place, and come to a state where the soul had been prior to its descent to our world. If a person attains the same state he had before he entered the body, it is considered the highest and most perfect state. A person such as that is regarded as someone who had fulfilled his role in the corporeal life. A person comes to that state after quite a few lifetimes, during which he corrected some part of his self, and constantly advances unconsciously. Only in the last one or two lives can spiritual progress be conscious.

We cannot tell what is our role in this world, what we should do and within how much time. There is not a fortuneteller who can say it. Kabbalists, however, can do it but are forbidden, because that would halt one's spiritual progress. If one does that, he would only go by his own calculations, which adhere to his egoism. That is why Kabbalists refrain from doing it.

A spiritual path is a system of developing altruistic desires. If we can know what is going to happen in advance, that would be completely egoistic. That is why the term that defines spiritual progress is "faith above reason." This means that a Kabbalist can see and know everything. He can also do anything, but chooses not to, because that would ruin his progress as well as his students'. Do not experiment with prophecies and other such things, just work on the development of altruism with faith above reason. It is forbidden precisely because it is possible (though, again, not for an ordinary person, only to a Kabbalist).

Q: Why is it, that in the earlier phases of our development, when we are children, we fully realize our egoism, though our primary goal in life is to be rid of the egoism and become altruists like the Creator?

A: That is correct, but the insatiable desire of a child for pleasure and his ability to satisfy them, is like a model of the evolving human being. Egoism is a necessary phase in our evolution. It is a partial answer to the question "Why do we need the egoism if we must fight so hard to overcome it?"

Q: Why can't we feel the spiritual world just as we feel our own?

A: If we examine ourselves, we will find that we are locked in an internal scrutiny: the five sensory organs allow us to feel that there is 'something' outside us. But if we had a different vision, for example if we could see X rays, or ultra waves, we would see a completely different picture. If we were able to hear other frequencies, we would hear very different sounds. If our sense of smell and taste were different, we would feel different things.

What we feel is unquestionably a fraction of something that exists outside us, and that fraction is what we call "our world."

Contemporary science accepts the fact that our research of the world is limited by our sensations. Consequently, all our assumptions and measurements are subjective. The scientists themselves maintain that the results of their experiments depend on the experimenter, meaning they are subjective.

A person therefore, cannot come to an absolute understanding of his environment, the reality he lives in. Let us assume that there are other forms of life on other planets. And let us also assume that they have other sensory organs than our own. They would naturally feel their world completely different than the way we see it. They would define it according to their sensory organs.

Regression

Q: Why must we descend to the lowest spiritual degree in order to be able to receive the attributes of the Creator? Can this process be avoided?

A: The creature must have both the possibility and the strength to choose between two forces freely: his own egoism and the altruism of the Creator. One must be able to choose one's way independently and follow it.

In order to create that situation, the Creator must:

- Detach Himself completely from creation, become disconnected.

- Create appropriate conditions for creation to discover and understand the universe.
- Allow creation the freedom of choice.

The Creator created these conditions in a gradual process. The problem is that as long as we feel the Creator, we are not independent: we are completely subordinate to the light. The light influences creation and passes its own properties. In order for creation to become completely independent, the Creator must detach Himself completely from it. In other words, only when we are devoid of any light, do we become independent in its every act. This operation – the departure of the light from the vessel – is called “restriction.”

The Torah begins with the word *Bereshit* (In the beginning). It is the beginning of the process of the departure of creation from the Creator. The word *Bereshit* stems from the word *Bar* (outside), meaning, it refers to the removal of creation from the Creator so as to become a separate spiritual degree, between Heaven and Earth.

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” Heaven is the *Sefira* of *Bina*, which consists of altruistic properties. Earth is the *Sefira* of *Malchut*, which consists of egoistic properties. Man’s soul hangs between these two properties, which are the basis upon which the entire universe is built. The Torah begins with the creation of creation, the upper world, and the creation of Man, the soul. But it does not speak of the end of creation. The goal of the Torah is to guide us in this world, to show us how to ascend to the highest spiritual degree, to a state of eternal wholeness.

Q: How can mankind be so low and despicable, if God created it in His image?

A: Why did the Creator create man that small? The Creator did not create man small, but in His image. In order for mankind to attain that state through its own labour and equalize with the Creator, one receives a “point in the heart”, the beginning of the spiritual vessel. One must develop that point into a complete vessel by himself, through the study of Kabbalah, to the point where the vessel is able to receive the entire light of the Creator, and thus equalize with Him. Namely, our preliminary state is indeed microscopic compared to our ultimate goal, which is the equivalence with the Creator (read more in the [Introduction to the Book of Zohar](#)).

Q: Can one know if one is making spiritual progress?

A: Only when one begins to study Kabbalah, meaning spiritual development, do the low and egoistic desires actually appear in him. That is the proof that one has really begun to evolve.

Q: Can a person who has already climbed two or three degrees suddenly come to a halt, or even decline?

A: No. He can’t fall. He cannot even stop, and will continue to climb. Everything moves toward the final and best situation. It is either done by beatings from behind, meaning by nature, or in a good way, which is when you are given a book and told that you can accelerate your progress with it. This way, you will ‘out run’ nature’s beatings from behind. That is the entire difference between the path of Torah and the path of pain.

We want to use Kabbalah in such a way that the next blow will not catch us. If we succeed, then we will never fall again. We say that there are ups and downs. But those are actually only internal feelings. At one time we feel close to the Creator, and another time we feel uncorrected and far from Him. For that reason we define the first

situation as an ascent, and the second, a descent. However, it is only our own parts that we feel in each of the situations. Both situations belong to the same degree, the same *Partzuf*. A person cannot climb a degree without tasting his situation, the lowness of his current state.

Aim

Q: What is the right aim?

A: The right aim is the single most important and most difficult thing that a person must do. It is very hard to attain the right aim – it is built under various influences of the light of the Creator on one's ego.

The student gradually formulates the right aim, studies, corrects and intensifies it. He constantly realizes that what seemed like the right aim yesterday, now appears as no more than disguised egoism. And tomorrow he will yet again find that yesterday's aim was the wrong one, and so on and so forth.

Q: How do I know if my aim is right?

A: Indeed how can we discern between wrong and right intentions? It can be done under a focused guidance of a group, a Kabbalistic teacher and books. The group is the first and foremost power. Friends influence one another for better and for worse. The group should ultimately be comprised of people who are connected by spiritual laws from above.

There are processes and movements in the group: apparent strangers can enter the group, and after some time they are no longer considered strangers. At the same time it happens that people who were in the group are suddenly pushed out, as though a centrifugal power threw them out, without a reasonable explanation. They can be people who have already given everything they were supposed to give to the group. Each of us must fear that he or she might be that person.

That melting pot gradually builds the condition by which any person, who endures despite the egoistic personal discomfort, will ultimately break through to the spiritual world. There is a lot of internal hard work needed here. But one who takes that path finds daily innovations inside himself. One feels the inner changes and how the understanding of the world around you changes by the day. You see how you become smarter than others, and this is only a temporary reward. However, there are times when the surrounding light leaves completely, and one cannot see the next day. The surrounding light is a light that should enter one's corrected vessel (one's feelings) when it is corrected, meaning when one corrects his properties. That light is what creates the sensation of tomorrow, while in the meantime it shines from afar, from the future.

A person can sometimes lose the sensation of the future altogether. He becomes depressed, because the mood is a result of the influence of the light. If the light begins to shine more brightly, then you can see a silly grin on that person's face, he is already happy.

Kabbalists experience these feelings consciously. The work is to try and carry on systematically despite these situations. It is impossible to continue with the inner work when in such situations, and the only thing one can do then is to continue with mechanical performance of whatever it is you were doing before that situation came: attending classes, circulation, and the ordinary. Whatever a person can do – he must. In these situations the brain is simply 'turned off' and there is nothing you can do about it.

If they are a consequence of previous spiritual effort, then they are monitored by a superior *Partzuf* that a person cannot feel. That *Partzuf* is one's spiritual parent. Although we think we can do anything when we are in a good situation, or just explode when we are in a bad one, these states are all conducted from above. They are given to us in order to show us how dependent we are on even the smallest amount of light. That is enough for us to understand who we really are.

Miscellaneous

Q: Can one influence the events of one's life?

A: We learn about the structure and the function of every system precisely in order to understand where and how we can intervene, and what can we change. One cannot influence one's spiritual root directly; it is the source from which we come, and we are at a lower degree, meaning our degree is derived from our root.

But through the correction we attain equivalence of properties with our root, change how we feel about what we get from above, and thus, instead of feeling struck and tormented by fate, we begin to feel peace, serenity, calm and completeness. We attain a collective understanding.

Q: What is Israel's role in the correction?

A: The Creator brought us to this world so that we, using the wisdom of Kabbalah, will discover the upper world and lead our fate by ourselves. The people of Israel must pass the wisdom of Kabbalah to all the nations. If it doesn't bring the knowledge of the spiritual worlds to the rest of the world, it thus prevents the world from becoming a better and happier place.

The other peoples sense it unconsciously, and express it in their hatred toward Israel. There is only one solution to all the problems: fulfill our task in this world, as the nation that was chosen for precisely that purpose. We are chosen precisely in that, in our duty to connect all the nations with the Creator. Until we do it, both sides – the Creator and the nations of the world – will continue to push us forcefully.

As time goes by, the moment of internal/spiritual and external/physical salvation approaches, as it is written in the [Introduction to the Book of Zohar](#) (items 66-71). Just as man cannot exist in our world without knowledge about it, so man's soul cannot exist in the upper world without the necessary knowledge about it, obtained through the wisdom of Kabbalah.

Q: Is there such a thing as coincidence?

A: Coincidence is a perpetual process that continues every minute and every second. Every new moment that one cannot foresee is a coincidence. On the one hand, it is our permanent state, but on the other, every incident is foreseeable. In other words, if we had known ahead of time of one's entire inner world, one's talents, genes, hormones and every motive and property, and also if we knew precisely how society influences that person, we would be able to predict his behaviour and reactions. That is because the only thing that determines the future are these elements. It is therefore possible to predict what will happen to a person and how he will react to it.

Q: We cannot talk about the thoughts of the Creator, but what merits one with the turning of the Creator to him?

A: It is certainly not one's virtue that brought him that. It is simply that he got disconnected from the bottom part (*AHP*) of the collective soul called *Adam HaRishon*. In such a person, there is a stronger expression of his egoism, therefore,

the light affects him more strongly and pushes him more forcefully toward the purpose of creation.

Q: How is the fact that one is chosen expressed?

A: The ‘chosenness’ is expressed in the greater selfishness, and consequently, a greater sensitivity to the negative in the world. That is why in large groups of people there is also a great desire for the satisfaction of selfish desires, and consequently great pains.

Q: Why did the Creator limit our understanding of our universe?

A: We can claim that the Creator created us incomplete, inferior and disabled. He lowered us into this terrible world, into horrendous circumstances in which every moment of our lives is sheer torment. But the question remains: “Why did He do it?” Kabbalah, on the other hand, poses a completely different question: “Could a perfect Creator create an imperfect creation?”

Q: Does the Creator even know about our imperfection and the imperfection of the entire creation?

A: We and the world we live in were created inferior for a purpose: it was done that way so that we could attain the degree of the Creator by ourselves, and would become like Him through our own efforts. All our intermediary states are necessary because they create in us the correct feelings to assess the perfection of the Creator and the joy that awaits us at the end of correction.

Q: Are souls corrected in this world?

A: Every moment of our lives, whether knowingly or unknowingly, in the path of pain or in the path of Torah, our souls draw ever closer to the purpose of creation, to the wholeness of the Creator. The worse the situation becomes, the faster we begin to understand and correct it.

Q: How can it be that the Creator created man in His image, but at the same time did not give him His primary characteristic?

A: The contradiction between the desire of the Creator to give and that of the creature to receive in order to receive, which is man’s primary motivation for progress in our corporeal life, is one of the most difficult issues to resolve. In order to understand the Creator-creature relationship, we must understand, at least roughly, the processes of creating a new life. These processes are elaborately described in the books of great Kabbalists. If someone wants to delve deep into the heart of it, he can study them by himself, bit by bit, and open all the worlds, and even the logic of the Creator, that you say is missing. Naturally, the explanations that I can provide within such a limited framework are superficial for such a complex system. The purpose of our development is to obtain a sensation of spiritual pleasure, and not receive it unconsciously, in various worldly formations. Only the search after transient delights, or ones that shine from afar (but are much stronger), compel the spiritual body to seek perfection. Therefore a rapidly growing child has opportunities for pleasure everywhere, and he can also continuously seek for new ones. The simplest things make him happy. There is a good reason why we say that someone is “happy like a child.”

Q: What is the connection between the generations and their intensity of egoism?

A: Each generation is characterized by a certain kind of soul. In earlier times, finer souls came down. They had only a minimal amount of egoism. But those people were virtually devoid of selfishness and hence had little incentive for development. Almost

nothing happened for many centuries, but gradually, over a period of time in which the souls incarnated from one generation to the next, a process of accumulation of egoism was underway, and along with it, the growing desire to escape them and feel only pleasures.

In our generation, everything is happening at a fantastic speed. We want everything this world has to offer! We no longer settle for controlling this world, we want to control the other worlds too. But that control can only be obtained if we exit the boundaries of our world, and for that we must change our natural egoism, the engine that operates man, and invert it to altruism, thus equalizing with the Creator. I have already said that for that we do not need any special talent, only an exceptionally strong desire. These strong desires fill the rougher and at the same time most developed souls that descend to the world in our time and separate us from the previous generations.

Q: But the Creator created the creature in order to delight him, so why does He deny it of us?

A: No, it is not the Creator who denied us of the pleasure. It is the creature who refused to receive it 'for free'. The thing is that the creature was in fact created perfect, like the Creator. The Creator cannot operate imperfectly. But the creature was so resistant to drawing far from the Creator that it refused to receive the pleasures that were given 'free'.

Q: Why did the Creator give the creature the ability to refuse?

A: Because just as the Creator has freedom of choice, so He cannot deny it from the creature. In spirituality the distance is measured not in meters, but in attributes (form), the very reception of the pleasure from the Creator without paying back creates an inevitable detachment.

Q: So who in fact is the creature, and what is the way to become a Man?

A: The creature can be defined as a sort of a collective soul, a global one. That soul refused the unilateral reception of the light of the Creator. Because of its desire for equivalence of form, it performs a restriction (the first restriction). It does that by creating a complete system of partitions that prevents the entrance of the light into the spiritual vessels. Later on, Kabbalah tells us that there was a breaking in the vessels and the light was extinguished from the vessel. Kabbalah also tells us that after that, the collective soul was shattered and that brought it to its final state, which is the farthest possible from the Creator.

In order for a person who obtains a certain part of that collective soul to start the process of his correction, the Creator did the following:

1. He gave the soul an absolute will to receive, called pride. As a result, man stopped feeling the Creator.
2. He divided the creature into many little particles and placed them in the bodies of our world.

Q: What is the correction for, if in the end the creature returns to the Creator, the same point it came from to begin with?

A: The world that we perceive around us, tells us more about the purposelessness. In the end, the cause of every negative attribute in us and (as we think) in Him, is the Creator. But in order to understand at least something of the nature around and inside us, we must explain in detail the purpose of creation, meaning its ultimate state. That is because the intermediary states can mislead. The Creator gave man the freedom of

choice and the freedom of will to take this path to the final state, realize the purpose of creation and equalize with the Creator.

Q: What is the difference between corporeal and spiritual suffering?

A: Pain and pleasure in spirituality are a consequence of a *Zivug DeHakaa* (spiritual coupling) between the light and the desire, using a screen. However, in our world, they are felt as the fulfillment or the absence of fulfillment of our egoistic desires. The sensation of the fulfillment or the absence of fulfillment is interpreted by us as pain or pleasure, or as good or bad. Other than that we feel nothing! That sensation builds into our five vessels that serve as sensors, a general picture of the world around us. It is that picture that determines how we relate to this world – whether good or bad, compared to what we have at our disposal. Pains express the lack of pleasure at a certain degree, while at the same time they express a need to feel pleasure at a higher degree. For that reason, pains are a preceding phase to the sensation of pleasure. In the spiritual worlds, however, there are no pains, because they are perceived as pleasure. The pains do not come as a result of a lack of pleasure, but as a result of great love, consequently they are eternal and always good.

Q: If I get to spirituality, will I accept any pain or traumatic event as a joyful one?

A: It is a direct instruction of the Torah. First, we are obliged to say about anything that happens, that it is done by the Creator, and not by anyone else. Only the Creator leads everything. It is the Creator who made all the tragedies and disasters. But why did He do it? However appalling it may sound, He did it for us. Only once we obtain spiritual attainment do we begin to understand the entire system of creation and the calculation that brought to the worst events that happened to us. We will understand why tragedies are necessary for our existence and correction. Unfortunately, it is the lack of the understanding of the necessity of the spiritual evolution that brings such tragedies on us. It is spoken of completely openly in the Zohar and in the books of the Ari. If we do not start studying the books of Kabbalah, the wisdom that guides our spiritual evolution, we will not evolve to attain the purpose of creation. The Creator will push every single one of us forcefully and painfully. Our people and the whole of mankind will be pushed ferociously to the realization of the necessity of spiritual development. There will be no way to escape it. That is why we place such emphasis on the circulation of the wisdom of Kabbalah, so that everyone will know and recognize its importance.

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Part Two: Phases of Spiritual Evolution

Chapter 2.1 – The Purpose of Creation

A Talk

There are five worlds between the Creator and our world: *Adam Kadmon*, *Atzilut*, *Beria*, *Yetzira* and *Assiya*. Beneath the world of *Assiya* there is the barrier and under the barrier there is our world. Our goal in this world is to attain the degree the world of *Ein Sof*, while our soul is still clothed in our corporeal body and thus attain complete unification with the Creator. The properties of the egoism change in every degree, according to the properties of the Creator, until finally the egoism is completely replaced with altruism, and the attributes of our soul become identical to those of the Creator.

There are two properties to the egoism in our world: “receiving in order to receive,” and “giving (bestowing) in order to receive.” The first assignment of a person who wishes to cross over to the other world is to restrict the use of his own desires. That state is denominated the “first restriction.” It means that one stops working with his egoistic desires altogether.

We cannot change our will to receive, which is in fact, the only thing that the Creator created, but we can and should change the *aim* of the desire from receiving ‘for me’ to receiving ‘for the Creator.’ Thus, the desire to feel pleasure does not change, only the aim.

For that reason, the method for changing the aim is called the “wisdom of Kabbalah”, and because the aim is concealed from the eye, the wisdom of Kabbalah is also called the “wisdom of the hidden.” It teaches how to receive by changing the aim. Consequently, the important thing is only the aim behind every act, the purpose for which one does what he does. The 125 rungs of the ladder are degrees of gradual correction of the aim of the soul from ‘receiving for me’ to ‘receiving for the Creator.’ The five degrees of the will to receive, beginning with the weakest (*Keter*) and ending with the strongest (*Malchut*), are organized in descending order from the Creator to the creature, and constitute the five worlds.

When the light of the Creator passes through the worlds, it weakens, and thus becomes suitable for reception by the weaker, altruistic desires. When the soul receives the light of correction from above, it begins to change its aim from ‘receiving for me’ to ‘receiving for the Creator,’ which is regarded as giving.

After the soul performs the first restriction over all its desires, it reaches the “barrier.” At that point, it refuses to perform any kind of work with the egoism, though it is still unable to receive for the Creator.

When the soul corrects its aim to give in the degree of *Keter*, it means that it is now able to overcome its weakest egoism and can refrain from receiving anything for itself. At that point it nullifies itself completely before the upper light. It is with this degree that the soul enters the world of *Assiya*, the first spiritual world above the barrier. If the soul can overcome its egoism when the light of wisdom shines in it, it rises to the world of *Yetzira*.

The greater the ability of the soul to resist its egoism, the higher it ascends in the spiritual degrees, until finally the soul comes to the world of *Ein Sof*. A soul is a spiritual entity that reveals its essence only past the barrier and the degrees above it.

The desires one works with in the spiritual world are bare, open; they are not clothed in dresses of our world. A Kabbalist stops studying our world once in the spiritual

world, and regards it as nothing more than a natural consequence, a branch of a spiritual root. He is more interested in studying the reason, the root and the beginning of every desire, not the consequences in the lowest and corrupted degree.

A person who rises to the spiritual world replaces his corporeal desires with desires that are directed at the Creator. Just as he wanted to enjoy every kind of pleasure in this world, he now wants to enjoy the Creator in the same egoistic manner. That state is regarded “suffering him to sleep.”

But through the illumination of the surrounding light that is always around us, one begins to gradually increase his desire for spirituality and make it greater than all other desires, until finally, with the help of that light, he crosses the barrier and receives the aim to give, to bestow.

Only the upper light of the Creator can do such a thing to a person –answer all his efforts to attain spirituality and bring him to a state where his desire for spirituality becomes so intense, as to not let him sleep, and overshadow all other desires.

The process is the same for all the souls, but each soul has its own mission in this world. Each soul also has a different speed in which it makes its way to the Creator.

Every thought, every desire and every movement that we make in this world, regardless of who that person is, is given for one and only purpose: to rise and come closer to spirituality. However, in most cases, this progress happens naturally, on the unconscious level, in the degrees of still, vegetative and animate in man.

Everything is planned in advance according to the purpose of creation. One’s freedom of choice consists only of agreeing with whatever happens to him anyway, and with his understanding of where it all leads to and the desire to become an active part in the events of his life.

All the thoughts and desires of the world of *Ein Sof* pass through each and every one of us. But only those thoughts that correspond to our current degree are ‘captured’. For example: one’s current degree does not enable him to reveal new things, but he can raise the level of his knowledge and his descriptive abilities. In this descriptive ability he suddenly begins to see something complex and wide. That is because he has now been given an ability from above to feel a more complex area of the spiritual realm.

One’s degree determines one’s range of influence and his outlook on the world he lives in. As he evolves, his thoughts will grow deeper and he will find new connections between the objects and the phenomenon of reality. It all depends on the level of one’s development, which defines the range of his perception of that part of the world of *Ein Sof* that he can feel.

There is no other way to want spirituality and awaken on yourself the surrounding light, except studying in a group under the guidance of a Kabbalistic teacher. It is the only way to take part in the acting out of the design of creation and shorting the way in which nature leads us to attain it. Only the light can help us replace our egoistic attributes with altruistic ones. That is because our egoistic attributes stand as a barrier between the spiritual world and us.

The surrounding light switches our desire to receive with a desire to give, thus carrying us across the barrier. We say that we want nothing of the corporeality, only of the spirituality, but if we had known how essential the change is across the barrier, that it is a transition from concentration on personal gain only to pure concern for others, we would escape the whole campaign.

Only after we cross the barrier do we encounter the “ocean of light”. The light of the Creator shines only to the extent that we regard the Creator as more important than our egoistic desire. It is that importance that enables us to slowly acquire the light’s property of bestowal.

The most important stage is the crossing of the barrier. Above the barrier, the soul knows the way by itself because it receives the light, which teaches it the next steps and the needed operations like a tour guide, or a map. That is what the Kabbalists write about in their books.

How can a bad thought about the Creator be turned into a good one? We first need to understand that it is bad, so that we will think about its correction. That evil can be seen only with the light of the Creator, through His greatness. However, if the light of the Creator does not shine, he cannot see. In the beginning, every person thinks his thoughts are good. But he is in this world, below the barrier, in the dark, in a place where the light doesn’t reach.

When the surrounding light shines on a person, he begins to see his real essence. It is a process called “the recognition of evil.” But before the light shines on him, a person always tries to justify himself. He thinks he is always right. But once under the light of the Creator, one begins to see the evil in him and that drives him to ask for help of the Creator, the source of that illumination.

If one’s request is genuine, the Creator will change his nature. But the will to receive itself doesn’t change, only the aim changes from ‘for me’ to ‘for the Creator.’ That change is called “giving”. Thus, one gradually changes one’s properties to the properties of the Creator in each of the 125 degrees in the ladder.

Each degree consists of several processes:

- The recognition of evil. It is the realization of how much I am worse than the Creator in my left line.
- Examining what kind of help do I actually need to receive from the Creator, from the right line.
- Placing one line against the other, testing how much of the right line I can actually receive, which is considered coming to the middle line.

The result of these operations is that a part of my desires become like the Creator’s, and I can ascend to the next degree. The process repeats itself in every degree until all my attributes equalize with those of the Creator.

Man’s desires determine his acts. Consequently, it is impossible to do something without wanting it! For instance: if I know that I have to get up early tomorrow morning, then I go to sleep early the night before. Is that against my will? No! No person and nothing in this world can do anything without first wanting it, and without satisfying the desire with pleasure, which is the energy, the motivating force that enables any movement whatsoever.

We sometimes think that we are doing something against our will, but that is not the case. We simply calculate and decide that it is better to do something one way and not the other, even if we are doing something against our will. One will endure many things if the calculation justifies it.

We make a certain desire close to our hearts and become able to carry it out by choosing it. But none of us can ever lift a finger without a motivating force, or without having a preliminary desire for it.

When one person does something good to another, he thinks that it is really so, that he is actually doing something without any personal gain. But if he looks deep into his thoughts, he will discover that it is all done for one purpose only: to please himself, and only himself, and anything else is self-deceit.

When one begins to study Kabbalah he begins to see how the system works, how everyone is a total egoist and thinks of no one but himself, not even his own children. At that point, you discover that your entire system of thought is built on illusions, and you think that you can actually do something for someone else.

It is only possible to give something to another if you receive something in return, if there is a profit for you. This is nothing to be ashamed of; it is our nature. We either receive for the purpose of enjoying, or give in order to gain something by it. It is no one's fault.

The only thing that we should want is to change our attributes to those of the Creator. Kabbalah teaches us to accept ourselves as we were created. We must not hate or even get upset when looking at our own, or someone else's properties. It is hard for such a student of Kabbalah to be in contact with the outside world. He hasn't any patience to see the little egoism in the people he comes across. But each person is created as he should have been created, and we should only try and help others change their properties to altruism.

What does it mean to suffer? Anything that is against our desire makes us suffer. It is written in the Talmud that if a person wants to take a certain coin out of his pocket, but brings out a different coin, he already suffers. Anything in life that does not match our desire perfectly causes us to suffer. Any bad mood, disease, or a lack of motivation to do this or that thing, is interpreted by us as suffering.

But everything that happens actually happens in our favour. Everything promotes us one way or another toward the purpose of creation. It is just that our distorted feelings portray the good as bad, and the sweet as bitter. Pure goodness can only be felt above the barrier, but for the time being everything is interpreted as pain. It happens because the light still cannot fill the soul before the desire acquires an altruistic aim that is suitable for the light, consequently leaving the light outside.

For as long as one does not attain spirituality, the will to receive is his "angel of life". However, when one begins to study Kabbalah, he extends upon himself the surrounding light and slowly sees how his will to receive is actually an obstacle that stands between his egoistic nature and its transformation to altruism. He begins to see that this desire is the real enemy of his spiritual progress, thus turning the "angel of life" into the "angel of death."

One begins one's process of recognition of evil from within his egoism. The sensation of the light stands opposite the properties of the light that one begins to feel. A huge desire appears in him, to remove these cuffs from his hands at all cost. But because one cannot do it by himself, he desperately cries for the Creator's help. If his plea is earnest – it will be answered.

A person who wants to attain spirituality must be like everyone else: he must raise a family, work and live a normal life. The important thing is what a person does in his two or three free hours a day, the ones in which he is not committed to his family or his work. Those are the hours that he must examine himself to see if he spends them in front of the television, in a restaurant, or labouring to attain a spiritual goal.

The difference between men and women in our world is a consequence of the relationship between the male part and the female part of the soul. As a result, men

and women have a different outlook on life, different obligations and different objectives.

The male and female parts of every *Partzuf* in the spiritual world complement one another: the female part contributes its desires and the male part contributes its screens. In the end, it is the combination between them that brings to spiritual attainment and perfection, which results in the revelation of the light, the revelation of the Creator.

The correction of one of them does not come at the expense of the correction of the other, as it happens in egoistic relationships, where each pulls toward his own side. In spirituality, everything exists in one *Partzuf*, one body, whereas in our world, we come in separate bodies. Every object in the spiritual world can exist only if it complements another object for a mutual goal. It is therefore clear that according to Kabbalah, there can never be a 'real' family, with a 'real' relationship between the sexes unless it is between souls that want to be corrected spiritually. Then, to the extent that they are corrected, so will the egoistic relationship in the family be turned to altruistic.

Women too can advance in spiritual worlds. There have been great prophetesses in history, which reached very high spiritual degrees.

Spirituality is an intimate thing for every person. It must not be discussed with anyone and one's feelings toward the Creator should be kept to oneself. This so as to not spoil someone else's individual progress. It is different for every person, and will become open to all only at the end of correction, since there will no longer be room for such obstructions as egoistic envy...

Chapter 2.2 – Persistence

Naming a person is done in Kabbalah according to that person's will to receive. For example – if a certain individual has a desire to attain the Creator, feel Him and cling to Him, then he is named Israel (from the words *Yashar El* – straight to God), although he is still in the beginning of his way, cannot see the Creator and doesn't even know where he is going and where it will all lead him. It is the desire that counts. When that person realizes the Creator's will – he is called a Kabbalist. A Kabbalist is someone who attained a certain spiritual degree. For that reason, Kabbalists are also called "One of attainment."

One gradually begins to understand that there is no one but him and the Creator. His wife, children, his work and his friends, all those are in fact the Creator. He is the one standing behind these figures. One's discovery of the Creator is called "attainment."

The clearer the spiritual world becomes to a person, the higher his spiritual degree is considered to be, until he finally realizes that every thing around him is the Creator. Then he acquires an even more important attainment, being that all his desires, thoughts, feelings and aspirations are also the Creator. So where is man here? Man is the person who feels all this inside, who reaches this ultimate conclusion that there is none else beside Him. This precise feeling – is man. The appearance of that feeling is called adhesion with the Creator.

But what is the difference between understanding and feeling? We are born as feeling beings, not as thinking ones. Our mind evolves only so as to allow us to comprehend what we are feeling. Let us take a child as an example: his desires are not great, and his mind is developed accordingly. A person in the jungle needs just enough wisdom to provide him what he needs. The more we want, the smarter we become, because the mind must get us what we want to have. The mind is but a consequence of the evolution of our desire. We seek and find all kinds of ways to get what we want. Thus, a strong will is the key to the development of the mind.

We needn't concern ourselves with developing the mind, only with developing the desire. A person who studies the wisdom of Kabbalah doesn't have to be smart. It is enough to want to feel the desired. It is impossible to see the spiritual world with our mind's eye, only feel it in our soul.

One should try and mingle with the suffering of the entire world, feel it and experience it. Afterwards, he will be able to receive the light of the entire world in the corrected vessel. Every time one learns about another person's pain, he should not regret that it is not him suffering, but that people don't relate to it as a revelation of the Creator, because their vessels are as yet corrupted. People perceive the providence of the Creator in the wrong way.

So do we have to justify the Creator when we feel bad? The wisdom of Kabbalah is also called the wisdom of truth. It is called so because a person who learns it learns to gradually feel the truth in an increasingly acute way. One cannot lie to oneself when standing before the Creator. He finds that the feeling in his heart is the only truth there is.

But is the bad feeling not a testimony to man's accusation of the Creator? The good feeling in and of itself is already gratitude to the Creator. We speak to the Creator with our hearts; there is no need for words. Thus, in order to justify the Creator, I must always feel good.

When we hear that there is killing, oppression and terrorism in the world, we must work on ourselves in such a way so as to feel that this is the best possible thing for our world, and it is only felt as bad because of our corrupted souls. That is why our only option is to ascend spiritually, and correct our vessels to such an extent that the evil that we see and hear of will be perceived as good in our eyes.

That is the only thing we must concern ourselves with, that in the process of the correction of the vessels and the spiritual degree where the bounty comes from, we will see how good He is to us and to the entire world.

A person who is still climbing the degrees of the first spiritual world – the world of *Assiya* (called “all evil”) - still feels what happens as bad. For that reason he is regarded as “evil”. Later on, when he enters the world of *Yetzira* (called “half bad and half good”), he feels what happens as good and bad intermittently. It is as though he is in between them, not knowing precisely which mark to give them.

The world of *Beria* is called “almost good”. When one corrects one’s vessels enough to ascend to the world of *Beria*, he feels with growing certainty that the Creator wants only what is best for him. Hence, a person who has climbed to the world of *Yetzira* is named “incomplete righteous”. When one ascends to the world of *Atzilut* (called “all good”), he sees only good there, without a hint of evil. Consequently, a person who has climbed to the world of *Atzilut* is called “righteous” (he justifies the Creator and thinks that what He is doing is right). It is all done in such a way that pains force us to rise ever higher.

One’s feeling constitutes his attitude toward the Creator in each and every situation. One cannot have a completely positive attitude toward the Creator and justify Him completely before he rises to the highest degrees, and that can only be in the world of *Atzilut*.

One should not stay in his current evil state but try and rise above it as fast as possible, but not before he examines and analyzes his situation. After he has done that, he should now try to reach a better state. But the truth is that one can never see one’s real state while in it. Only when he moves to a new level, when he is certain that he really did attain a new degree can he examine and analyze his previous state.

For example: a ten-year-old child, who is angry with his parents because they do not want to buy him a motorcycle, cannot assess his situation correctly. But what can he feel besides his insult? When he grows older he will be able to assess the event correctly. The most important thing is to try and leave a state where I accuse the Creator in favour of a better one.

It has been said that the Creator created the world in order to delight His creatures. But that does not mean that He wants to delight us because we suffered before. The Creator did it without any considerations and regardless of the amount of torment one has suffered. Staying immersed in pain never brought anyone to happiness. Only self-correction brings one to the good. Humanity can go on suffering for thousands of years, but it will never bring any kind of correction, only increase man’s desire for correction.

It is written in the Introduction to the Book of Zohar (item 6): “Our sages have instructed that the Creator created the world for no other reason, but to delight His creatures. And here is where we must place our mind and heart, for it is the ultimate aim of the act of the creation of the world. And we must bear in mind, that since the thought of creation is to bestow to His creatures, He had to create in the souls a great amount of desire to receive that which He had thought to give. For the measure of

each pleasure and delight, depends on the measure of the will to receive it. The greater the will to receive, the greater the pleasure, and the lesser the will, the lesser the pleasure from reception.

So the thought of creation itself, dictates the creation of an excessive will to receive, to fit the immense pleasure that his almightiness thought to bestow upon the souls. For the great delight and the great desire must go hand in hand.”

If I want to eat a little, then I take little pleasure in the food. But if I am very hungry, then eating gives me great pleasure. Thus, because of His desire to give the maximum amount of pleasure, He created in us this immense will to receive, to equal the amount of pleasure that He thought to give us. However, when we want something very much but cannot have it, then we suffer tremendously.

Increasing my desire for spirituality is a very complex question. We are incapable of feeling spirituality before we cross the barrier. We can only feel desires for self-indulgence. When I begin to realize it and understand that it is bad, I feel very bad about myself. Not only am I not nearing the Creator, on the contrary – I find myself drifting away from Him. At first I didn't think that I was that bad. Does that mean that I was closer to Him? And now, when I feel myself as evil, is it the Creator pushing me away and making me worse than before?

It is the complete opposite! It is the Creator pulling me to Him!

Our progress is measured by our negative feelings. That is because as long as we have not corrected our vessels, shame helps my correction more than anything. The only thing that enables humans to remain humane is the shame. Unpleasant situations direct us more quickly in the right direction than pleasant situations, which normally corrupt even more.

To suffer from your egoism means to hate it, while clearly seeing that it is in you.

The hatred serves to keep us away from the source of the agony. That in turn, serves to build the right frame of mind for progress and desire for nearing the Creator.

One comes to a state where one realizes that he will not be able to resist committing a sin, even if he knows about it in advance. Yet one still wants it, or when he sees it coming to him, he does nothing to distance himself from it, but simply stands and waits. All this belongs to the part of correction. There is nothing that we can do by ourselves. All we can and should do is learn from every obstacle and failure along the way. Even if we sometimes think that we have overcome some situation, it will take no more than the next minute to realize we didn't overcome anything.

Sins and wrong doing do not actually exist. They are all situations that we must go through in order to know the nature that was created by the Creator, so that we feel the necessity of correcting ourselves. If a person relates to everything that happens in this manner, then that is an act toward correction.

Let us take the sin of *Adam HaRishon* as an example: the Creator created a soul and gave it an anti-egoism screen that can resist a certain amount of pleasure. After that He placed before it a greater pleasure than it could resist. As a result, the soul could not resist the temptation and received the pleasure in order to receive, meaning it sinned. A sinful act is receiving in order to receive.

The soul consists of ten *Sefirot* that are divided to internal *Sefirot* and external *Sefirot*. The corrected part is considered internal, and the one that is as yet uncorrected – external. It is the external part that gives us the sensation of the world around us. This is where the feeling that there is something around us comes from. But the truth is, that every thing I see around me, is actually inside. It is the uncorrected vessels that

create a fictitious reality around me, but a person who enters the spiritual realm feels it at once.

When do we begin to need the Creator? When He not only makes us suffer, but also lets us understand that it is He who stands behind it. It is precisely then that we cry for help. In that state, the entire agony is concentrated in the point in the heart, where the darkness is felt, and it is in that dark point that the connection with the Creator begins.

The question will continue to trouble us until we cross the barrier. Although the questions will be asked by the same individual, they will always come with new vessels and new insights. Nothing ever regresses, only progresses, and we must experience all those situations.

Chapter 2.3 – The Recognition of Evil

A Talk

It is not enough to love the Creator and want to unite with Him. It is also necessary to hate the evil in you, meaning your own nature – the desire for self-indulgence, from which one cannot escape by himself. A person should come to a state where he looks inwardly, sees the evil in him, and is constantly tormented by it. He must know how much he is losing, and yet know that he will not be able to liberate himself from the evil.

At the same time, one cannot come to terms with his state because he feels the loss that the evil inflicts on him, and the truth that he will never find the powers for salvation in himself, because that trait has been imprinted in him by the Creator.

In order to exit our world and enter the spiritual world, one must feel a number of specific situations: first, he must feel that the situation he is in is intolerable. That can happen only when he feels, even if just a little bit what spirituality is and how different it is to his own state. He must feel that all the good is there, that it is unending abundance, tranquility, eternity and wholeness – and that everything is one power that pulls him toward it.

In addition, there is the rejecting force in this world. A force that rejects you from the situation that has now become intolerable to you. When these two forces – the one that draws toward spirituality and the one that rejects him from his current state – reach their peak, and at the same time one understands his helplessness and inability to liberate himself from the evil, it is in that state, when these three conditions are met, that an explosion occurs, and the Creator delivers him.

What one can and must do, is develop genuine hate to the evil in him, and then the Creator will deliver him from it. The Creator guards souls. It is manifested by the fact that the Creator saves them from evil. If one has even the slightest connection with the Creator, he is a fortunate individual.

All the situations that one experiences in spirituality remain. They continue to exist independently. They can be returned to at any stage, corrected and used for continuing the progress. Because the Creator gives, the creatures must try and want the same thing also. And vice versa, because the Creator hates to be a receiver, because He is complete to begin with and needs nothing, the creatures too should hate reception, hate the evil and concentrate all their hatred on it, because that is the origin of all evil. It is only through hatred that evil can be corrected and become subordinate to the sanctity of the Creator.

If a person encounters states of emptiness, indifference and bad feeling, it means that his state already belongs to the next degree, which has not yet been corrected. Every situation begins in the dark. The day begins in the night; the vessels begin with the will to receive. Then they are corrected and receive the light. Thus, every time we feel a new sensation of the evil, we should be happy, because the next phase will be the reception of the light. There is no progress in the sensation of evil, because only the presence of two contradicting situations enables arriving at the middle line.

Baal HaSulam compared this movement to breathing. How does breathing occur? First the lungs prepare themselves, they empty themselves of air and then fill themselves with new light. In each and every place and in each and every thing there must first be a need, a lack, and only afterwards the filling is obtained.

Each person must come to adhesion with the Creator. This long way that was predetermined in the design of creation began thousands of years ago, and souls now continue it in every incarnation. There is nothing in the gigantic computer of creation that occurs without a reason. Every thing is tied to other things with invisible wires. The world is one living body, and any change in even the smallest and most remote area affects the entire being.

The still, vegetative, and animate do not experience mood changes. But there is not a creature on earth that does not have a Godly spark. They all must come to the purpose of creation – the end of correction. The still, vegetative, and animate degrees will follow in man's footsteps. Each has its own time, conditions and place that they must be in. Being in this exact same place without understanding why, and taking all these steps and actions, brings everyone naturally to the purpose of creation in his own way.

This is the place to ask, why do some come to the wisdom of Kabbalah while others do not? The answer is very simple: those who come to the wisdom of Kabbalah have already accumulated enough agony to ask – “Who am I?” and “What am I living for?”

Those who lead ordinary lives never ask these questions. No one asks why he is happy, because if he is happy, he is convinced that he deserves it. But if he suffers, then he doesn't understand what he has done to deserve it, and that question never gives him peace of mind. Every person must labour with his own strength in order to draw nearer to the Creator instead of waiting until the anguish makes him act.

There is no difference between suffering in our world and suffering in the spiritual world. Both suffering is a way for the Creator to control and guide us. If one could transfer the physical pain to spiritual pain, he would correct some of his vessels and in that equalize his attributes (form) with the Creator's and shorten the way. If he cannot do it, he progresses naturally, meaning in the natural way and in the natural speed.

When a Kabbalist becomes physically ill, his body suffers. But because the physical body cannot attain spirituality, only one's inner sensation becomes spiritual, corrected and awakens him, while the body continues to suffer. While the soul of the Kabbalist continues to climb, his physical health continues to deteriorate.

Why then does the body not climb alongside the soul? Because the body cannot become spiritual. Spirituality is an inner ascent of the soul; it has nothing to do with the outer part, meaning the biological body. The body is doomed to perish and be buried in the ground. That is the end of its correction. When the body expires, one gets a new body, just as we change a shirt when the one we wear needs washing.

There are souls like the soul of Rabbi Shimon Bar-Yochay, the Ari, or Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag, that have already corrected themselves, and no longer need to descend to this world. They do it only to correct the world; they absorb agony from the entire world and thus suffer for it. That process is called the *Hitkalelut* (mixture/mingling) of the souls. Each soul becomes involved with other souls to help them correct.

We should relate to the corporeal pain as a call to spirituality and contact with the Creator. When a person is attentive to that call, his torments are corrected and diminish. A person who enters spirituality sees everything that the Creator lets him see. But a Kabbalist only wants to see that which will help his progress; he doesn't care about the rest. Otherwise, it is not spirituality. Every new situation is taken as a springboard for an even greater ascent; for that reason he takes the most positive things from his current degree, the ones that will help him get to the next.

In his Introduction to the Study of the Ten *Sefirot*, Baal HaSulam writes of four degrees: *Malchut*, *Zeir Anpin*, *Bina* and *Hochma*. Those are in fact degrees of

attainment of the Creator (*Keter*). When a person attains the Creator, He shows him every thing that happened to him throughout the entire history of his soul. He sees how the Creator treated him every step of the way, how the light left, what torments he went through and is taught why these things happened.

Only now can one see that in fact, the Creator had always been good to him, and never had any other considerations. The fact that he took it as bad was because of his corrupted senses, which perceived the approach of the Creator toward him as negative. Everything that one can see now makes him feel a greater love toward the Creator, and because of that he must learn of all that has happened to him in his newly corrected vessels.

In the next and final phase, the Creator demonstrates His attitude toward all the souls throughout the generations. Here is where one sees how good the Creator has been to all the creatures. The result of such an attainment is eternal love for the Creator. The only thing that man cannot see is how each person will come to the Creator, naturally, or with the help of the Creator, and when.

There is sufficient quantity and quality of desire in man to begin with. We must only learn to use it with the right intent: either I use my desires to satisfy myself and receive as much pleasure as possible with the least possible effort, or I only want to please the Creator by receiving from Him the maximum amount of pleasure.

One cannot change one's aim by himself. Only the Creator can do that. If while I employ my desires, the aim "in order to receive" makes me hate the egoism, it is a sign that I have come to recognize the evil in me. At such a state I will be rewarded with the alteration of the aim to "in order to bestow." The passage from *Lo Lishma* (in order to receive) to *Lishma* (in order to bestow) is in fact, the crossing of the barrier between our world and the spiritual world. Such a state is called "birth", the acquisition of the screen; it is the crossing of the Red Sea that separates between Egypt and the Land of Israel. There is only one origin to spirituality - the Creator.

Only the aim changes when one attains spirituality. The will to receive does not diminish as a result of it, but continues to grow and renew itself in every spiritual degree. We said earlier that everything has already been created and there are no innovations anymore. It is true that the entire will to receive has already been created, but before the attainment of spirituality I was only shown a small and negligent part of it. Now, however, I find greater and greater egoistic desires in each degree, but only to the extent that I am able to correct their aim.

If a person feels the evil in him, he should be proud of it. After all, it means that he has merited the revelation of his evil.

While in ascent, he must prepare himself for the next stage, the descent. Our inner feeling is connected to the final goal of everything that happens, the final outcome, to the one who gave me this situation and the reason for it. We must know that the egoism is both opposite to the Creator, and of equal size. Furthermore, in each degree it becomes more and more aggressive.

It is forbidden to discuss what we feel with others, because the person you speak to is in a similar situation to yours and cannot help you. Thus, you might force your corrupted state on him. You can speak about it to a rabbi-teacher, but it is best to talk to the Creator.

To attain spirituality, you must sort out your egoistic thoughts in this world. You must recognize the evil in them and your inability to attain spirituality because of them. You must face the agony that accompanies the sensation of the oppositeness between

the Creator and you, and hate it as vehemently as possible. Then, and only then, will you discover spirituality.

The recognition of evil isn't merely an unpleasant mood due to an absent of some temporary thing that you want. Recognizing the evil requires the sensation of the Creator, the oppositeness of the altruistic nature to one's own. You must feel your 100% egoism vs. His 100% altruism; you must feel that this situation is intolerable, and have a burning desire to correct it.

Starting from the barrier and above, when one already climbs the spiritual degrees, one can already feel the Creator. Now he must constantly correct his attitude toward the Creator, his aim. This is where the work of the recognition of evil is done. The shells surface opposite the light, opposite the correction of the vessels of reception into vessels of bestowal.

Chapter 2.4 – The Attributes of the Light

My Computer

The soul is the only thing that was created; it perceives the sensations of sight, sound, touch, smell and taste, through its ‘filters’. Behind the filters of the five senses there is a computer and software. The soul translates what it finds outside it into a language we can relate to: pleasure or pain. Thus, at the center of the soul, in its innermost point, that is where we feel if something is good or bad.

If the computer operates on the natural software, the program serves the egoistic definitions of good and bad. If the computer has been reinstalled with an altruistic operating system, then the understanding of good and bad is no longer calculated with regards to the soul itself, but toward something that is outside it – the Creator.

There are two operating systems that the soul can use to evaluate reality:

1. The egoistic form, for itself;
2. The altruistic form, for the Creator;

There is no other reality but the Creator and the creature, the light (bounty) and the desire (vessel).

When a person is born, he is naturally programmed to be egoistic. Because of that, in the ‘back of his mind’ there is an egoistic picture called “this world.”

A person doesn’t feel anything but the light. The light is processed egoistically and reflects inside us as “this world.”

We feel nothing but the light. It is processed egoistically and reflects in us as “this world”. If the egoistic processing did not influence us and inserted its obstructions in us (as the program that attracts the good and rejects the bad, meaning a program that is concerned only with man’s self-preservation), we would perceive a completely different picture. It would have been projected to the front of the soul, and would show us everything that really exists in spirituality; it would have displayed everything that exists outside us – namely the light, the Creator. Otherwise, the picture would have been subjective and would only reflect our internal content and only out of self-gratifying consideration .

The means for reprogramming the computer from egoistic to altruistic is called “the wisdom of Kabbalah.” We can use it to create the real picture of the world without a shred of egoism. We will be able to feel the actual creation outside us, and come to “equivalence of form” with the light, and unification with the light. It is a state where there are no partitions between the light and the soul.

The sensation of the light is somewhat like the sensation one feels in a state of clinical death. It is a state of partial detachment from the physical body (animate egoism). In that state there is desire for the light, to attain it. However, attaining it is impossible as long as they do not rid themselves of the entire egoism, spiritual and physical egoism alike. Hence, man’s work is primarily in the physical body that lasts either one or several lifetimes.

It is quite easy to get rid of the spiritual egoism, if we know which obstruction the egoism puts into our internal computer. The entire information enters through five filters, called the five parts of *Malchut*, the five zones of the government of the egoism. These five channels transfer the data that comes in from the outside to a form of data the egoism can process: “I feel good,” or “I feel bad.” Every channel-filter that

the signals go through has its own thickness (coarseness), which differs from person to person.

The more lifetimes the soul experiences, the greater its coarseness. One becomes not only coarser, but also more prepared for correction. However, people who are not developed egoistically do not need that much; they settle for little. A greater egoist is he who is ready to be corrected, and feels the necessity for correction and to fill himself with light more intensively.

Correcting the Program

When one's coarseness reaches its ultimate size, there appears a need to correct the program of his personal computer. The coarseness increases over many lifetimes, not only of man's life, but also of animal and vegetative and even the still nature. Though nature itself rises too, its ascent depends on man's situation and happens only when man ascends.

When the coarseness reaches its peak the gap between man's inner picture and the light also reaches its peak and an inner switch is turned on inside, producing the feeling that one can no longer satisfy himself with anything, in the present or in the future.

This is the sign that one has stopped looking for something inside, in the back of one's soul, but now aspires to feel its surrounding reality, hence the quest for all sorts of disciplines and methods, until one finds the method of Kabbalah, and that is where he finally finds what he's been looking for.

Kabbalah is a system that can change these filters, not remove them altogether, but only change their focus from an egoistic intent for receiving pleasures to an altruistic aim to delight. In fact, the only possibility that really exists is to receive in order to bestow, because when it comes to Creator-creature relationship, the Creator gives and man receives. We have nothing to give the Creator, accept our willingness to receive pleasures from Him.

We can also use these filters for receiving, in order to please the light, the Creator. Then the data that comes from the outside will not be distorted and falsified, but will appear before me as it really is outside us. That concludes the design of creation, which enables mankind to live without any disturbances from his selfish ego, and feel and live in the actual system of creation. All the pleasures that humanity has experienced thus far and is destined to experience, comprise no more than one part of 600,000 of the smallest pleasure in the smallest light (*Nefesh*).

Even when only one soul completes its correction and receives the full amount of light, it stands before all souls, looking over everything, before the data enters the system, before the pleasure penetrates all other souls.

One's coarseness is determined at one's first life in our world. But Kabbalah can develop and increase it by dozens of times and reduce the number of times one will have to reincarnate. It accelerates the process of one's ripening for the purpose of attaining the spiritual realm.

Human torments are an external expression of something that is missing. The torments do not vanish, but the Kabbalah replaces the animate-corporeal pains for spiritual pains, ones that come from the absence of spiritual sensation. The qualitative change in the suffering leads to a reconstruction of the internal vessel, the renewal of the soul. The sensation of the light comes hand in hand with the growing desire, and

processes that would have taken generations to complete are completed in only a few years.

Chapter 2.5 – Building an Inner Attitude

A Talk

Studying the secrets of the spiritual world leads us to build an inner attitude to it, which is also expressed in how we relate to our everyday life. At the end of the process, our life in this world should be subordinate to spiritual rules – it is the desire of the Creator. The more we are able to leave our ego, the better are our chances of feeling spirituality and liberating ourselves from our corporeal body. The body is the root of our every problem. For example: the world of *Atzilut* serves as a model for building our society in this world. By doing that, we immediately fall under the influence of spiritual forces that guard, protect and lead us. The bounty that each receives corresponds to the ability to sense them in corrected vessels.

The spiritual world and the corporeal world are parallel. Spiritual light and power come down from above, but cannot clothe our world because there is a different form of reception that prevails here - 'for me'. It is the opposite from the spiritual form. If we organize even a very small community that lives according to laws of the world of *Atzilut*, then all the upper positive forces will be able to clothe each of its members and raise them respectively to a high spiritual degree.

But it demands serious preparation on our part to build a spiritual frame of life. It is the best thing that a person can do for himself, for his family, for his environment and for the entire world. The entire world will gradually feel better even if only a small society lives by altruistic spiritual laws. We must aspire for that and the help will come from above.

The Creator created a soul with a desire for pleasure. The number of desires is 600,000. If we divide the soul by 600,000, each part will be called a human soul.

What is the difference between each soul? The quantity and quality of the desire. I am created in such a way that I aspire for a certain pleasure, and someone else, for a different pleasure. He has different desires, different pleasures, while the light is one and the same. This means that the difference is only in our desires.

It is impossible to replace one desire with another. The soul consists of all the desires that were created by the Creator. Each desire is a certain kind of light that comes as a unique pleasure and is felt by each person individually. We cannot feel any other pleasure than the one that fits our individual desire.

We are created different to begin with; different in the kind of desires we have and their intensity. We have nothing and no one to complain to, it is the will of the Creator. Because of that, each person has his own way and his own incarnations in this world, his own path to attain the purpose of creation.

However, we do have one thing that unites us all: it is the purpose of creation, meaning the correction of the egoism, the will to receive in order to receive that we have been given by the Creator and change it into a will to receive in order to bestow to the Creator. That will enable us to unite with the Creator, cleave to Him. Consequently we will acquire a great collective soul, eternal and endless, which will receive the perfect pleasure.

We are made with a very small egoistic vessel that can receive only very limited delights in quality, quantity, and time. We chase something, suffer because of its absence, seek for it, and the minute we get it – we lose our interest. Then come new pains chasing yet new pleasures and so on until we end our lives in this world, having fulfilled none of our desires.

Now imagine that wanting something and receiving it are instantaneous! The minute you want something, you immediately get it. What could be more perfect? We are not talking about tiny desires for animate pleasures, but about immeasurable desires to feel and attain endless spiritual delights that instantly fulfil every desire.

Anyone can increase his petite egoistic desire, perpetuate them and receive fantastic bliss that is equal in power to the collective soul, by simply changing his aim from 'for me' to 'for the Creator.' That process is called "equivalence of form with the Creator." Each soul must first mingle with all other souls, and according to its measure of mingling its tiny desire is intensified to match the measurements of the collective soul.

One of the slogans of the socialist movement was: "From each person according to his ability, to each person according to his needs." In other words: "Give what you can and receive what you need." That social rule is in fact borrowed from spirituality and is applicable only there. That is because the ability to receive only as much as I need depends on one's spiritual degree, on one's screen. The more one wants to receive, the more desires he needs to correct. His desire to receive for himself does not let him receive what he actually needs, and is in fact, even more limiting. If one is not yet corrected, he cannot give "what he can."

Only by changing the aim from reception to bestowal, meaning by crossing the barrier to spirituality, can one begin to understand the true meaning of the slogan "Give what you can and receive what you need." That this is the only way for complete and eternal fulfillment.

When one enters the spiritual world, one learns to give more and more and receive only the bare minimum to support himself. When he unites with the Creator, he becomes like Him, and then gives everything without taking anything for himself, but precisely because of that, he is filled with everything. In the end, the giving itself is the reward, which is why a life of giving is eternal, filled with light that enters the vessel. This is also why the departure of the light from the vessel is death...

Chapter 2.6 – Discovering Spiritual Properties

In order to start feeling the spiritual world, we must acquire spiritual attributes. But what does acquiring spiritual attributes actually mean? And how can I acquire them? People who discovered the spiritual world tell us that looking from the outside, they see the nature of our world as a manifestation of pure, unadulterated egoism. This means that every thing in our world is based on egoism – the still nature, the plants, animals and people. In all the incidents and in every degree there is only one law – total pursuit of self-indulgence according to the intensity of the egoism in each object or creature. Because our every thought and act is based on a single resolution – to receive as much personal pleasure as possible in any given situation. That and only that constitutes the essence of our nature. Hence, it is simply impossible to even unite the atoms into molecules, maintain an existing form, develop physical bodies and a human consciousness, without the pursuit of some egoistic goal. Even if we think that the reason for some act of a certain person is his fellow man's benefit, after we analyze the reasons behind it, we will find that in fact there is nothing but a disguised egoistic ambition, a sophisticated form of egoistic exploitation. And because our nature is absolute egoism we are only able to discover and feel external stimulus that correspond to our internal egoistic attributes.

The collective picture of the external stimulus that we feel with our egoistic attributes is called "our world." That is all we can feel with our egoistic attributes. In fact, it is not our sensory organs that are egoistic, it is the heart that stands behind the senses, our ambition to derive the maximum pleasure from all these sensations. If there had been an altruistic heart behind these senses instead of an egoistic one, we would be able to retrieve completely different information with the exact same senses. That would have been the picture of the "next world," or the spiritual world. But while being in the spiritual world, we would still be able to see the picture of our own world, because we do not stop living in this world, we do not leave into a different physical dimension, only add the collective picture to our perception of this world. We begin to understand the reasons and the consequences to every thing that happens to us, distinguish the spiritual forces behind the physical bodies in our world. One who is in the spiritual world begins to see the roots that influence reality, formulate the events of this world, and finally, begins to see and understand the reason and the purpose of his existence.

Those who are as yet unable to feel and see this picture have only to believe that this possibility exists. A Kabbalist cannot describe and convey his spiritual sensations to people who cannot see it for themselves. But if we take the counsel of a Kabbalist who has already passed this way, it is real help for any person who seeks an outlet to the spiritual world.

Chapter 2.7 – Correcting the Desires

A Talk

Utilizing my desire in a different way is called “correction”. It is a state where I am completely liberated from it, as though looking at it from the side, not governed by it. For example: we can look at the will to receive as a will to bestow. If I know that you will enjoy my acceptance of your present, I will take it. By accepting your gift, I am inverted from a taker to a giver of delight.

In order to ‘return’ the pleasure to you, I must express great joy when I receive your gift. Thus, my desire doesn’t change, only its implementation.

Desires are always divided to light/fine and hard/coarse, according to how they are used, the pleasure derived from them and the possibility of transferring them from desires for reception to desires for bestowal. It is important to separate the desire from its clothing, to consider only the desire. Only then can I use all its parts – fine and coarse. But I must first restrict every new desire that surfaces and say: “Yes, this is indeed pleasure, but I can refrain from realizing it, I can resist it.”

By doing that I stretch a borderline between me and the pleasure and the giver of the pleasure. It is like a game, where a certain desire appears, I have to reject it, and afterwards receive only to the extent that I can do it for the host.

That is why our work is denominated *Zivug DeHakaa* (mating by rejecting), because we use the screen to detain and reject the pleasure, and only then accept it to the extent that we can use it in order to give the benefactor. I must use every vessel at my disposal correctly, but I must first separate myself from the pleasure that reaches me.

When I think of the purpose of creation, of the contact with the Creator, I aim my every act toward Him. That is what I should do with every desire, and that will intensify the pleasure I will derive from them many times over. I actually increase my vessels of bestowal that way. We need only learn how to use our desires correctly, and constantly analyze our situation. The essays and letters of Baal HaSulam and Rabbi Baruch Ashlag (Rabash) are very helpful for that.

Progress is expressed in understanding the situation. I am not the owner of my desires and pleasures. Only a constant study of the situations makes for a correct use of our desires. Our thought must be aimed at the questions: “Why was I sent this desire?” “What for?” “How should I react to it, and why?” We must observe things from the side, so to speak. These exercises teach us why the Creator does what he does. We sometimes have such desires we cannot overpower, and sometimes such that we can. Sometimes we feel indifference, envy, hate and so on.

We must only keep things under guard. Sometimes it is not what we do that is important but the experience we gain by it. But we cannot evaluate the situation correctly. It is not important if I regard something as a sin or a misdoing, because such an incident can be of great necessity and help. All those feelings are given to us by the Creator in order for us to acquire the necessary experience and knowledge.

In the end, one will understand that every time he tries to do something that he does not connect with the Creator, it will end up placing him in a terrible state of acknowledging his evil to the point that he will want to relinquish his personal pleasure once and for all, refuse it altogether.

But the Creator wants us to enjoy ourselves, that is the design of creation, and the joy must be genuine! The thing is that the aim must be to give that pleasure to the Creator

and not remain on a beastly (animate), egoistic level. What should change is the principle of reception, the approach to pleasure.

The entire creation consists of a will to receive; there is a feminine root in how we relate to the Creator (in the sense that we are receivers). The desire to bestow is our masculine root (in the sense that we want to give). Consequently, creation itself is divided to a feminine side and a masculine side. If creation adopts itself to the light and becomes like it, then it is considered the masculine part. If it remains outside the light, a receiver, then it is considered as its feminine part. There is another division, by which the masculine part is the upper nine *Sefirot* and the feminine part is *Malchut*.

Every thing that happens in this world is a consequence of the dismemberment of the soul of *Adam HaRishon* to 600,000 spiritual souls. These parts are at varying levels of correction and should fulfill masculine and feminine parts interchangeably, meaning they should sometimes follow the right line (bestowal, masculine part) and other times they should follow the left line (reception, feminine part). All the names in the Torah are names of spiritual attainments in the spiritual ladder. But in order to attain a certain name, you must play both the masculine and the feminine parts, meaning the right and left lines. For example: in the degrees of Pharaoh, Moses, Israel, and a Gentile, there is both a feminine and a masculine part. But each name can only be attained once and in a certain degree.

Man and woman are a union of between *Zeir Anpin* and *Malchut* of the world of *Atzilut*. Its essence and degree create different names and a higher spiritual degree. The male and female states are set in each of the 125 degrees. If that is the case, then how should men and women behave in this world? Each according to the possibilities that he/she has been given within a specific gender.

Though we are egoistic and seek nothing but our personal profit, we must be grateful for the Creator for having allowed us to see ourselves as we really are, as unpleasant as it is. It is easier for a woman to find the strength in herself to accept what happens in her family and her work through the mind and not through the heart, though at times, things that affect the mind and the heart may lead to an intense reaction, we should try and learn to react to things moderately, observe ourselves from the side.

That is in fact our entire work - to become owners of our situations, control our emotions. It may happen that we lose our temper, but we must examine why things happen and what should be done from now on. That teaches us to separate the mind from the heart, and emotions from reason.

Introduction to the Book of Zohar (item 11): “And the worlds concatenated onto the reality of this corporeal world, meaning to a place where there is a body and a soul and a time of corruption and a time of correction.”

The body is called the will to receive for myself. It expands from the root of the thought of Creation, through the entire system of the impure worlds, and becomes increasingly coarser. This period of time, when it is under the government of the will to receive for myself is called “the time of corruption.”

Later on, through the practice and the study of Kabbalah, which aim to give to the Creator, the body (will to receive) begins to purify itself from the will to receive that is initially imprinted in it, and gradually acquires a will to bestow. That gives it a possibility to receive the light of the Creator, the soul that extends from the root of the design of Creation. The soul passes through the system of the pure worlds and clothes a body. This period is called “the time of correction.”

In that state one faces the ladder of the spiritual degrees, which spreads according to the thought of creation from the world of *Ein Sof* in order to help continue in the acquisition of the aim to give to the Creator, until one's every act is in order to bestow (even the reception will be only in order to give to the Creator, and take nothing for myself). Reception in order to bestow is considered complete bestowal. Thus, by attaining that, one attains equivalence of one's properties with the Creator's, namely adhesion with Him. When that happens, one receives the complete eternal abundance that the Creator had intended for him in the design of creation.

It is impossible to turn the will to receive into a will to bestow because it is our essence, and remains with us. It must only be clothed with an aim to bestow, meaning the direction of received bounty should be changed. In that situation, one's body (desires) will commence their process of correction, 'cleansing'. If, for example, ten grams of the body are cleansed, then ten grams of the body can now be filled with light. When the light descends, it also restricts itself to ten grams to fit the corrected part of the body and clothe it. The two world systems – pure and impure – act synchronously and help one another in the correction process. Each newly obtained spiritual degree helps ascend to the next, until we finally reach the last degree, the attainment of eternity, perfection and wholeness, the ability to view life and death from a new perspective.

Chapter 2.8 – The Right Way to Advance

A Talk

The society we live is flooded with perpetual pursuit of beastly (corporeal) pleasures such as: money, glory, and sex. It is impossible to sin in such a state, but it is just as impossible to keep *Mitzvot*. This is simply not spirituality. However, there is hope in that situation, provided a person is willing to restrict the use of these desires, or to better phrase it, direct his desires for spirituality. When that happens, he is admitted into the first degree in the spiritual world, where there is a light many times stronger than the one shining in our world.

A person asks for a screen in order to resist the animate pleasure and refrain from receiving them for himself, but only with the intent ‘for the Creator’. He obtains a screen and thus corrects his first degree. After that he ascends to the next degree, in which he is faced with an even greater will to receive and consequently a greater light. By acquiring a screen with a greater anti-egoistic power, he corrects that degree too and continues to climb.

We can picture our world as a horizontal line of 0 value. The first egoistic desire to receive in the scale of degrees will be considered as -1 (minus one) and will be felt as a decline, or a fall. The screen and the light that is received with the intent for the Creator will be worth $+1$ and will be considered an ascent. The distance between -1 and $+1$ is equal to the size and height of the *Partzuf*. When one completes the first degree, he is then given -2 worth of egoism. That necessitates a $+2$ worth of screen. This is how the ascent to the next degree occurs. The higher one climbs, the lower he falls, but only in order to rise even higher.

Malchut of the world of *Ein Sof* broke after having failed to receive the light ‘for the Creator’ in the world of *Nekudim*. That was the breaking of the vessels. As a result, the vessels of bestowal and the vessels of reception were mixed, and every egoistic desire ‘absorbed’ sparks of altruistic desires of the Creator, which enable it to bond with the Creator and with spirituality.

The greater the task that one is destined to carry out, the higher the vessels he is equipped with and the deeper and higher are his descents and ascents. Because of that, we must never judge a person by his acts, because we cannot know what corrections he is currently going through.

The best thing to do is have this picture before us: the soil, the earth - is the egoistic level, where we are, and the sky is where the light comes from. If the light has no contact with a person, he cannot detach himself from the ground. Such are his traits. If the light does shine for a person, then he seemingly detaches himself from the ground, above his egoistic will to receive. The minute the light stops shining, one falls to the ground, as though he’d never been off it. He hasn’t any positive powers of his own to rise above it. Only the light of the Creator can lift us.

The higher one’s place is in the spiritual world, the greater the distance between the ups and downs becomes. Thus, the fall in the world of *Atzilut* can reach almost as low as this world. That is why the great Kabbalist, Rabbi Shimon Bar-Yochay, when he was at the one degree before last, suddenly felt himself (and called himself accordingly) as “Shimon from the market.” All the knowledge and the corrected properties, all the knowledge, everything disappeared and he became completely ignorant. That is how he described his situation in the book of Zohar.

It happens to everyone, even to a person who has just begun his spiritual ascent. How does one rise from the falls and gets back on track? By partaking in the group – even without a shred of desire. In that state one must continue to act mechanically or automatically, because when in descent, it is impossible to even read a book. Sometimes, the only way out is sleep, detachment from everything, just letting time work on me.

The most dangerous state, is when a person is at the highest spiritual point, and begins to enjoy the pleasure that he receives, the security, the stability, and the clarity, the pleasantness that comes with eternity. That very moment is the cause of the fall. It is very important to maintain the thought that this state was given to me precisely so as to continue the thought of delighting the Creator precisely in that situation.

It is impossible to refrain from falling altogether. The falls are necessary for progress, because if it weren't for the falls, we would have no other means for acquiring additional desires to receive, with which to rise again.

One's inner state of mind toward others is called a *Partzuf*. It is the degree of one's development. It is impossible to receive the light before we obtain a desire for it. It is impossible to obtain the good without first obtaining the evil: when we rise in spirituality, for example, by fifteen unites, and we fall on the 16th, it is because my actual attributes have been disclosed in their worst shape, since in the ascent we are exposed to a greater light, and that enables us to see ourselves compared to the corrected properties of a higher degree.

The spiritual degrees we go through continue to live in us. We can only see the evil when we ascend to a higher spiritual degree. The greater the light that shines, the worse I see myself compared to it. That is how it goes until the last degree – the end of correction.

See what Rabash (Rabbi Baruch Ashlag) writes in a letter to his disciples (letter No. 2): “The truth is that there is another reason for it: Baal HaSulam explains in his book *The Study of the Ten Sefirot*, that the Ari explains why *Melech HaDaat* (king of *Daat*) in the world of *Nekudim*, who was the degree of *Keter* and the highest *Melech* (king), fell lower than all other kings when the breaking occurred. That is because he who has the greatest coarseness is also the highest when in possession of a screen. But when he loses his screen he becomes the worst, and consequently falls lower than all other kings.

His words can also be interpreted regarding those who follow the ways of the Lord: those people have a desire for both corporeality and spirituality, as it is said, that those who were close to Baal HaSulam had a screen and *Aviut* (coarseness), but now that he was gone, they had no one to subdue themselves before and were left with coarseness but no screen, and were only looking to become rabbis and ‘pretty Jews’. Therefore, I (Rabash) suspect everything that comes out of their hands, for there is no one to restrain them.

I am speaking briefly here, for I do not want them in my thoughts, for you know the rule that “One is where one's thoughts are,” but because I know your fondness for the truth I am compelled to bring to my mind the coarseness that hasn't a screen, which are broken vessels that are as yet not on the path of correction, and may God have mercy.

Let me give you a short example so that you understand the above: it is known that each and every degree has a middle part that consists of both. Between the still and the vegetative there is the coral; between the vegetative and the animate there are the

stones of the field, which are animals that are connected to the earth by their navel and receive their nourishment from it, and between the animate and the speaking there is the ape. That raises the question: what is between true and false, which is the point where it consists of both. Before I clarify this, I will add one known rule, that something small is hard to see, whereas a large object is easier to see. Consequently, when one lies only a little, he is unable to see the truth that he is on a false path, but thinks that he is going in a truthful path. However, there is no greater lie than that because he hasn't enough lies to see his actual state. But one who has acquired a great deal of lies, the falsehood has increased in him to such an extent that if he wants to see his actual state, he can now do it. Thus, now that he can see the falsehood, meaning that he is on a false path, he sees his real state, meaning he sees in his heart the truth of how to get on the right track..."

A passerby who hasn't any connection to the wisdom of Kabbalah will always think that he is not doing anything wrong and that he is not different from anyone in anyway. He thinks that he is taking the right path because of the minimal amount of recognition of evil that he has obtained. But once he accumulates a substantial amount of falsehood, he will be able see his real situation (provided he wants to).

When he sees it he will realize that he's been on the wrong path all along, and then he can get on the truthful path. When we recognize the fact that our current state is intolerable, and that we have come to the end of our rope, then we will ask for the Creator's help.

"...It turns out that this point, which is a truthful point, that he is taking a false path, is the middle between true and false, it is the bridge between them. This point is the end of the lie, and from here on begins the path of truth. This is how we can understand what Baal HaSulam wrote, that in order to attain *Lishma* we must first obtain the greatest *Lo Lishma*. And then we can come to *Lishma*. And we can interpret the above, that *Lo Lishma* is considered falsehood and *Lishma* is considered truth. When the lie is small, meaning that the *Mitzvot* and good deeds are few, then his *Lo Lishma* is small and he is unable to see that truth. Therefore he says that he is on a good and truthful way, meaning that he is working *Lishma*. But when he works day in and day out in Torah and *Mitzvot* in a state of *Lo Lishma*, then he can see the truth, because the numerousness of his falsehood actions increase the lie and he can see that in fact, he is on a false path, at which time he begins to correct his ways. Only then does he feel that everything he does is *Lo Lishma*, and from this point on he passes over to the path of truth, meaning *Lishma*. Only at this point begins the transition from *Lo Lishma* to *Lishma*, whereas before he thought he was working *Lishma* and how could he change his situation? Thus, if one is idle in the work he is unable to see the truth that he is taking a false path, but by accumulating Torah and *Mitzvot* in order to bring contentment to his Maker, he can see the truth that he is taking a false path, called *Lo Lishma*, which is the middle point between true and false..."

The Creator operates in any situation we are in, whether good or bad. One does not and cannot make any decisions. One can only accelerate one's development, but certainly not change it. If we look at this path with egoistic eyes, we will be terrorized and terrified. But if we perceive the egoism as an evil thing that must be destroyed, if we seemingly look at it from the outside, we will immediately want to uproot it and replace it with altruism.

Chapter 2.9 – Spiritual Reward

A Beginning of the month banquet, *Shvat* 1996

People want to be rewarded for anything they do. Even when a person works to attain spirituality he wants to be rewarded, because we are made of pure egoism and cannot operate any other way. Behind every act, there is always an aim; otherwise our egoism would not permit us to make even a single step!

A person begins his spiritual work from zero – yesterday he was still busy chasing after every worldly pleasure, and today it is as if the Creator had shone on him from afar with illumination of surrounding light. This illumination compels one to act, and one decides to give up all the beauties of this world in favour of a spiritual sensation. He doesn't even know what exactly is it he wants to receive, because the light shines on him from a distance, without clothing in his vessel. At this point, the light merely gives him the sensation of the future pleasure that he will find in spirituality, which he cannot find in the world around him. The surrounding light operates on him and attracts him to spirituality, turning him into his own undertaker.

First, one wants to use the spiritual world the same way he uses this world. He thinks that acquiring spiritual forces will give him the ability to predict the future, control it, perhaps even fly. But little by little one comes to realize that instead of all that, he must give all his strength and devote his every goal to the Creator. He must nullify himself and relinquish his control over himself in favour of the control of the Creator on him. This is man's real growth.

There is a question: "What is the connection between a Jew by birth, and a 'spiritual Jew'?" In someone who was born Jewish there is a tendency to become a Jew in the spiritual sense. The Creator matches the souls into bodies in a way that the 'genetic' Jews, as well as all those who join them, must correct themselves first. That is not an indication to the quality of the Jews. On the contrary, the Jews today, are greater egoists than any other nation.

In a corrected state, Israel is a corrected desire that is directed at the Creator. Israel is the name given to altruistic desires, meaning desires for bestowal (*GE – Galgalta VeEynaim*). The name Gentiles, or nations of the world, is given to egoistic desires, or desires to receive (*AHP – Awzen, Hotem, Peh*). That is why it is said that Israel, meaning *GE* will be a minority. When the rest of the nations are corrected, the light of *Hochma* will appear in each and every soul, as well as in the collective vessel of mankind.

The nations of the world subconsciously feel their dependency on Israel. They are given that feeling by the Creator so as to press on the Jews and set them in motion toward correction. It is difficult for us to imagine what this means in spirituality, when one has to stand and wait for another, to be completely dependent on another for one's own correction.

The state of Israel is a gift from the Creator, and has a right to exist only to the extent that it gives altruism the right to exist, which is the idea of nearing the Creator that is spread throughout the world. The Creator's will to render delight is not enough. It takes movement on the part of man too, from below, to want to receive this precise pleasure. We still don't feel this desire and are therefore slowly losing what we were given, without even being aware of it. We are still not ready to receive the spiritual Land of Israel. Furthermore, we are even willing to give our land away to anyone because we are not spiritually connected with the gift that we've been given. The

Eretz (land) means *Malchut*, or *Ratzon* (desire). The word *Ysrael* (Israel) comes from the words *Yashar* – *El* (straight to God), meaning the land of Israel is a state where one's every desire is directed toward the Creator. When a person is in that state, we say about him that he is in the land of Israel, or that he has returned to it.

That is why it is said that there is nothing more important than being in the land of Israel. It is also said that all the *Mitzvot* are valid when performed in the land of Israel, and performing them outside of Israel is merely a reminder until such time when one arrives at the land of Israel.

That is why we are not only unable to receive the present of the land of Israel, but we are even willing to be rid of it. We do not feel the giver of the present, and that makes us unable to appreciate its importance.

As long as we are not cleansed from the shells, they will continue to pressure us. That is why today we are dependent on the Arabs. They will continue to run our lives for us until we replace our egoistic vessels with altruistic ones. Everything that happens in this land is defined by spiritual roots. These roots can be affected through our desires. Therefore, when we feel within us and say out loud that the land of Israel belongs to us, our enemies will fold instantly. In the meantime we continue to influence with our desires, but it is still against our interests.

We have no other alternative except that of being worthy of the land of Israel, either through the path of Kabbalah, or the path of pain.

A person who tries to find his contact with the Creator, who discovers and feels Him, performs his entire work in one of two conditions: "single concealment" and "double concealment." One is completely blind while in double concealment. The Creator is completely hidden. Such a person has only this world.

However, in single concealment, one begins to understand that it is the Creator who influences his work, though he still doesn't feel the Creator explicitly. However, from time to time the feeling and the realization disappears and sinks entirely into our world. These states constantly change in such a person.

This struggle of a person with himself is expressed in his free choice. Free choice is only possible in a state of complete concealment of the Creator. Therefore, one should appreciate this state, for it is the only state that can bear fruit and produce the saplings that are customary to plant on the fifteenth of *Shvat*, plants that in due time will bear spiritual fruit.

The spiritual fruit is attained precisely in a state of concealment, when one advances without knowing or understanding anything; in total darkness, against every reasonable conception. When one attains the revelation of the Creator he reminisces over his dark past, for now when he sees the Creator and feels Him, he seemingly loses his freedom of choice.

There are two kinds of providence: general and private. General providence is executed through the surrounding lights and acts on mankind and nature as a whole. It is this providence that leads the entire world by a predetermined plan toward the end of correction. It leads to the realization of the fact that the technological progress leads humanity to a dead-end. It may render superficial sensation of satiation and abundance, but it produces an inner void, a complete emptiness.

Private providence, on the other hand, works on each and every person individually, through inner light. A person who begins to seek his connection with the Creator in our world is affected by the private providence of the Creator.

The contact with the spiritual world is created when there is a screen that rides over the egoistic desires. One changes one's egoistic properties and turns them to altruistic ones. He receives the light of the Creator in his corrected vessels, corrected properties.

The spiritual ascent is a long and strenuous journey. One must be reborn in every single degree until he finally resembles the Creator in his every property and blends with Him completely.

That is why we turn to the Creator of the world on the holiday of the fifteenth of *Shvat* with the plea to plant us, as one plants a new tree, and guide us to a life of truth, and thus revive us.

Chapter 2.10 – The Sensation of the Light

A Talk in Memory of Rabbi Baruch Ashlag (1995)

The Creator influences us through various things in our environment. It is our duty to understand that every thing that happens with us is nothing but the Creator approaching us. If we react correctly to this influence, we will begin to understand and feel what it is that the Creator actually wants from us, to the point where we will begin to feel Him.

The Creator influences us not only through certain people, but also through the entire reality. The world is built the way it is precisely because it is the best way for the Creator to influence and promote us to the purpose of creation.

When we encounter various situations in our everyday life, we do not feel the influence of the Creator behind them and we cannot feel Him. That is because our properties are completely opposite of His. But as soon as one begins to equalize with the Creator, even if just a tiny bit, he immediately begins to feel Him.

In response to every ‘strike of fate’, we should ask the right question: “What was it given to me for?” and not, “What have I done to deserve this punishment?” or, “Why is the Creator doing this to me?” There are no punishments, though we find many depictions of them in the Torah, there is only the inducement of mankind toward the perfect state, from which we are trying to escape because of our egoism.

Our mind is but a tool of ancillary significance that aids us to perceive our sensations correctly. If we relate to our lives as one big classroom, where the Creator is our teacher, that He has all the knowledge and that He gives it to us only as much as we are able to perceive at any given moment, then slowly but surely, the sensation of the Creator will come to our every newborn spiritual sense.

The Creator created this ladder so that we climb it and reach Him. This ladder (the same ladder that Jacob saw) was depicted by Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag, who was named Baal HaSulam (the “owner of the ladder”) for it, and also by my teacher, Rabbi Baruch Ashlag.

However, for the time being we keep turning our backs to the source. We will be able to face it and approach Him, only if we make a conscious effort. That is why the Creator sends us books and group mates, for the purpose of spiritual progress.

The student is in the corporeal world and the teacher is in the spiritual world. Because of his egoism, the student cannot understand and appreciate the teacher.

If a student can ‘erase’ his own mind, his reason and opinions and operate with the ‘mind’ of his teacher, then he will seemingly switch his own mind with that of his teacher, who is already in the spiritual world, and thus tie himself with spirituality (even on an unconscious level).

We do not see or feel the Creator in this world. For that reason, our egoism cannot act for the Creator. However, a student can see his teacher, talk to him and learn from him. He trusts and respects him. Because of that, he can do things for his teacher.

It is much like the process where the *AHP* of the superior (the teacher) lowers itself into the *GAR* of the inferior (the student). Reaching the *AHP* of the rabbi means to accept every act, thought and advice he gives. If the student ‘unites’ with the *AHP* of his rabbi, the rabbi can raise him temporarily and show him what spirituality is.

When we read such books that were written by righteous men such as Baal HaSulam, Rabbi Shimon Bar-Yochay and Rabbi Baruch Ashlag, we connect with them through the surrounding light that surrounds us and purifies our desires, meaning our vessels.

Therefore, when we read these books we must always remember who wrote them and what his spiritual degree was. That enables us to not only connect with the idea and the direction, but also with the bridge that could help us in our progress, because we bond with the author himself. It is not important if the author is or is not in this world momentarily, we can bond with him in our feelings, while studying his books.

The eldest son of Baal HaSulam, Rabbi Baruch Ashlag, finished his studies at the *Yeshiva* (school for orthodox Jews) and started to work as a construction worker at the age of 18. He would rise before dawn, eat a kilogram of bread and onion, drink a little water and go to work. Bread and onion was also his supper. On holidays he would add a little herring or something else that would make his meal festive.

Rabbi Baruch Ashlag lived a very hard life. He was among the workers who built the Hebron-Jerusalem road. The workers lived in tents and would move from place to place in each section of the road. The cook permitted him to study in the kitchen from 3:00AM and in return Rabash would fill and warm the pots so the cook wouldn't have to get up so early in the morning.

He continued this way of life even after he got married. His wife and children lived in Jerusalem, and when he arrived there, he would attend his father's lessons, which meant a walk from the old city of Jerusalem to Givat Shaul (the neighborhood where Baal HaSulam lived, over an hour's walk each way). In those days, there were jackals on the way too.

There was always poverty and shortage to the point of hunger in the house of Baal HaSulam, but there were things that were a must for him, such as paper, ink and coffee. He wrote, and writing was his life.

When Baal HaSulam died, Rabash stopped working and began to build a group of students. However, things went slowly and with great difficulty. His students began their studies at the age of 14-15, and when they grew and got married, their ambition and desire to study diminished significantly. They would come only once a week or even once a month instead of every day.

Every person is given his own problems to solve. Sometimes, the smallest obstacle can become an impassable wall.

Later on, in 1984, I brought my teacher dozens of new students, and Rabash began to write articles for daily group lessons. But even before that he would always write things about the spiritual worlds that he discovered on bits of paper. I recorded all my lessons with my rabbi.

Today there are several books that are based on that material. They constitute an important addition to the writing of Baal HaSulam.

Baal HaSulam spoke of many things, but there was one thing he spoke of very clearly: we must not forget that there is a leader to the world, and sometimes, when the need arises, He sends His messengers. Other times He lets us advance by ourselves.

There are many ways to the Creator, and many supporting operations that He activates on us. Thus, we can regard any obstacle on our path of study, including the departure of the teacher from this world, as a change in our own private providence.

The Creator changes His providence, but always for the best, meaning every such change brings us closer to the end of correction. Although our egoism dictates its

conditions to us and says that the former situation was better, easier, more pleasant, we must still try and see the guidance of the Creator vividly in every situation and event.

Even when the rabbi dies and his many students are left without a teacher, it is a qualitative change in their work, since providence has become faster and tougher.

When a person comes closer to spirituality, he begins to feel much like a parachutist being thrown into the air for the first time. He knows that there is a parachute behind him, but in the first seconds that he falls in midair, he prays and asks himself what does he need all that for.

But then the parachute opens above him and he feels complete certainty. But that too does not last very long because he will soon have to land on the ground. He forgets that the parachute defends him and utilizes his own ability and skill to land safely. However, this fear is really subjective, because it is actually the parachute that holds him and lands him slowly on the ground.

Rabbi Baruch Ashlag used to say about one of his students that when he was given a new office, he was summoned to the minister's office. But the same night there was a banquet at the Rabbi's. The students did not go to see the minister and did not get the job; he chose which was most important for him – meeting the rabbi.

Rabbi Baruch Ashlag did not leave behind any articles that were ready for print, because he did not want to publish his articles after his father, his great teacher. However, time passes and the demand for Kabbalistic texts change. Today's students can no longer absorb the material the way it was presented to us.

We can say that Rabash was the last of the great Kabbalists of the past. He contained within him the entire former life of Judaism. His knowledge of the history of Judaism and the great rabbis of the last generations was very impressive, and he would tell their stories as though they were a part of his own life.

We can clearly see from his stories that in the beginning of the 20th century there was a spiritual decline that reached so low that the gates to the spiritual world began to close, and a time of spiritual darkness began. Thus, if a person in previous centuries were offered to devote his entire life in return for spiritual attainment, he would instantly agree. Today, however, we are so immersed in our daily nonsense that we cannot break free from it.

Every student must aspire for a very close connection with his rabbi, because the rabbi is a person in a very high degree and the attainment of that degree is the goal of every student.

When Rabash's students were next to him, they felt an immense source of spiritual power. It was very difficult to think like him, much less understand his acts and motives. It was also difficult for him with his students because he had to reduce himself to their level and conceal his attainment in order to give his students the freedom of choice.

Any understanding is given according to one's own spiritual progress. That keeps one safe from breaking. It is very difficult to understand a person who lives a corporeal and spiritual life at the same time; why he considers some things important and ignores others. Sometimes it is completely incomprehensible before you reach a minimal spiritual degree.

Rabash was very interested in natural sciences like physics and chemistry. He immediately connected everything he heard with Kabbalah and saw what has been revealed and what hasn't.

The desire to take a spiritual path is given to a person by the Creator, but the effort that it demands must be made by man. A student of Kabbalah must ask himself every single minute what he is doing it for; is he studying Kabbalah for taking the knowledge into his egoism, or in order to feel the Creator, and correct himself?

Any person, who marches on the path to spirituality and learns about the way to ascend there, circulates the books and the media that contains Kabbalah lessons. When he does that, it is as though he is adhering to the will of the Creator and spreads His ideas in the world. By that he becomes a partner of the Creator in this world and comes near Him in his acts and thoughts.

The revelation of the Creator to the creature is a moment when the creature equalizes his own properties with the light that extends from the Creator. That is to say, the Creator appears in that specific property that has been equalized with Him. A person, who is on a certain degree, constitutes it and is named after it.

We must complete the equivalence of our attributes with His in the entire spiritual ladder, while being in this world, and within one lifetime. All our past lives are but preparatory phases for climbing the rungs of the ladder until we reach the Maker of the world.

Chapter 2.11 – Linking the Worlds

A Banquet for the Beginning of the Month of *Tishrei*

Reality consists of a Creator, being the will to bestow, to give pleasure, and from a creature, which is a will to receive pleasure. There is nothing except these two components of reality.

When the will to enjoy is corrected through a spiritual screen that acts against its egoism, it is called a *Partzuf*, which is a spiritual object. When the *Partzuf* receives pleasure in order to please the Creator, meaning performs *Zivug DeHakaa*, this act is called a *Mitzva*, and the light that enters the *Partzuf* is called Torah. If a person can receive the light of the Torah (into his corrected egoism) while performing a physical *Mitzva*, then he combines the physical world and the spiritual world within him.

In order to do it, one must first learn what he wants to attain by doing this. Automatic performance of *Mitzvot* (plural for *Mitzva*) gives no spiritual attainment, but only places one in a degree of ‘spiritual still’. Only one’s aim, its power and direction can bring him into the spiritual world and determine his spiritual degree and the extent of sensation of the upper light, being the attainment of the Creator that he will have. It is said that a, “*Mitzva* without an aim is like a body without a soul.” This means that a *Mitzva* without an aim is ‘dead’ in the spiritual sense. It is in a degree called “still”.

The purpose of Kabbalah is to teach us the right aim. That is the reason that Kabbalah is called “the wisdom of the hidden.” No person but man himself can know what he aims for, and sometimes even he cannot be certain of his intentions.

Therefore, Kabbalah teaches man to examine what his precise intentions are, so that he will eventually begin to feel his egoism and his real essence, which is the desire to enjoy without any reservations or consideration of the other and the other’s needs.

In the beginning of our spiritual way, one cannot quite understand why he gets up so early in the morning to go to class and stay afterwards for meals and conversations. He does those things without awareness to his motives. Only afterwards, when he discovers the Creator, he begins to see and feel how he’s been led from above, and then it all falls into place for him.

All the worlds have been prepared in advance within us. They do not exist without the perceiving person. One perceives only this or that section of the uniform and eternal light that extends from the worlds. He refers to it as “my world” and gives it a name. These names are spiritual discriminations that one makes, through which he begins to gradually, step by step, attain the outside world, the world that is outside our own.

If we want to accelerate our progress, we must receive additional desire for spiritual elevation from one another, meaning ‘cling’ to our friends’ desires for spiritual elevation. However, during the day we come in contact with many people who are not related to Kabbalah, and may thus ‘catch’ their thoughts and wishes. If we bring these external desires into the group, we will unconsciously ‘infect’ our friends and obstruct their spiritual progress and that will turn against us in a form of weakness and lack of motivation for the study. Hence, each and every person must be very hesitant in his choice of environment and restrain his connection with it.

Our mission is to clean ourselves entirely from external issues, whether good or bad according to our current opinion. We must live only our pure self, through which we will be able to feel the Creator. One can advance using his own vessels (desires), or vessels that come from a superior *Partzuf*, meaning the vessels of the rabbi that leads him.

Rabash had many students who would get together once a week and arouse the importance of the work in themselves, for the purpose of creating a collective vessel. All the Kabbalists since the time of Rabbi Shimon Bar-Yochay held these assemblies of friends every week. The Ari and Rabbi Moshe Chaim Lucato (Ramchal) wrote about such assemblies as well as other Kabbalists in Russia, among which are some of the greatest teachers of the previous generations.

The influence of the outer society awakens one's beastly desires, which become a serious obstacle for spiritual progress. We must escape influence of people who try to influence us consciously or unconsciously. Even partaking in conversation with such a person can result in a loss of spiritual achievements that took many months to come by. I have no wish whatsoever to encourage isolation from society, but a beginning student must be extra careful with regards to the knowledge that he perceives. After all, our entire free choice consists of choosing the right environment, meaning the society that we join and whose influence we are subject to.

We are but egoistic points that should ripe to spiritual work. This point in our hearts that opens and ripens is the root and the beginning of everything. All other operations are but consequences and results of that point. The only thing that was created is a will to receive pleasure, meaning a desire to enjoy for one's own gratification, in varying degrees of evolution. The desire for self-indulgence is called a 'shell'. The shell is a power that guards us until we develop and ask to rid ourselves of it in order to reach the fruit itself, being nothing more than the corrected shell. Namely, the corrected shell *and* the fruit are a desire to bestow, to give and receive pleasure like the Creator. A shell is a spiritual concept; its spiritual body consists of (just as the body of a pure *Partzuf*) a *Rosh* (head) and a *Guf* (body). The *Rosh* of the shell is called *Daat* (wisdom) and the *Guf* of the shell is called "reception". The pure *Rosh* is called "faith above reason" and the *Guf* itself is called "bestowal".

Only a group of friends who are united by their desire can bring one out of the situations he falls into, where he is unable to control and criticize himself. If a person meets with his friends on a day-to-day basis, it helps him purify his thoughts and gives him a thrust forward in the right direction.

Chapter 2.12 – The Body at the end of Correction

A Talk

Will we retain our physical body after the end of correction? Kabbalah never speaks of the physical body. It is simply not a part that needs correction. There are no changes in the body except the aging. Only for the will to receive pleasure needs to be corrected. Our body is only flesh; it needs sleep, physical pleasures, food and rest. It has nothing in common with the internal, spiritual correction. That is why it doesn't change when the soul changes. Even our character remains the same. My rabbi was still running all the time even at the age of 80. He just didn't know how to take things slowly. That was his character and it never changed.

In our current state we are unable to imagine what the world will look like when our soul is corrected. Our body will lose its meaning. Will there still be a universe and everything around us? Will we bear children? Will we live and die?

Today our lives are filled with agony and pain. We cannot begin to imagine how the corporeal life we live today can be filled with spirit at the end of correction.

Diseases are a consequence of inner corrections and should vanish once the corrections are done. It is the correction until the end of the 6,000 years that we are talking about. We cannot discuss or explain the seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth millenniums just as we cannot explain what it means to remain without a physical body when our life in this world is through. It is also impossible to explain how the body does remain after the end of correction, because all our situations are branches that exist as a result of their spiritual roots, and past the end of correction that connection is nonexistent.

We do not correct the will to receive in and of itself, the egoism, only that part of the desires that have connected and mingled with altruistic desires during the breaking of the vessels. That is why we cannot see the full picture of suitability and equivalence of form at the end of correction. If we would actually feel it, we would be completely healthy every *Shabbat* (Saturday) and no one would die on that day. It is impossible for us to picture a perfect state.

We do not get the answers to our prayers and requests from above at the time we make them, or even near it. It can happen as late as several months later. A Kabbalist can feel spiritual states of *Shabbat* or a holiday on weak days too.

If for example, my soul connects with someone else's, then the question I had will present itself in his emotions, while for me it might have already been replaced by another. These perpetual changes are called reincarnations of the souls. We cannot understand how these jumps occur and why, but there is a certain degree of spiritual attainment that once there, a person begins to see how souls bond and separate. It can be compared to a welling forth, a continuous flow, transition from place to place and from one soul to another. But there is no accurate definition for it. There is a collective and an individual part in every one of us. The collective part remains unchanged, while the individual can and does change. As soon as one wants to receive something from the Creator, and that someone is in a state of seeing the Creator's face, his soul is ready to receive the light of the Creator, and he instantaneously and naturally receives it. The spiritual world is different to our own in the sense that every desire is immediately answered.

Baal HaSulam writes that the attribute of *Malchut* that is clothed in the worlds is called the "self." That attribute spreads down to the world of *Assiya*, where one feels

it as an independent entity. The self always remains, but its form is corrected. When one corrects his self, he immediately begins to feel the Creator.

The breaking of the vessels played a major and positive role in continuing the process of correction of the desires. Without it we would always remain in the 'still, vegetative, and animate degree and would never be able to make even the slightest connection with the Creator.

Our body experiences all sorts of sensations. In the spiritual body there are no emotions. Instead, there are *Sefirot*, which are something completely different to emotions. I cannot say that my vision is a consequence of my spiritual vision, called "wisdom" that reflects the sensation of a certain light that is clothed in the appropriate spiritual vessel. For example: using the screen, I can feel the light of *Haya* in a vessel that has *Aviut Aleph* (first degree coarseness). There is a field of waves around us, and each sense perceives waves of different wavelength. The same thing happens in spirituality, there is a special kind of light, one that enters its appropriate vessel. However, there is no connection whatsoever between the animate emotional system and the spiritual sensation of the light.

A person corrects his left line through the right line, thus building a middle line from the both of them. The middle line renders a possibility to equalize itself with the Creator, to the extent that he has corrected himself. That completes the job of that specific degree. Afterwards one reenters the left line and must again correct it with the right, thus building the middle line, and again receiving a certain portion of the light of the Creator, which in turn, makes me just a little more like Him. The process repeats itself when that degree is also completed. It might seem dull looking from the outside, but that is the way to climb the spiritual ladder. It is a perpetual process of acquiring desires and fulfilling them intermittently. This is life, and it is a magical feeling indeed! It is like a very intense hunger and satiation experienced simultaneously.

The maximum intensity of the utilization of the right aim over our desire in each degree is also the bridge through which we pass on to the next.

Our time is a transition period toward spiritual evolution. Every soul can absorb only as much as its own level of development makes possible. We must not pressure people to study Kabbalah, because if they are not interested, it means that their time has not come yet.

The primary act that one should occupy himself with, while being in a group of Kabbalists, is that of nullifying himself before the spirit of the group and before everything that happens in it. One must break his ego and participate in any way he can.

Chapter 2.13 – Questions and Answers

What Is the Meaning of Our Lives?

Q: People asked about the meaning of their lives in previous generations too, but it is in our generation that everyone can study Kabbalah. Is that because of our virtues or because of our sins?

A: Yes, it's true. But in our generation the question about the meaning of our lives is being asked more acutely. The souls that return to our world are riper now, better prepared. In the past, people were less interested in finding the meaning of their lives, and more in science, social science and culture, literature and so on. But nowadays we have become disillusioned with everything: there is less talk about the capability of science to provide peace of mind and confidence; people often seek answers to the most basic questions about the anguish they experience, and they are finally beginning to understand that the source of all this trouble is the concealment of the Creator and dissimilarity from Him. They are beginning to feel a yearning to connect with Him, and that ultimately leads them to Kabbalah. Humanity is approaching a state of searching for the meaning of life, but not on the level of our world, because they have realized that there is no happiness in high technology, or the development of our culture and ethics. Drugs and other accessories for pleasure produce a desire to refrain from such questions and the desire to understand the meaning of life, but nonetheless, it remains as vital.

Kabbalah and I

Q: Has everything been preordained?

A: The starting point and final point are determined by the Creator. But the way from the starting to the final points depends on us. We have the ability to choose which way to reach the purpose of creation. But even at the starting point we operate under the pressure of our absolute egoism, we are its slaves and are motivated only by egoistic desires.

When one changes one's nature from egoism to altruism, he also becomes a slave, but this time to an altruistic nature. The freedom of desire is only in the choice of whom to serve: Pharaoh or Moses. Therefore, the entire Torah is a guide to attain the purpose of creation, as it is said, "I have Created the evil inclination, I have created for it the Torah as a spice," meaning, I have created egoism and I have given the Torah/Kabbalah in order to correct it.

All the parts in the Torah were given to us so as to match our properties with those of the Creator. But each generation must focus on a certain part of it. A Kabbalist named Moses rose to the spiritual world through his spiritual understanding, meaning he was able to feel spiritual degrees, and he described them in a book he entitled the Torah.

The Torah strictly forbids depicting of spiritual phenomenon as physical entities. It is forbidden to picture a distinguished old man named Moses climbing down Mt. Sinai with a book of Torah in his hand. Torah means the light of the Creator. Every word in the Torah is a name of the Creator. The names of the Creator are one's sensations of Him, while He Himself has no name.

It is the attaining individual who gives names to the Creator according to his sensation of Him: "Kind", "Merciful", "Mighty", "Fearful" and so on. The Torah describes everything Moses discovered and understood of the spiritual worlds, everything that

the Creator revealed before him and commanded him to convey to us so that we perform it.

The purpose of the creation of this world by the Creator is spiritual unification with Him, the correction of man's properties, or in other words: spiritual ascent. There are 620 spiritual degrees from our point, which is the lowest possible, to the Creator. Each of those degrees is called a *Mitzva*.

When a person corrects himself through a certain altruistic act, he performs a certain *Mitzva* and consequently ascends to the corresponding degree. This means that there are 620 further corrections or adoptions of altruistic desires that we must perform after we rise above the egoistic nature of our world.

At the last and highest spiritual degree, one unites with the Creator completely. His properties and desires become completely identical to those of the Creator. One must attain that state of complete sameness of attributes with the Creator's while living physically in our world.

Thus, the completeness of the entire creation is attained, and the gap between the highest and the lowest point of creation is breached. In that state, everything returns to the Creator, to His attributes, to the source and to a state of infinite altruistic bliss. It is only at that spiritual degree that one (or better phrased – the soul) is liberated from the necessity to go through the degrees of "this world" and keep returning here.

But as long as there are corrections to perform, we must return here over and over again until we complete our correction through the study of the wisdom of Kabbalah. Why do people interpret and relate so differently to the text of the Torah? After all, the Kabbalists themselves described the spiritual world for us and gave us this book. They called it Torah, to indicate that it relates to the words *Ohr* (light) and *Horaa* (instruction).

Kabbalists, are people who can sense the upper worlds and depict these sensations in their books in a unique language. Because anyone who is as yet unable to see and feel the spiritual worlds, can understand the explanations of Kabbalists only in a human tongue. After all, there are no physical bodies like our own in the spiritual world, and there are no names that you can use to name the objects there. It is in fact, impossible to convey these feelings in a language that humans understand.

But because every thing that exists in our world stems from the upper worlds, and every physical object has a spiritual root above, Kabbalists decided to name every spiritual entity according to its worldly branch, which seemingly passes from above downward, from a spiritual root to a corresponding material body in our world. The spiritual root is the cause and the worldly branch is the projection, the consequence.

The entire Torah was written in this descriptive language. It speaks only of spiritual forces, and so do all the other holy books. The books can be divided to ones that use a legal tongue, such as the Talmud, or a historic-tale like tongue, such as the Pentateuch. But all these books describe nothing but the spiritual worlds. They have no intention whatsoever of referring to our world.

The confusion is created only when we read the book and automatically interpret the words according to our understanding, which uses terms of our world. As a result, we begin to think that it speaks of things that happen in our world. But a Kabbalist, who reads the exact same text, understands precisely what the author meant in each section of the book. It is a lot like a musician who can sing the music by merely looking at the notes.

Q: We don't feel the Creator and consequently we don't believe that He exists. We cannot see the upper world, we don't know and don't understand a thing about it. None of the existing sciences enables us to influence the future, so on what grounds do you claim that it is possible to influence it?

A: The wisdom of Kabbalah does not study the phenomena of this world, but it's spiritual roots in the upper world. These roots affect everything that happens in our world, and produce the events of our lives. A person who studies Kabbalah begins to see and understand the upper world.

By seeing the upper world, one begins to feel the Creator and understand how He created the spiritual world. The wisdom of Kabbalah refers to this act as the "first day of creation." In the acts that follow, meaning in the next days, the Creator created the nature of the upper world, and the forces that manage it. The last act of the Creator, on the sixth day was the creation of *Adam HaRishon*.

Because *Adam HaRishon* was the consequence of the last act of the Creator, he also constitutes the purpose of the entire creation. Everything that was created before him was created for him. So judging by the program of the Creator, what should become of man? He must attain spiritual identicalness with the Creator, become like Him in every property, equalize with Him and take upon himself the management of his own destiny.

Furthermore, man must attain the highest spiritual degree of total completeness by himself. That means that he must first be at the lowest spiritual degree, completely opposite to the attributes of the Creator, and then rise to the spiritual degree of the Creator through his own spiritual efforts.

The wisdom of Kabbalah can be utilized to observe both the spiritual world and our world, and the reciprocation between them. There is knowledge that constantly descends from the upper world to ours and materializes before our very eyes. Our reactions to this information rise to the upper world in a form of knowledge and determine whether we feel our tomorrow as positive or negative. Therefore, the Creator, who is at the highest spiritual degree, created this creation from an egoistic attribute, which is the complete opposite of Him, and filled it to the rim with light. He then emptied it and lowered it to the degree of "our world." A creature who ascends back up the spiritual ladder receives a much more intense pleasure than prior to the decline to this world.

Q: If there is an upper force that governs us and every little insect in our world, then how are we different to robots?

A: If a person uses Kabbalah to change his inner properties, he also changes the external influence that operates on him. Because this entire world is built to guide us to perfection, our process of individual correction changes also a little bit of the outside world as well, and uncovers its better side toward us. It is then easier for both the individual and for all mankind to progress to the ultimate goal. The beginning and the end points are preordained, but the road there can be a path of Kabbalah or a path of pain. Which path we take is up to us.

Q: Will Kabbalah help my professional progress?

A: Kabbalah not only enhances one's sensation and attainment of upper worlds, it also deepens and expands other emotions, and refines them. The individual improves his connections with his environment and the events around him, and learns to regard science as a trivial thing that is used only for mankind's general sustenance and adaptation to the world around him and nothing more.

When one first begins to study Kabbalah, he is normally quite confused with all the new terms and emotions. Later on, he begins to relate to science from a superior point of view, as something incidental. That helps him avoid bowing before science and relate to it in a truer and more profound manner, and see what it can show. Kabbalah renders a scientist a possibility to progress and attain a more complete attainment even on the level of our limited world.

Q: You mentioned that there is general providence that leads mankind in general, and that one who begins to study Kabbalah can change his life and fate. Can a person who studies Kabbalah somehow change the collective current of life in his environment, not only for himself, but somehow help others too?

A: It can be done, but only by circulating Kabbalah to other people, gently and without being missionary. We can discretely inform people around us that there is such a thing as Kabbalah, and interest them in reading books that were written by Kabbalists. That is enough to put one in a completely different state regarding the Creator, where there is already a different kind of providence on him from above.

I have no other answer: books, [audio and video files](#), cassettes, our [Internet site](#). We do everything to provide people whatever means they choose to change their fate. In any event, people will come to it in just a few years time. They will realize that oaths, charms and blessings are not the solution to the question of how to change their lives. Every person must make his own decision about his fate, and not discharge himself from the responsibility to his own life. It cannot be bought for money or any other way.

The Spiritual World

Q: What is a spiritual birth? Is it anything like a physical birth?

A: Every thing that happens in our world matches perfectly what happens in a spiritual birth. When one is completely liberated from his egoism, his state corresponds to that of a fetus in its mother's womb. The fetus then goes through nine months of spiritual development that correspond to a state of conception, until he is born as an independent, though small being. Then there are two years of infancy and feeding of the 'breast' of the superior. Then the infant continues to at the expense of the superior *Partzuf*, but in a separated form. The child continues to grow until he reaches the age of the thirteen, and from that age he begins his state of *Gadlut* (adulthood). This is how every person's soul develops.

Every thing the Kabbalah books write about, every thing that happens in our world and every thing the Torah speaks of are processes of ascent in the spiritual ladder. There is nothing but a human being and the Creator, and our entire way is meant to bring us closer to Him.

Q: How can one know he has attained a connection with the spiritual world?

A: Every thing we can imagine comes as a consequence of our experiences in this world, ones that we experience in the physical body. Therefore, all the 'flying' experiences and other such 'spiritual events', are in fact completely disconnected from the actual spiritual world.

Because the sensation of spirituality can be obtained only by means of a screen, being an anti-egoistic property that can be acquired only through the system of Kabbalah, which means: group study, the right teacher and a number of years of intensive study with the right books. Sometimes a person can get a feeling of the spiritual world

without any preparation, but it is a passive feeling, because one is unable to correct himself when he gets it as a gift from above without prior efforts to create the screen.

It has nothing to do with the evolution of an ordinary soul in the path of correction; it is just something that the Creator needed to do according to His own program of development of unification and separation of souls. That is why He did it. If we could see the entire picture of the reincarnation of souls we would understand why the Creator acts this or that way with a certain soul. But no person, meaning there is not a part of our collective soul that can attain the goal, the spiritual degree of the Creator before it is corrected.

The Creator will allow no one, under any conditions, into the spiritual world without a spiritual effort. If He did, one would be unable to create a vessel, the desire he must have in order to feel the perfection of the Creator.

Q: What would happen if the Creator appeared before us right now?

A: In that case we would take the pleasure for ourselves and would never be able to exit this egoistic pleasure, though it is so small it is practically nonexistent compared to spiritual pleasures, which is a pleasure that is sensed with the aim toward the Creator. The Creator hides from us in order to allow us to build a screen, which is the aim for the Creator. Only afterwards will He reveal Himself to us. Only then will the pleasure be infinite and lasting, because that is the nature of altruistic desires.

Q: But you keep saying that all we need in order to enter the spiritual world is the revelation of the Creator?

A: What I mean in this case is not the pleasures that come from the Creator, but the revelation of His Godliness. When that happens, one will nullify himself before the Creator and be able to cancel his egoistic desires, meaning obtain a screen. Only afterwards the Creator will reveal itself as the source of all pleasures.

Q: How do you differentiate between “good” and “evil”?

A: Our perception of good and evil is very different to the way they are perceived in spirituality. Good and bad in our world are based on subjective, egoistic feelings, meaning something is good if it is good for me, and bad if it is bad for me. Only when one transcends his own egoism does he attain what good and evil really are.

Everything is done by the Creator, but we are unable to justify His actions. Global disasters, wars and annihilation of entire nations, horrendous torments and trouble everywhere, all these are called good by those who attain the collective picture of the universe and the worlds.

Q: What is the “freedom of desire”?

A: When one attains the spiritual world, he attains everything that descends to our world; he attains the roots and where and how they concatenate to our world. Every earthly event begins in the spiritual world. Everything that happened and that will happen to us stems from there.

The system of Kabbalah means having faith above reason, and the Kabbalist never exploits his knowledge for self-gratification. That is why his knowledge of himself or others is of no significance because he will never use it in the ordinary way people want.

Many people ask me about the future, but I tell them to go see a fortuneteller. What I can do is advise about what one should do, but it is forbidden to open the picture to a person, because you deny his freedom of choice and freedom of desire. That will result in the loss of his desire for living, because if everything is known before it even

happens then why bother living? Our lives are only pleasant when we have a little bit of freedom of desire. That is what separates us from all other elements in creation and we must utilize that freedom.

Q: When one attains the spiritual world, what does he find there?

A: He finds absolute harmony inside him. He finds that everything is conducted by an upper force that brings all creations to a single goal. He finds his own goal and stops making mistakes. He understands why he gets sick and what is the purpose of the troubles in his life. He begins to understand the good or harm that his actions bring and how he should behave with others. That person does not need to learn anything from anyone because he becomes a part of creation. He has no need to satisfy in himself; it is toward this state that the Creator is leading us.

There are only two ways to choose from: the first is the one the whole of mankind is taking. It entails suffering and running from pain to pain without any ability to find any reason for living. This state may continue until the pain accumulates and brings one to a spiritual degree. It is impossible to know or feel the previous amount of pain that has been accumulated, but every soul keeps its own account and needs a different amount of suffering to bring it to spirituality. This is the first path, the path of pain. It is a very long and agonizing road. However, the Creator gives every person a way out of the anguish that befalls him and finds the spiritual world through a second path – the path of Kabbalah (Torah). The Hebrew word Torah means instruction. There are clear instructions in the Torah/Kabbalah that teach us how to attain spiritual attainment, while combining it with family life, study and work. It is an instruction of how to discover our inner spiritual world as well as the outer physical world.

Desire

Q: If we are only a desire, like all other creations, then what is our deepest desire?

A: Our deepest desire is to cleave to the Creator. That is everyone's unconscious desire. It has been imprinted in us to begin with and it is the only desire that we are actually eager to satisfy. But that desire only becomes clear to us to the extent that we are willing to accept and realize it. Until that point, the Creator continues to push and tempt us with new desires, meaning the primary desire is clothed with other desires.

Q: What if I suddenly have an urge to steal something?

A: There will not be such a desire. There can be a desire to steal with a thought that follows it, because that is the Creator's way of showing us how despicable and dirty we are.

Along with the desire there is the sensation of repulsion at such a desire appearing in me. That is what the "recognition of evil" exists for. An ordinary person does not have such feelings, he does not regard his desires as evil, but as a normal person: "well I am like that but so is everybody else."

It is written that God said to Abraham, "Look now toward heaven" and promised him that his seed and his people will be like the stars in the sky – innumerable. Stars are sparks of returning light that broke the collective soul. One collects these sparks, corrects them and thus ascends. For that reason, the sparks, which are tiny souls that rise upward, are called stars. For that reason the Creator promised Abraham that if he followed this path, the entire heaven would be his.

Death

Q: Does a part of the soul pass on from parent to child?

A: A human is a two-legged animal. It has a vital force called the “animate soul.” When a person dies his soul leaves his body, just like with any other animal. But Kabbalah speaks of a different kind of soul, one that is the light of the Creator.

A soul is a certain amount of light that enters a person’s feelings only when he acquires specific altruistic attributes. It has nothing to do with the identity of his parents.

Q: Most people find death distressing, but what is the death of the body really is?

A: The problem begins with what we tie our ego with. Do we associate it with our body or with our soul, our internal part? If one lives inside the properties and desires of his soul, then he remains with it and connects with it. For such a person death is not something tragic, it is just a transition to a different state. It is as though certain obstructions that his body presented before him are removed and he passes to a more perfect and complete state, with an improved ability for spiritual progress. It turns out that death is something that one can only be happy for. Death indicates that you are on the right path for spiritual progress and have already completed a certain portion of the way. Now that that part has completed you are free to continue without the weight of the physiological body. It all depends on what one ties himself with during his corporeal life.

Q: What happens to a person who experiences clinical death?

A: People who experience clinical death necessarily experience a detachment from the egoism because they enter a post mortem state. Though not yet spiritual, that state is no longer animate because the clinical death separates one from one’s egoism.

One is incapable of feeling what spirituality is like before he acquires a screen, because he lacks the sensation vessel called “returning light”, the aim for the Creator. However, one can still feel the fineness of spirituality because of the pain that he suffered. Agony neutralizes the egoism, because they bring it to such a situation that it is willing to become nullified if only to stop the pain.

A rabbi was once sent to an imprisoned man in Russia. He was in a very poor mental state, without any knowledge of Hebrew, but he wrote poems in Hebrew about such sublime spiritual states, that only a Kabbalist could experience. Or course, he did not use Kabbalistic terms, but he experienced states of disconnection from our world. A person experiencing clinical death also feels a higher spiritual state because he goes through such torments that the egoism inflicts on him, that they are enough to push him away from his egoism.

These torments make him start looking at his himself ‘from the side’, and he begins to feel some spiritual sensation. However, that is not the way the Kabbalah advises us to take – because we have the Kabbalah as a cure. These people felt these things in the worst possible situations, but that is not the way we should go.

This does not come directly from the Creator. When the animate soul dies we feel a little more light from above, but it is billions of times smaller than the least spiritual state that was acquired as a result of our labour!

Q: Do we pass to the spiritual world when we die?

A: The soul is our spiritual vehicle, our inner self. It is in a certain spiritual state before it is born in this world. Because the purpose of creation is to raise the soul from its lowest to its highest state, the soul receives additional egoism, additional negative properties that hide the spiritual self from us.

The self had a certain spiritual basis, it was above this world before it received additional egoism, which caused its descent to this world. Egoism is added in a form of desires of an animate body and this is how we begin to feel our birth and existence in the corporeal world. However, if you take one's additional egoism from him, he will immediately find himself in the place he had descended from into this world, meaning in his original degree in the spiritual world.

Now one is in a state where he feels the world around him as everyone around him does. What he should now do is ignore his egoism and use it to rise in spirituality. This way he ascends by 620 degrees higher than the degrees he started from.

When one rises from our world and reaches the end of correction he rises to the world of *Ein Sof* and feels 620 times more complete than his current state. Our animate body dies because we take away its egoistic satisfaction. The meaning of death is that the spiritual force that gives one the desire to live and absorb the force of life is taken from him.

Miscellaneous

Q: Why are all the meetings with the Creator performed on mountains (Mt. Olives, Mt. Moriah) etc.?

A: The word Moriah comes from the word *Mora* (fear); the word *Har* (mountain) comes from the word *Hirhurim* (contemplations) of *Mora*, which is a screen for the *Gar* of every degree. Sinai comes from the word *Sinaa* (hatred), because there is concealment of the light of mercy. It is hatred that the nations begin to feel toward Israel after the reception of the Torah. It is a screen for the *Vak* of the degree because Israel are “the fewest of all peoples,” meaning *Vak*. Mt. Olives is *Malchut*, the point of this world, the end of all the worlds. Every place where *Malchut* ends without touching the point of “this world” is called Mt. Olives.

Q: Is there any connection between the spiritual Mt. Olives and the physical one?

A: There is no connection between the spiritual Mt. Olives and the physical one. That is why any person can call that mountain by that name, and not only one who has attained the spiritual Mt. Olives.

Q: How can an ordinary person name anything according to its spiritual root if he doesn't attain it and doesn't even know that it exists?

A: Any person, even a non-Jew, can name any place on earth according to their spiritual root, even without attaining these roots. That is because all people are messengers of the Creator, just as is the entire creation and the whole of nature. Just as an ordinary person attains that a mountain should be called Mt. Olives for some corporeal reason, so a Kabbalist attains that this mountain should be named that way because of a spiritual root. This teaches us that the difference between the attainment of an ordinary person and that of a Kabbalist is only in the depth of the attainment. The former sees only the external layer, and the latter sees the entire depth down to the primary reason. That is why Kabbalah is also a science. The only difference is that Kabbalah studies the full depth of the matter, to its innermost layer, meaning the desire that was created by the Creator, which is wrapped by all other properties. That is why a Kabbalist and an ordinary person can both give the same name because the olive trees grow on the same mountain. Meaning, the ordinary person has his own reason for calling something by its right name. Furthermore, the internal property with

which the Creator created a spiritual object appears in any language with the same meaning.

Q: What is a dream?

A: During sleep we are disconnected from spirituality. There are only electric currents that run through our minds and nothing more. If we disconnect the brain from the body during this time there will not be any dreams. We can disconnect one's ego from his body so that the body will sleep separated from the ego.

The state of slumber has nothing to do with spirituality. It exists in every living creature. The state of *Dormita* (slumber) in Kabbalah is a name that is given to the time when the light leaves the *Partzuf* to a higher *Partzuf*. All that the *Partzuf* is then left with is called *Kista DeHayuta* (A small pocket of life-force), which is a uniting and strengthening force. That is the spiritual meaning of slumber. If one thinks of an idea during sleep, it is because the lessened connection with his physical body allows him to see more clearly. As a result, his mind and imagination operate on a higher level, but that has nothing to do with spirituality.

A Talk

Q: Can one know when he deserves to be punished or rewarded?

A: Let's say that a person was standing on a high porch and a part of it suddenly collapses and he falls off and dies. Or perhaps a natural catastrophe suddenly happens. Who do we blame? Who can we be angry with?

When a child breaks something we can punish him, we can hit him, but we will be doing so from within our animate understanding of reward and punishment. By that we teach the child our own understanding and approach.

That is how it used to be in Russia. If I did not accept communism, they could punish me and even kill me. They set their own rules and their own justice, meaning their own understanding of good and evil. In fact, there must be an honest and objective system of reward and punishment, but not one that favours the initiators of the system, but the well being of those who keep it. It is impossible to provide an accurate and concise explanation of the concepts of reward and punishment. If the system is correct, it should teach us something and not merely exist. However, we cannot be objective; we don't know what hides behind our actions, which contradict the purpose of creation because of our corrupted vessels. There is no reward or punishment from the Creator's perspective. He has no desire for man to do this or that. There is only one assignment with regards to the Creator – to bring mankind to a special inner state, such that will enable him to receive the bounty and delight that is intended for us after we attain the purpose of creation. The Creator has no desire to punish or reward any person for operations, He always leads us toward the purpose of creation.

If that is the case, then whom do these concepts of reward and punishment relate to? A child? An adult? At which degree, which level of understanding does it begin? A person who grows up in this world attains properties of this world and becomes subjugated to its rules. If we could know a person as well as the Creator knows him, we would be able to predict his every move in every situation. That brings up the question: where is our freedom of choice, and what exactly are we liberated from?

Is it freedom from the natural properties that the Creator inserted in man, or freedom from the influence of the environment? Where is that part where one can become free from both his own nature as well as from his surroundings? If we knew it for certain then in those parts where we can choose freely we could also speak of reward or

punishment, because the steps we would make would be steps that were made through choices that are liberated from one's own nature and any other external influence.

One should know that in every move he makes, in every step he takes, it is the Creator teaching him, fine-tuning his senses and directing him toward the purpose of creation. If we could see it that way, then reward and punishment would take on a completely different meaning, depending on the goal that was set. In that case, everything that one would go through, the good and the bad will be taken as a reward. The bad will not be regarded as painful and tormenting, but as tutoring. Such a person interprets everything positively. It means that the division between reward and punishment simply does not exist, because such a person finds only positive in how the Creator treats His creatures.

But one does not come by such a feeling in one time, but after all sorts of concealments of the Creator. In the beginning, there is the double concealment, then a single concealment. After that comes the revelation of the Creator, and finally – the attainment of eternity, completeness and love toward He who has always loved us, and has always wanted to give each and everyone of us nothing but the greatest possible pleasure.

Continued Questions and Answers

Q: How and when does one attain spiritual understanding?

A: One comes by spiritual understanding only through his own spiritual efforts in studying the wisdom of Kabbalah, and a persistent struggle with his egoistic desires. The precise moment of understanding is untraceable. One cannot know when that time will come, because his spiritual efforts must be directed not toward understanding, but toward giving to the Creator. However, we must always believe that “God’s salvation is as the wink of an eye.”

Q: This example gives the feeling that you are separating between the Creator and His produce, as though you are separating Him from His nature?

A: The thing is that I feel the consequences inside me. I feel the delights I will receive ahead of time, if I can taste them, then the consequence will be experienced inside me. For example, I cannot say that there is any pleasure in a salad; the pleasure is in me to begin with, and the salad is just a means to bring out the delight in order to satisfy my desire. You can weigh or otherwise measure the salad any way you like, but you will not find any pleasure in it. This means that pleasures exist inside us, including the sensation of the Creator. Generally speaking, we feel everything inside us. That is what I meant by saying that we feel the giver behind the salad. The question is not how much salad, or how good was the salad we ate, but what kind of pleasure do we experience at the time, because the pleasure is felt in the spiritual part of us.

Why did the Creator make it so that we would only be able to reach an altruistic vessel from an egoistic one? Even the fact that we can find the pleasure center in the brain and stimulate it will only be an external expression of these spiritual vessels. So why did the Creator create an egoistic vessel from which we would rise to an altruistic one? Because when we rely on a small egoistic vessel that can contain ten grams, for instance, but we receive these ten grams from the almighty Creator, and we use them to please the Creator, then our pleasure depends on how great the Creator is, not on the ten grams. The ten grams are only an axis with which we can turn everything

inside us and come to a reality where the pleasure is infinite. Then time disappears and a state of perfection is created, because of the connection with *Ein Sof*.

Q: Let us say that Israel, the Creator and divinity are one; what then is divinity?

A: There is nothing but the Creator and the creature. The Creator created a creature, which is the will to receive pleasure from the Creator. The only thing that this desire can do is receive. It names what it feels, meaning it names the reflection of the Creator in its feelings. It is not important what or whom we denominate, it all depends on our sensations, meaning how we are influenced by the Creator. These feelings are a consequence of two elements: the Creator Himself and our own sensations. If we change those, we will also feel the Creator differently. We will never know what the Creator is when not perceived through our senses. That is why we never speak of the Creator Himself, but only of how we feel Him inside us, in our senses. That feeling in our senses is called “divinity”.

Part Three: Fundamentals

Part Three: The Structure of the Upper Worlds

Chapter 3.1 – Altruism

All holy books describe spiritual emotions that one should attain. They all deal with one thing only: choosing the spiritual over the physical; the greatness of the Creator. The Creator doesn't need our respect because He is completely denied of egoism. The one thing he does need is to bring us pleasure, to the extent that we prefer Him over the corporeal world, and become like Him. The greatness of the Creator testifies to one's degree of correction. The pleasure at the unification with the Creator can be infinite, eternal and complete, but only when not limited by egoism. Altruism is a special property, it is a unique method for correcting the vessel. Egoism brings nothing good; it is enough to remember the high percentage of people who commit suicide among the rich to demonstrate it. Even if we give one everything and satisfy his cup of desire to the rim, he will still not feel that there is a meaning to his life. The reception of pleasure 'blows out' the desire for it. It is possible to feel the reason, the taste, only on the border between pleasure and pain.

The Creator set the demand to correct the vessel by turning it to altruistic instead of egoistic in our favour, not in His. Our current status is called "this world." Our next state is called the "next world." A world is what we feel this minute; the next sensation is a new world.

Any person, who begins to learn something new and leaves it after some time, still gets something out of it. It remains alive inside him. Each and every one of us has an unconscious feeling of what is the most important thing in life.

There are many different kinds of people. Some are shrewd and clever; they succeed easily and become rich. They become influential and exploit others to promote their own goals. Others are born lazy and evolve slowly. They are what we call "good-for-nothing". They might in fact be working harder than the clever ones, but attain less. Some of them may find it difficult to get up in the morning, but we can never accurately assess one's efforts, because they depend on so many inner properties. We haven't any tools for measuring one's properties and internal efforts. I do not mean a physical effort, but an internal, mental effort.

Baal HaSulam wrote that 10% of the people are altruistic. Such people derive pleasure when they give to others. Just like an egoist can kill if he does not get what he wants, so an altruist can kill if he is does not give what he wants. It is a means for pleasure for him. Such people are still egoistic, because underneath, they still aim to receive something from the giving, though it is concealed. Naturally, they too must be corrected. In fact, they have a longer way to go to become conscious of their egoism. The fact they are not really altruists necessitates a longer period of self-recognition, at the end of which they will be compelled to face their own egoism. The coarser and more egoistic one is, the closer he is to spirituality. In that state, his egoism is immense and ripe and can begin its path toward the spiritual world. All that is now left is to realize that the egoism is harmful and ask of the Creator to change his intention from 'receiving for himself' to 'receiving for the Creator.'

The shame appears in *Malchut of Ein Sof* when it understands the meaning of *Behinat Shoresh*, of *Keter*. It is a state where there is a sensation of absolute contrast between man and the light of the Creator. *Malchut* itself cannot feel the light, but only the properties the light evokes. The light itself has no properties. *Malchut* feels them because of the influence of the light.

All our reactions are compulsory and useful; the spiritual reactions of our soul as well as our animate, physical reactions. It is a common concept that all the diseases are a

consequence of attempts of the body to maintain its balance. Let us assume that one is sick with a certain illness: the body raises the temperature deliberately in order to fight the bacteria and defend itself. A disease is perceived not as a state of sickness, but as an external expression of something that happens in the body, a breach of the inner balance. That is why it is forbidden to 'kill' a symptom of a disease so as not to suppress the body's ability to defend itself.

Our egoism is highly sophisticated. If we feel a desire that we cannot satisfy, the egoism immediately suppresses it, so as not to cause us unnecessary anguish. But the minute the conditions ripen to attain that pleasure, the relevant desires awaken. That determination is also true for an old person, or a sick one. Such people have no other desires but to go on living. Our body suppresses unattainable desires.

The wisdom of Kabbalah completely denies the theory of evolution. The creature evolved according to the four phases of direct light, when *Behina Aleph* became *Behina Bet*, which turned into *Behina Gimel* etc. But when *Malchut of Ein Sof* was created, it absorbed all the desires of the upper ten *Sefirot* (four *Behinot*). They are now in it and cannot be changed in any way.

The appearance of the worlds and the *Partzufim* does not testify to a change in the desires, but to a change in the intent. This and that desire is activated according to the aim. The desires themselves remain unchanged, and do not create anything new that did not exist before. The same applies for thoughts we think today that we did not think yesterday. It is simply that they were concealed from us, but they were in us to begin with. They only appear gradually, but they are not new.

It is impossible to turn one degree of existence into another. For instance: breathing life into a still, or turning a plant into an animal and vice versa is impossible. There are intermediary degrees between the still and the vegetative natures, such as corals. Between the vegetative and the animate there is a form of life that feeds directly off the ground called "Field Dog". Between the animate and the speaking there is the ape. It is not completely an animal, yet cannot be turned into a human.

The only thing that could happen is if a Godly spark comes and pulls one toward the spiritual, and that creates in it a desire to attain something that is greater than this world, then man becomes the "son of Man". According to this definition of the Kabbalah, there aren't many people on earth who can be called "sons of Man". In fact, there are very few of them.

Science and technology have been developed only to lead us to a dead-end, to the understanding that this is not the way to go. But before we look for the new way, we must first reach that dead-end.

All the Kabbalists had students. It is strictly forbidden to classify students as better ones or not such good ones, or to ones that want spirituality more, or want it less. Every person is born with certain desires, and no person can say why he was created this or that way and his desires are the way they are. The classification and sorting processes happen naturally in the group and produce a stable and strong group.

The Ari formulated a new system. But even his disciples did not quite comprehend his system except Chaim Vital. There were great Kabbalists in the Ari's group, but none of them received his entire knowledge, except Chaim Vital. The method that the teacher uses depends on the kind of souls that descend to this world. There were other forms of study before the Ari, but starting from the discovery of his method, it became possible for everyone to study, provided they had a strong enough desire.

Baal HaSulam did not make any fundamental changes in the Ari's method, but only enhanced and deepened it. He wrote a detailed commentary to the books of the Ari and to the Zohar. It is thanks to this commentary that everyone who wants to study the wisdom of Kabbalah and draw nearer to the spiritual world, can comprehend the inner meaning of the text and find the true meaning of the books of the Torah.

Souls that came down to this world before the Ari received their spirituality on a superficial level. After the demise of the Ari, the souls that descended to the world studied and analyzed themselves and the spiritual world in a spiritual-scientific method. For that reason, the books that were written before the Ari are written as tales, whereas books that were written after his time are written in the style of *The Study of the Ten Sefirot*, in a language of *Behinot*, *Sefirot* and worlds. It is an engineered psychology, a scientific approach to the soul.

A Kabbalist does not need to practice this or that science and make experiments. He can provide all the explanations from the perspective of the Kabbalah, the origin of all sciences. Each science has its own language. If a Kabbalist is not a scientist he will find it difficult to describe this or that phenomenon in the professional terms of that science.

The Kabbalist feels the actual laws of the universe that are the origin of the material and spiritual essence. But what language should he use to describe the reciprocation between various phenomena? How should he describe the spiritual force that constitutes the foundation of this world, and what are the reciprocal relationships between spiritual objects? There is not a single formula in our world that can define these things. A Kabbalist can convey these feelings to another, but he cannot convey them to those who have not yet entered the spiritual world. Even if there were some way to convey a certain feeling, it would still be impossible to use it in our world, before one changes himself. If people would change their properties, we would be able to communicate in a spiritual language and perform spiritual acts.

Anyone receives and suffers according to the level he is in. Turning the anguish into something spiritual requires a screen. That cannot be given just like that; such a demand creates a barrier, a separation. That is why the wisdom of Kabbalah is also called "the wisdom of the hidden" (for those who have not attained it).

In the Preface to the Zohar, Baal HaSulam depicts four levels of recognition: matter, form dressed in matter, abstract form and essence. Our science can only deal with what concerns the matter and the form dressed in the matter. A form without a matter is a completely abstract concept that cannot be clearly analyzed. The essence, the thing that brings life to objects, or creates responses, is completely incomprehensible. The same thing happens in the spiritual world. A Kabbalist who learns something in spirituality, attain the matter and the form that is dressed in the matter, but a form that is not clothed in matter is unattainable for him. This means that the spiritual world also has its limitations in understanding and perception of the universe. But when a Kabbalist reaches a certain level, he receives a gift from above that opens before him all the secrets of the universe.

Chapter 3.2 – What Does Kabbalah Deal With?

The Method of Kabbalah

Scientists have discovered lately that plants react differently when different people approach them. For example, if a certain person harms a certain plant, the plant will remember it, and if that person approaches it, it will react with intensive internal ‘waves’. Fish and animals also feel the ‘other’ in various ways. Much like plants, the revelation of the Creator enables us to feel our surroundings, feel the other. That revelation occurs in the same senses in which we feel other people as ordinary people. That external sensation is absent in the still nature, and exists only a little in plants.

The science of Kabbalah deals with man’s revelation of the Creator. The Creator is outside us, as is everything that is around us. He is external, alien, He is even farther and more concealed than everything we see around us. He is behind our reality.

Our ability to feel our surroundings, as well as our other abilities and properties depends on the measurement of egoism in every creature. It is that property, the measurement of the desire for pleasure that develops the needs that each creature must satisfy and the properties and abilities.

Thus, all the properties in the animate nature, its ability to move and understand, exceed the abilities of the still nature. The same ratio exists between the animate and the human nature. The least egoism is expressed in the still nature, it only appears in statistic, physical laws for the preservation of the properties.

Such a low level of egoism creates only minimal needs, ones that do not necessitate any internal changes, which would express vitality and create the need for movement.

Corals are an intermediary state between the still and the vegetative because they have a greater amount of egoism, which renders them an attribute of growing.

Greater egoism begets the vegetative nature and the need to change, swallow and defecate, grow and react to external conditions and even develop a memory. The intermediary state between the vegetative and the animate nature is a plant that resembles an animal that has a body but still feeds on the minerals in the ground.

An even greater egoism produces many more types of living organisms, which are equipped with an ability to learn, remember, adapt and can move about freely, depending in their degree of egoism.

The characteristics of every species are a direct consequence of the amount of its egoistic desire. That is the only factor that emanates the appearance of this or that property or ability. Everything that characterizes any object stems from a single origin: its amount of egoism.

Thus, the ability of an object to feel outside itself exists even more intensively in mankind, for it is that which must attain the goal - the sensation of the Creator. But you can also say the opposite: because people can feel outside themselves, we can conclude that the purpose of the creation of mankind is to be in contact with the Creator.

Hence the enhanced ability to feel others compared to animals. However, in addition to this property, it is vitally important that we use our mind to enhance our sensitivity to others many times over. Through it, we become capable of feeling the joy and agony of others like us.

The mind helps us develop the sensation of the other more intensively. It asserts the idea that man is the only creature for whom the revelation of the Creator has been

prepared. For that, meaning in order to feel something external, something that is at first completely concealed, one must develop a full capacity to feel his environment the way it really is. One must be able to feel outside himself, meaning regardless of his personal egoistic interests.

We are constantly met with our inability to understand one another. It is our egoistic interest that does not allow us to feel outside ourselves, which does not let us come close to nature, to those who are like us, but rather drives us further away from each other. Therefore, if we want to make the most of our lives here, we must develop our ability to feel those who are like us and be able to understand them.

However, if we want to feel the Creator, we must develop more than just the ability to feel those who are like us, but also our minds. The enhanced intellectual ability will enable us to intensify that sensation many times over, relate to people around us impartially and even ignore our egoism altogether with our attitude to others. Such a person can feel the Creator to the extent that he can feel the others instead of himself. The more he is able to feel compared to people who are still in vegetative and animate degrees, the harder it will be for that person to describe the intense emotions he feels, to the point that it will become virtually impossible.

Moses developed the ability to feel ‘outside himself’ by himself. It is that ability that led him to attain the highest spiritual degree, and it is that ability that enabled him to speak face to face with the Creator.

The purpose of creation is to attain the sensation of the Creator, and the way to do it is formulated in the verse “Love thy neighbour as thyself.”

The degrees of our evolution, meaning the ability to feel and draw near Him are called degrees of spiritual growth. Every person as an individual and the whole of mankind are on a gradual path that leads to the purpose that the Creator had preordained.

The Creator pushes us in that path by inflicting pain on us, so as to force us to question the origin of the anguish. The examination of the origin of the pain should eventually lead us to understand that the best thing for us is the connection with the Creator, the connection with the strongest, eternal power that controls our lives. That connection accompanies us in this world and in the next.

Kabbalah should enhance our sensitivity to an objective perception of reality. It must lead mankind to an accurate analysis and recognition of the correct good and evil and realize that the evil is our very nature. It is our nature, that prevents us from seeing ‘past our own noses;’ we are compelled to think only with our ‘gut feeling’.

There is not a single form of study that explains the real purpose of creation and the method to attain it. Orthodox Jews think that the purpose of the Torah consists of study and performance of physical *Mitzvot* (precepts). In other words, they believe that one must perform *Mitzvot*, and that everything depends on how things are done in the flesh without any addition. This explains their view that all that they need to learn is how to perform physical actions, and that there isn’t and should not be any other consequence, much less in the form of changing one’s inner attributes.

Kabbalah maintains that the rules should not be kept as a goal in and of themselves, but that there is a completely different purpose to them. Our sages clearly say that the Creator cares not if we slaughter from the throat or from the back of the neck, meaning He does not care about the simple observing of the laws. That is not what He expects of man and that is not what He gave the *Mitzvot* for.

Those who turn the means for correction to an end and settle for it and determine that that is the way to live, teach others to stay away from Kabbalah, which states that the

rules are only a means to an end, while the goal we should strive for is to feel Him through a correct performance of His will and His counsel.

Man's purification is the Torah's real goal, and the observing of *Mitzvot* is only a means to attain it. If the performance is not directed toward this aim, but is done automatically, out of habit that has become a need, then it will not bear the right fruit.

It is as though a person who operates without this intent in mind simply does not exist! The Zohar writes about it, that a *Mitzva* without an aim and without a purpose is like a dead body (a body without a soul). Therefore, one must obtain the desired aim. Only then will he attain the purpose of his existence.

This intention to attain the purpose of his existence, the sensation of the Creator and unification with him must be a real one. It is the only reason for doing anything. Anything one does with this aim in mind is considered a *Mitzva*.

In other words, if one performs a *Mitzva* while thinking only of his egoistic purpose, it is as though he did nothing! That is how we should relate to every *Mitzva*. It is the only approach where the act helps one purify himself from his egoism.

It is not enough to learn the mechanical performance of rules. It is a lot more important to learn what will produce the right aim and obtain faith, meaning the sensation of the Creator. That study should precede the mechanical operation of rules. When one acquires the correct intention, then by keeping these statutes, which are in fact the desires of the Creator, he will actually become closer to the Creator.

We must emphasize that Kabbalah does not negate the physical performance of *Mitzvot*, only when the mechanical performance substitutes the internal. Mechanical performance of *Mitzvot* is only a preparation, and will bear fruit only if one actually acquires the spiritual intention in the act.

Before one performs *Mitzvot*, he should learn anything that will help him in acquiring the right aim. That is what Kabbalah books teach and nothing else!

Chapter 3.3 – The Structure of the Upper Worlds

Foreword

This course is based on the article "Preface to the Wisdom of Kabbalah", written by Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag. Rabbi Ashlag wrote this article as one of his introductions to the Sulam commentary that he wrote on the Zohar. According to the method of the Kabbalah, one learns about the extension of existence from above downward, from the Creator down to this world. Consequently, the student acquires means for spiritual elevation from below upward, exactly like those degrees of progressions from above downward that he learns about. This is in accordance with the definition of Kabbalah: "This wisdom is no more and no less, than a sequence of roots, which hang down by way of cause and consequence, with fixed, determined rules, interweaving to a single, exalted goal described as – "the revelation of His Godliness to His creatures in this world" (Rabbi Y. Ashlag, "The Essence of the Wisdom of Kabbalah").

The Necessity For Learning Kabbalah

"It is also evident, that it is impossible for the whole of Israel to attain this great purity, except by the study of the wisdom of Kabbalah, which is the easiest way, suitable for the unknowledgeable as well. But through the study of the literal Torah alone, it is impossible to attain it but for singled out individuals, and with great efforts, but not for the majority of the people" (Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag, Introduction to Talmud Eser Sefirot).

"The attainment begins from the hidden Torah, and only afterwards does one attain the remaining portions of the Torah, and only in the end does one attain the revealed Torah." (The Vilna Gaon. - the book of "Siddur").

"I have seen it written that the prohibition from above to refrain from open study in the wisdom of truth, was only for a limited period, until the end of 1490, but from then on the prohibition has been lifted and permission was granted to study the Zohar. Since 1540 it has been a great *Mitzva* (very good deed) for the masses to study in public, old and young... and that is because the Messiah will come because of that and not because of any other reason. Therefore, we must not be negligent" (Rabbi Azulai, Introduction to *Ohr Hochma*).

"Woe unto them that make the spirit of Messiah vanish from the world, so as never to return, make the Torah dry, without the moist of mind and knowledge, for they confine themselves to the practical part of the Torah, and do not wish to try and understand the wisdom of the Kabbalah, to know and educate themselves in the secrets and the reason behind the Torah and the precepts. Alas, they cause by their deeds the poverty, the ruin and the robbery, the looting, the killings and destruction in the world" ("Tikkunei Zohar", tikkun No. 30).

"The Study of the book of Zohar is preferable and above all other studies" (The CHIDAH).

"Redemption depends primarily on the study of the Kabbalah" (The Vilna Gaon. - "Even Shlema" 11,13).

"On the learning of the Zohar there are no restrictions..." (The Chafetz Chaim).

"If my generation had listened to my voice, they would have started to study the book of Zohar at the age of nine. Thus, they would have acquired the fear of heaven instead of secular sciences" (Rabbi Isaac from Kamarna. The book "Notzar Chesed").

“When one as much as reads the words... what is it like? It is like a sick person who drinks a therapeutic potion that helps, although one is not proficient in the wisdom of medicine” (Remez, part 3, page 2).

"In the future only with the help of the book of Zohar will the children of Israel go out from the exile." (The Book of Zohar. - parashat Naso).

Chapter 3.4 - Fundamentals

Preface to the lessons

It is written in the book of the Zohar that all of the worlds, both upper and lower, are found within man. The entire reality was created for man alone. However, while we feel that we are inside reality, we do not feel that reality is inside us. Why is this world alone not sufficient for man? Does he need the other worlds - the upper ones, and what they contain?

In order to understand this one would need to learn the entire wisdom of Kabbalah: The reason for the creation of this reality was the will of the Creator to benefit his creations. Therefore the Creator created the creature with a desire to receive that which the Creator wanted to give him - and this desire is the creature's nature.

The Creator is above and transcends space and time. His thought works like an act itself. Therefore when it came before His will and thought to create the creatures and fill them with enjoyments, so it happened that all the worlds were immediately created with all the creatures, and all were filled with the delights that they received from the Creator.

If so, then why did the Creator create from His essence all the worlds down to this world, and lower the creature unto our low degree? The Ari (Rabbi Yitzchak Luria) answers this question in his book *Etz Chaim* (The Tree of Life): "In order to reveal the perfection of his deeds." However, in the creation of the worlds, and in the descent of the creatures, is revealed instead the imperfection of the works of the Creator! But the answer is: this was done in order that the creatures would perfect themselves, that they would reach the degree of the Creator on their own, which is the only perfection.

Hence the Creator created the ladder of the worlds. Through this ladder the souls descend unto the lowest rung, in which they are clothed in bodies (in desire to receive) of this world. By means of learning Kabbalah the souls begin to ascend on that ladder until they all return to the Creator.

The Soul consists of light and vessel. The light of the soul comes from the Creator, from His essence. The vessel of the soul, i.e. the desire to receive light and benefit from Him, is created by means of this light. Hence, the vessel is a perfect fit for the light, which comes to fill it. The essence of the soul is the vessel, because the light is a portion of the Creator. Consequently only the vessel is considered a creature. It is created out of nothing; that is to say, that this will did not exist before the Creator decided to create it.

Since the Creator wanted to benefit His vessel in a complete manner, as is fit for Him, He created this extremely large vessel (that is to say this desire to receive), according to the greatness of the light (enjoyment) that He wanted to give.

This Creation is an innovation, which never existed before. This innovation is called "Existence out of Absence". However, if the Creator is complete, how can there be anything that is not included in Him? According to what we have already said, it is clear that that which was not in the Creator prior to creation, is the desire to receive.

The desire to receive cannot be in the Creator because He is complete. But if He is complete, shouldn't He also have the desire to receive? The answer is NO. If He had the desire to receive that would mean that He wants something He does not have; which would mean that He lacks something. It is impossible to say that because He is complete, and hence lacks nothing. And, that which He needed to Create - this is only

the desire to receive from Him, because He wants to give. Consequently, He only created the desire to receive, for everything else is already present in the Creator.

Connection, in the spiritual realm, occurs as a result of the equivalence of characteristics (desires or wills). Separation, in the spiritual realm, occurs as a result of a difference in characteristics (desires or wills). If two spiritual entities have one form, have the same desires (or wills), the same goal - they are attached together, and they are one, and not two. The reason for this is that in the spiritual realm there are no bodies. The spiritual world is a world of wills (or desires), 'raw' powers, wills that are not clothed in any sort of substance. But the "desire to receive for himself" is called substance and body.

Therefore, if all the wills (or desires) of two spiritual entities are equal, then they are one. They are one because there is not a thing that separates them from one another. It is possible to distinguish that there are two, and not just one, if there is a difference of form between them. They are only separated from one another, as much as there is change in form between them. If everything in one is equal to the other, then they are one. If everything in one is opposite to the other, then they are as far from one another as the east from west. If among all the desires they have but one in common, then they touch one another via this common will. If their wills resemble each other's more or less, then according to the equivalence or change of form, they are close or far apart.

We have no conception of the Creator Himself. Therefore we cannot say even a single word about Him. But from His actions that we experience on ourselves, are we able to understand Him and name Him according to that which we experience of Him.

We learn from the attainment of the Kabbalists that the Creator has only a will to bestow. (A Kabbalist is a *Mekubal* in Hebrew, from the word Receive, because they receive from the Creator). He created everything in order to bestow upon us good from His goodness. Therefore He created us with the desire to receive that which He wants to give to us. This desire to receive is our entire nature.

However, this causes us to end up being in an opposite form to the Creator's. The reason is that He is totally and exclusively just to bestow, and has no desire to receive. We, on the other hand, are made exclusively of the desire to receive for ourselves – as thus we were created by Him. But, if we remained only with this desire to receive for ourselves we would remain forever distant from the Creator.

However, people who live in this world, and also live and experience the reality of the upper spiritual realms, are called Kabbalists. Therefore we have the opportunity to hear from them things about the Creator, which we ourselves have not yet experienced. And they tell us that the Creator is the absolute good, and created everything in order to give us good. The Kabbalists tell us further, that the Creator is perfect and complete, and therefore His actions as well must of necessity be both perfect and complete.

But how is it possible that from a complete and perfect Worker can imperfect and incomplete works emerge to begin with - that His works must still be mended? Creation is only the desire to receive, and from this aspect it is imperfect and incomplete since this will is opposite to that of the Emanator. Hence they are in a state of separation. However, it is specifically the desire to receive which makes it possible for the creature to carry out the will of the Creator, i.e., to receive everything that the Creator wishes to give him.

However, when the Creator gives and the creature receives from Him, they are separated. This is because the manner of their actions diverges. And if the creature

would remain a receiver, then he would not be perfect and complete. Consequently, the Creator would also not be able to be called "perfect and complete", because from a perfect and complete worker come forth only perfect and complete works.

Therefore the Creator restricted His light and created this world with restriction-by-restriction, until this world, the most darkened place, finally emerged. In this world the creature is found to have the desire to receive for himself alone. Therefore the light in it is so slight that the source of life is not even sensed.

However, by means of the proper use of "Torah and *Mitzvot*" (this will be explained in the following lessons), a person obtains the completeness and perfection that he lacks since the time of creation. What is this completeness and perfection? It is that he obtains equivalence of form with the Creator. That he too gives, like the Creator. And then he is worthy of receiving all of the good and the enjoyment included in the thought of Creation. And he is also found to be in a state of adhesion with the Creator - in equivalence of form, having identical desires and thoughts.

There is a *segulah* (a special property, a remedy) in the correct practice of "Torah and *Mitzvot*": a person receives a spiritual power, which brings him to equalize his will with that of the Creator. However this power will only be revealed and act in a person subject to the condition that he practices "Torah and *Mitzvot*", not in order to receive any reward for himself, but only in order to bestow contentment upon the Creator.

There are five degrees in the equivalence of form with the Creator: *Nefesh, Ruach, Neshama, Haya, Yechida (NRNHY)*. He attains those five degrees from the five worlds – *Adam Kadmon, Atzilut, Beria, Yetzira, and Assiya*. Each degree has its own five inner degrees as well. Thus, there are in totality 125 degrees from this world to the top of the ladder.

By practicing "Torah and *Mitzvot*" in order to bring contentment to the Creator, a person slowly merits and attains (degree by degree) the vessels of the will to bestow. This way a person climbs these degrees one by one, until he reaches complete equivalence of form. Thus the thought of creation is carried out in man, which is to receive all the enjoyment and perfection that the Creator prepared for him. And his greatest benefit is that he attains true adhesion by attaining the desire to bestow, as the Creator does.

See what is written: "All of the worlds, upper and lower, and everything within them were not created but for man." All these degrees and worlds only serve to complete the will of Man, in order to help him acquire equivalence of form with the Creator, which he lacks by nature of creation.

In the beginning, successive worlds and degrees went through a progressive process of restrictions and developments, up until our own material world, in order come to a body of this world, which is a desire only to receive and not to bestow. On this degree a man is like an animal or a beast, which is the complete desire to receive, denied of any bestowal. In such a state man is the complete opposite to the Creator, of which there is no greater separation.

If a person studies Kabbalah, he invokes the surrounding light to illuminate upon him from afar. This light is found outside of the vessel (the person's will) and waits until man fixes his vessel and shapes it into a form of bestowal to the Creator - and then the light enters it. Therefore this surrounding light is called the light of *Neshama*. By learning Kabbalah this light clothes itself in man's will and helps him attain the form of bestowal.

Man only attains this desire to bestow gradually, from below upward, by the same route the degrees descended during the time of development from above downward. All the degrees are measures of desire to bestow. The higher the degree, the farther it is from the desire to receive, and closer to the desire to bestow.

A person gradually acquires all the degrees, until he merits to become “entirely for bestowal”, not receiving anything for himself. Then a person has reached completion, with a true adhesion. This is the goal of creation, and is the only reason for which man was created.

Once a person knows all this, he is permitted to study the wisdom of Kabbalah without any fear of anthropomorphism. Because studying Kabbalah without proper guidance confuses the student: On the one hand, all the *Sefirot* and *Partzufim* (spiritual objects) from the world of *Atzilut* to the world of *Assiya* are complete Godliness and are united with the Creator. However, how could it be possible that this should be of Godliness: that all of the worlds are innovations, coming after the restriction, that they have all different types of changes, numbers, above, below, ascents, descents, couplings?

From that which was explained it is clear that all of these changes - ascents, descents, restrictions, and numbers - are seen from the perspective of the receiving souls. It is possible to divide the entire reality in two divisions: potential and actual.

It is much like a man who builds a house. In his thought he already has a house, however, the ‘substance’ of that house cannot be compared to the ‘substance’ of the house that has been actually built. This is because in theory, the house is composed of a substance of thought, and is a potential house. However, when the house begins to turn from thought to action, it takes on a different substance - that of trees and stones.

Thus it is possible to distinguish potential and actual in the souls as well: the emanating of the souls from the Creator ‘in fact’ begins only at the world of *Beria*. Therefore, all the changes that occur before the world of *Beria* are considered ‘potential’, without any tangible distinction from the Creator.

Therefore it is said that all the souls are already included in *Malchut* of *Ein Sof* (infinite), in the middle point of the entire existence. It is because this point in ‘potential’ includes the vessels of the souls, which are to emerge in ‘fact’ from the world of *Beria* and under. The first restriction was made in the middle point only in the aspect of ‘potential’ with respect to the future souls.

All the vessels and the worlds from the first restriction up, until the world of *Beria*, emerged and developed from the middle point, and they are only ‘potential’ worlds, with respect to the souls. Only when souls begin to emerge in fact, from the world of *Beria* and under, the changes in the degrees of these worlds begin to influence them.

It is much like a person who conceals and hides himself with clothes and concealments, in order that he should not be seen and sensed. With respect to himself, he certainly remains as he was originally. Similarly the ten Sefirot (*Keter, Hochma, Bina, Hesed, Gevura, Tifferet, Netzah, Hod, Yesod, Malchut*) are only ten concealments, inside which the *Ein Sof* conceals and hides itself from the souls.

The light of *Ein Sof* is in a state of absolute rest, and so it is when it shines from within the concealments. However, since the souls receive the light of *Ein Sof* through the concealments, they feel as if changes occur in the light. Therefore the souls, which receive the light, are divided into ten degrees, in accordance with the divisions in the concealments.

All these concealments are only from the world of *Beria* and under, because only there do the souls that receive from the ten *Sefirot* via the concealments exist. In the worlds of *Adam Kadmon* and *Atzilut* the souls do not yet exist, because there they are only in 'potential'.

Despite the fact that the ten concealments in the ten *Sefirot* rule only in the worlds of *Beria*, *Yetzira* and *Assiya*, the ten *Sefirot* are nonetheless considered to be Godliness just like before the first restriction.

The only difference in the vessels of the ten *Sefirot* is that in the worlds of *Adam Kadmon* and *Atzilut*, they are potential vessels, whereas from *BYA* (*Beria*, *Yetzira*, *Assiya*) the vessels of the ten *Sefirot* begin to manifest their covering power and concealment. However, the light in them remains unchanged as a result of the concealments.

If in the worlds of *Adam Kadmon* and *Atzilut* the souls (who are the receivers) are not revealed yet, then what are these vessels of *Adam Kadmon* and *Atzilut* used for, and for whom are they hiding and conceal themselves? The answer is that in the future, when the worlds of *BYA*, together with the souls in them will ascend there, then they will receive according to the degree of the ten *Sefirot* that are in *Atzilut*, or *Adam Kadmon*.

It has been explained that the worlds, the innovations, the changes, and the degrees, all refer only to the vessels, which bestow to the souls and measure out to them so that they might receive from the light of the *Ein Sof*.

However, when the souls ascend in the degrees, they do not make any changes in the light of *Ein Sof* itself, because all the concealments do not affect the one who is concealed, but only the one who wants to perceive the one who is concealed, and receive from him.

One can distinguish three aspects in the *Sefirot* and *Partzufim* (spiritual objects) wherever they are found: the Creator's Essence, vessels, and lights. The receivers have no thought and perception of the Essence of the Creator.

There are always two contradictory aspects in the vessels: concealment and disclosure. In the beginning the vessel hides the Essence of the Creator so that the ten vessels in the ten *Sefirot* are ten degrees of concealment. However, after the souls receive these vessels with all the conditions in them, these concealments are changed into revelations for the attainment of the souls.

These two contradictory aspects in the vessel become as one, because the measure of revelation in the vessel precisely matches the amount of concealment in the vessel. And the coarser the vessel, the more it conceals His Essence, and the larger stature of the Creator it reveals.

The lights in the *Sefirot* are the same stature, worthy of appearing for the attainment of the souls. While on the one hand everything extends from the Creator's Essence, the apprehension in the light is nonetheless only according to the characteristics of the vessel. Therefore there must be ten lights and ten vessels - that is to say, ten degrees of revelation to the receivers, according to the characteristics of those vessels. Thus, there cannot be a difference between the light and the Creator's Essence, but only in what reaches us from the Creator, through its clothing in the vessels of the ten *Sefirot*. Therefore anything attained we name "Light".

Chapter 3.5 - The Four Phases in the Evolution of the Vessel

Kabbalists attained spirituality and wrote about it in their books. They perceived that the root of the entire reality is a supreme power, which they named “His Essence”, because they could not attain the power itself. However, they did manage to perceive that there is a thought, an aim, to create creatures in order to delight, which comes from His Essence. They named that thought and aim “The Thought of Creation”, or “Upper Light.” It turns out that toward the creature, the light is the Creator, because he cannot attain his essence. Hence the Creator-creature contact is maintained through the upper light.

In short, there is a light that stems from His essence, which wants to create a creature and delight him by filling him with pleasure. Meaning, the purpose of the light is to create a creature that would feel the light as pleasure. The Kabbalists therefore called the creature “Vessel” and the light “Filling.” The light that stems from his essence in order to create the creature is called *Behinat Shoresh* (Root Phase), because it is the root of the entire reality. That light then creates a desire to take pleasure in the light. The desire for pleasure is also called “Will to Receive” (light).

The intensity of the pleasure depends only on the intensity of the desire to receive it, just as in our world one may have an empty stomach, but no desire to eat. Hence, the desire is the vessel for the filling, and without it there is no pleasure. There is no coercion in spirituality and the filling is always only as much as the desire.

The light that stems from his essence creates a vessel and fills it. The pleasure that the creature feels when it receives the light is called *Ohr Hochma* (light of Wisdom). The desire created by the light that fills it is called *Behina Aleph* (First Phase). It is called by that name because it is the first *Behina* (appearance/manifestation) of the future vessel. But that desire is not yet an independent one, as it is created directly by the light. The actual creature is the one that wants to enjoy the entire light that comes from the Creator by itself; its desire and decision to delight in the light must come from within it, and not be imprinted in it by the Creator.

In order to receive light, the creature must know the intensity of the pleasure in the light ahead of time. Then it must be filled with light, and then feel what it is like to be without the light. Only then is the real desire for the light created.

In much the same as it happens in our own life, when a person is given a new fruit to taste, one that he has never tried before, he has no preliminary desire for it. But if he tastes it and feels the pleasure in it, and the fruit is then taken away from him, then he begins to crave it and wishes to bring back the pleasure. It is precisely that desire, that is the new desire born in man; that is what he feels as an independent will.

Hence, it is impossible to build the vessel all at once. In order for the desire to know what to delight in, and feel that he himself wants to enjoy, he must go through the entire chain of events. That condition is presented as a law in Kabbalah: “The expansion of the light and its departure, make the vessel worthy of its task,” which is to receive light and enjoy it. The phases of the evolution of the desire are called *Behinot* (phases/distinctions/observations) because they are phases in the building of distinctions/observations in the will to receive.

Thus, along with the pleasure, the light renders the vessel with the attribute of bestowal. And the vessel suddenly discovers, while enjoying the light that it wants to give, just like the nature of the light that fills it. The reason for that is that the Creator premeditatedly rendered the light with the ability to convey its own attribute along

with the desire to bestow. It turns out, that once the light fills up the vessel in the first phase, it feels that it wants to be like the Creator. And because this is an entirely new desire, it is an entirely new observation, named *Behina Bet* (Second Phase).

Behina Bet is a desire to give. The pleasure it feels at resembling the Creator is called the Light of Mercy. Thus we see that *Behina Aleph* is opposite to *Behina Bet* in that the desire of *Behina Aleph* is the will to receive, whereas that of *Behina Bet* is the will to bestow. The light in *Behina Aleph* is a light of wisdom, and that of *Behina Bet* is a light of mercy.

When the will to receive in *Behina Aleph* begins to enjoy the light that fills it, it immediately feels that the light is the giver of the pleasure and that she is the receiver of the pleasure, and thus begins to want to be like the light itself: she doesn't want to receive the pleasure, but to give it, like the light. Hence, the will to receive in her leaves and she remains empty of the light of wisdom, because pleasure can be felt only when there is a desire for it.

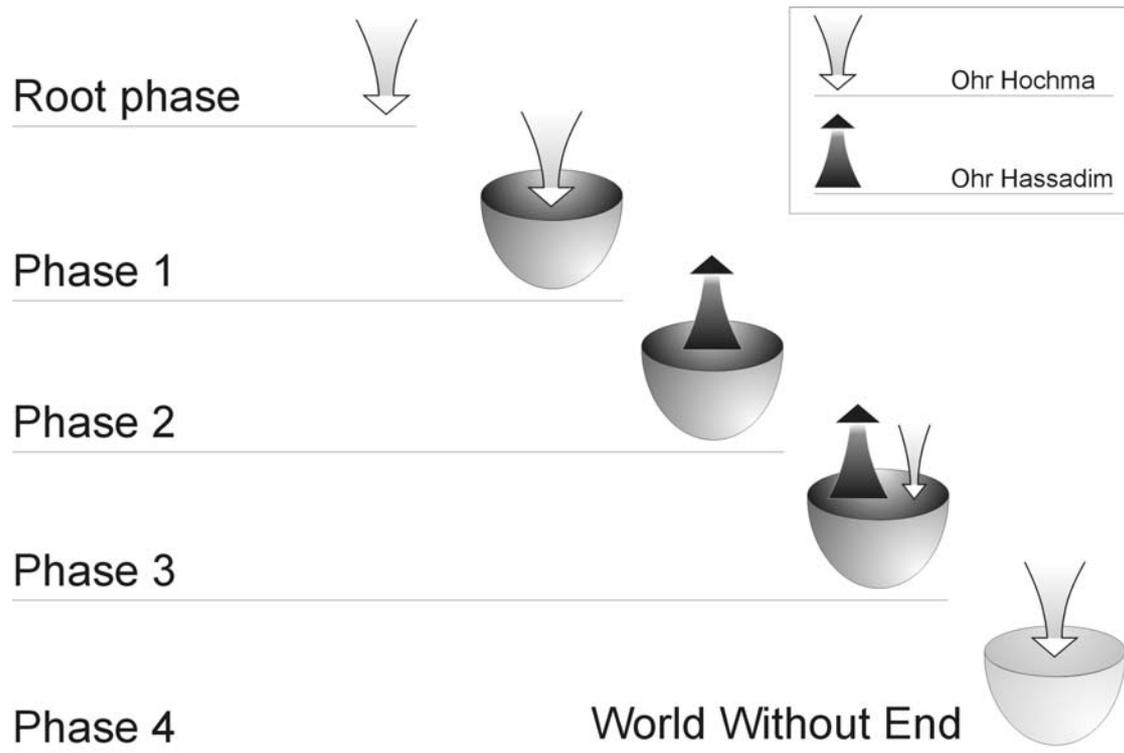
The will to receive cannot remain without the light of wisdom, because the light of wisdom is its livelihood. Therefore she must take in a little bit of the light of wisdom. Thus, this new desire, called *Behina Gimel* (Third Phase) consists of two desires:

- A desire to resemble the light.
- A desire to receive a small amount of light of wisdom.

It turns out the vessel now feels two lights: the light of mercy in the will to bestow, and the light of wisdom in the will to receive.

When *Behina Gimel* receives light, she feels that of the two lights, the light of wisdom, the light of life, is more consistent with her nature. She then decides to receive it fully. Thus an independent desire for the reception of that light of wisdom, i.e. the very desire that the Creator wants to fill the creature with, is now created.

We see that the light that emanates from His essence creates a vessel in four steps. That is why that final desire, named *Behina Dalet* (Fourth Phase), is in fact the only creature. All the phases that preceded it were only phases in its evolution. In fact, the entire creation is comprised of that fourth phase. Everything that exists, except for the Creator, is that *Behina Dalet*. This *Behina Dalet* is named *Malchut* (Kingship), because the will to receive governs in it.



Picture of the Four Phases

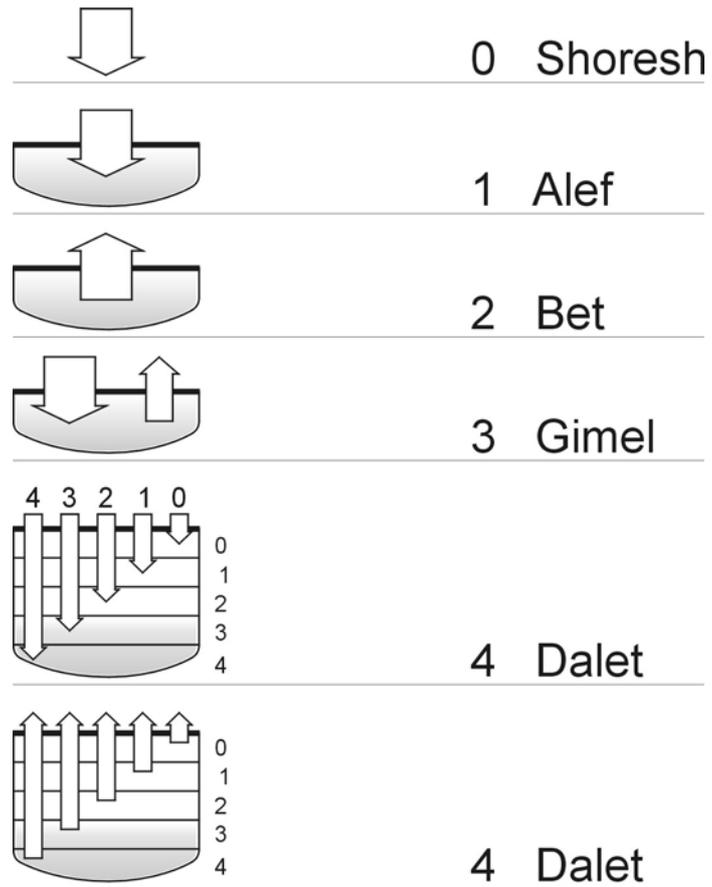
Four Phases

The fourth phase is the only creature. It is divided into outer parts and inner parts. The outer consists of *Sefirot*, *Partzufim*, worlds, and our world, and the still, vegetative and animate. The inner part consists of the human souls. The difference between those parts is only in the magnitude of the will to receive that they have.

When the fourth phase is entirely filled with light of wisdom, it is called *Olam Ein Sof* (World Without End), because its desire doesn't limit the reception of the light. The fourth phase receives through the four prior phases: Root, First, Second, and Third. It turns out that the fourth phase is divided into five parts (including its own phase) of will to receive.

Four Phases that Precede the Fourth Phase, With its Five Phases

Summary: Light comes from the Creator, i.e. the Root Phase. The light then creates a creature, i.e. the fourth phase, in four phases. The essence of the creature is the desire to receive pleasure. The pleasure is the sensation of the light within the desire. The fourth phase is then divided into four inner parts, which receive light from the four preliminary phases. The fourth phase, filled with light of wisdom, is called the World of *Ein Sof* (no end). The parts of the fourth phase are called souls and worlds. The worlds contain *Partzufim*, *Sefirot* and everything that is not souls.



Picture of 4th phase with 5 phases within Malchut

Chapter 3.6 - The First Restriction – Screen – Partzuf

When light of wisdom fills up the will to receive in the first phase, it also gives it its nature – that of bestowal. That is why in the end, meaning after having felt the nature of the light that fills it, the first phase changes its desire from that of reception to that of bestowal.

The light works the same way in the fourth phase, once it exits the third phase after having filled itself with light of wisdom, and it too begins to want to give, like the nature of the light inside it. As a result, the desire to receive disappears from the fourth phase.

The light gives the vessel its desire to bestow when it fills up the vessel, because the vessel feels not only the pleasure from the light, but the desire of the giver as well. The Creator could have created a vessel that would not feel him as a giver, but only the pleasure at reception. That's how People with an undeveloped will to receive and children feel like in our world, as well as insensitive and mentally unstable individuals.

Once the child grows, he begins to be ashamed to receive. That sensation is so developed in man, that he would choose any pain in the world over the pain at the sensation of shame. This attribute was created by the Creator, especially so that we would be able to use it to rise above our nature, which is the will to receive.

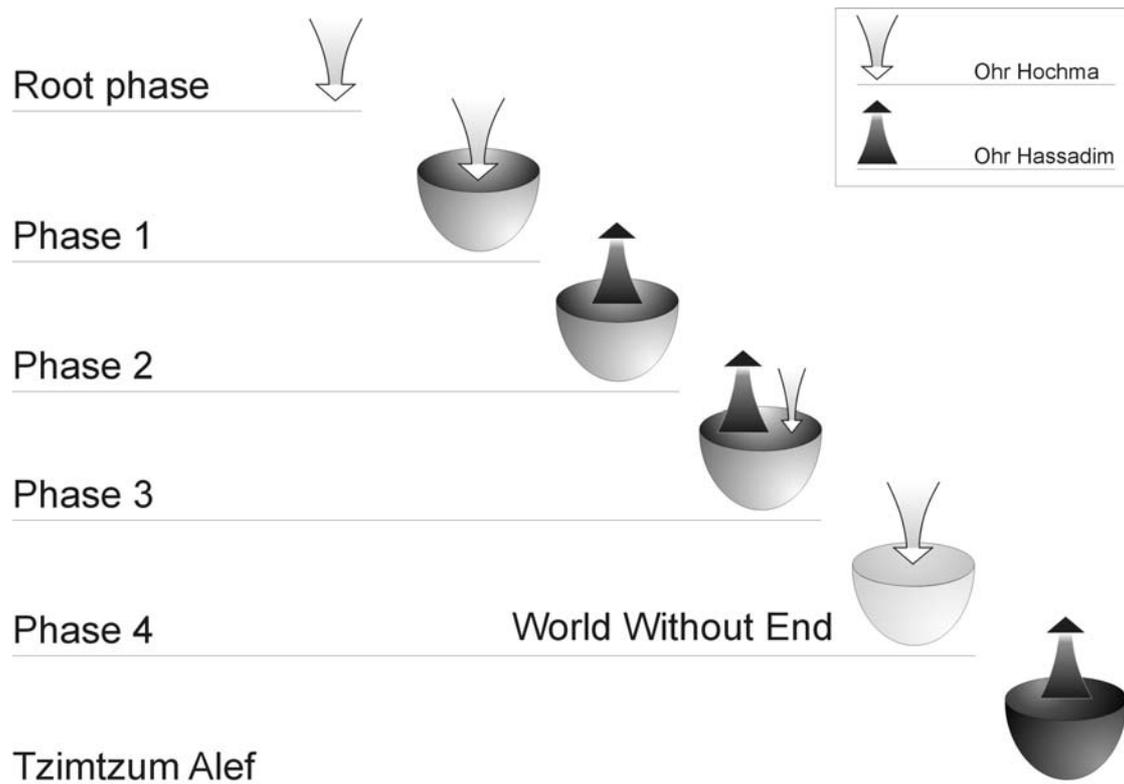
In order to be ashamed at receiving, we must feel that we are receiving. That is possible only if there is a giver, and we feel his existence. If I don't feel the host, I will not be ashamed. But if he's standing right in front of me, then I will be ashamed. I cannot receive directly; because I have to relate to him, give him something in return for what I receive, which turns it into a tradeoff rather than mere reception. Then I too become a giver, because he too receives from me.

The sensation of the Creator awakens in *Malchut* such intense pain at the reception that she decides never again to use her will to receive pleasure for herself. That decision of *Malchut*, to not receive light for herself, is called "Restriction." The name "First Restriction" indicates that this is the first time something like this happens.

The progression of light leading to the restriction

By not receiving light, *Malchut* stops being the receiver, but she still gives nothing to the Creator; she still does not attain her desire to be like the light, the giver of the pleasure. By not receiving pleasure from the Creator, *Malchut* does not attain the equivalence of form. Thus we see that the first restriction is not an end, but a means to acquire the ability to give.

The purpose of the Creator in creation was that *Malchut*, the creature, would receive pleasure. That thought of creation is unchanging. Because of that the Creator continues to pressure *Malchut* to receive it. *Malchut* feels that the restriction is not enough to attain the status of the giver, but how can the creature, whose only attribute is that of reception, give anything to the Creator?



By feeling her upper nine attributes (the attributes of the Creator that *Malchut* feels inside her), which comprise the way the Creator relates to *Malchut*, she begins to understand how she can give back to the Creator: she decides that if she would receive the light and enjoy it, but only because the Creator enjoys her delight, then that would make her reception tantamount to bestowal. The reception of the pleasure by the receiver in order to please the giver turns an act of reception into one of bestowal. If *Malchut* receives the entire light (pleasure) that the Creator had prepared for her, then she will give the Creator just as much as he is giving her.

For example: there is a guest and a host. The host treats his guest with delicacies just as the guest would love to have. (The desire is in perfect fit with the light in both quantity and quality, because the pleasure-light created the vessel-desire this way). But although the guest is very hungry, the presence of the host makes him feel ashamed, and that stops him from eating. The shame stems from the fact that he feels himself as a receiver, and the host as a giver. The shame is so strong that he can no longer eat. But the constant pleas of the host, who have prepared it all for him, finally persuade him that the host will enjoy it if he eats. Then the guest thinks that if now, after having rejected the pleasure several times he will agree to eat, it will be considered a favour to the host. By that he will in fact become the giver, the host the receiver.

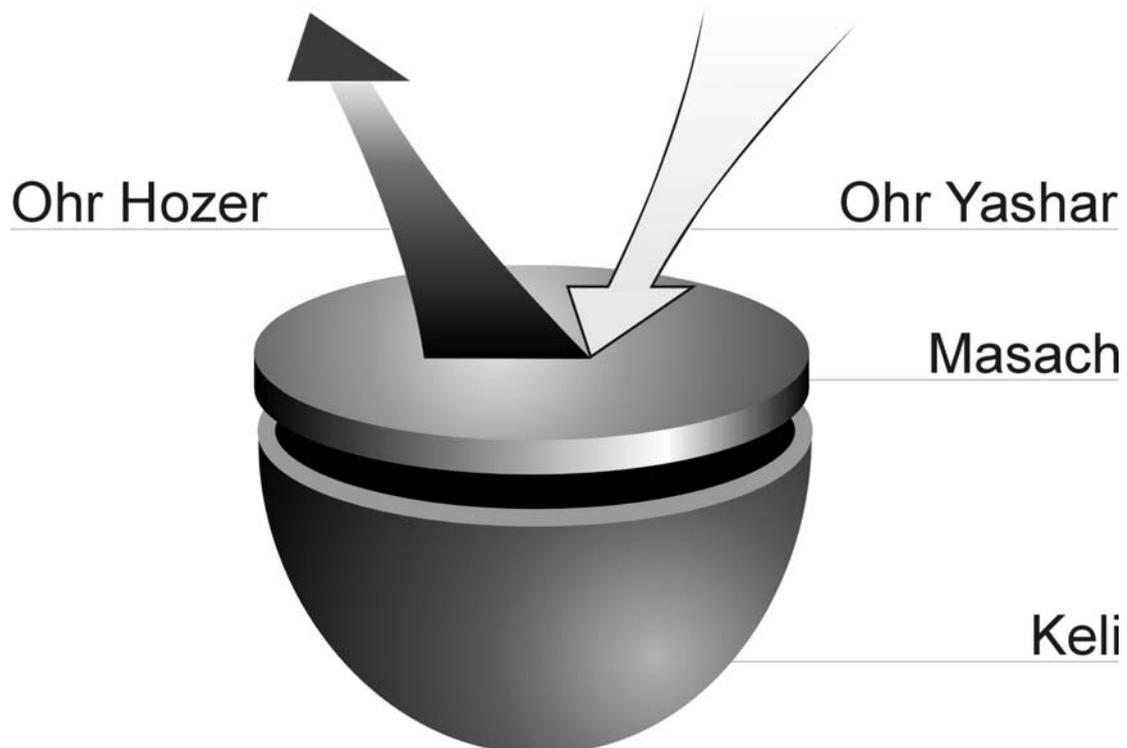
The hunger, the desire to receive delight and pleasure, is referred to in Kabbalah as a Vessel. The pleasure emanating from the Creator is called Direct Light, and the power to reject it is called a Screen. The light that is rejected from the screen is then referred to as Returning Light. With the power of the screen, i.e. the force to reject enjoying for himself and taking pleasure only for the Creator, the vessel can face its own will to receive. It might be possible to understand that the vessel rejects the light, but it would be more accurate to say that the vessel rejects the use of the desire in order to please itself.

The Screen Rejecting the Light

The vessel cannot return light to the Creator, but only change the intention. The intention to delight the Creator is what we call the Returning Light. Light is only an appellation for pleasure. Direct light is tantamount to the pleasure that the Creator wants to render the creature. Returning light is the pleasure that the creature wants to give the Creator.

Once the vessel (guest) is certain that he will not receive for himself, he examines the magnitude of his returning light (how much pleasure he wants to give the Creator) and decides to receive from the abundance before him, i.e. the direct light, which are the delicacies and pleasures the host has prepared for him, but only as much as he can eat in order to please (delight) the Creator, i.e. the host.

Kabbalists are people who feel the light that comes from the Creator and every action he performs, but when they write about spirituality, they convey their feelings in ‘technical’ terms. Therefore, only if the reader has the screen and the strength the books write about, can he translate the words into feelings by repeating the same acts he reads about.



The light stems directly from the Creator, hence the name Direct Light, and wants to dress the vessel, but then it collides with the screen. The screen rejects the light, meaning refuses to receive it in order to receive, by which the vessel asserts the limitation of the first restriction, which is to not receive for itself. Once the vessel is certain it will not receive for itself, it calculates how much it can receive in order to

bestow (delight the Creator). The sensation of the light and the calculation of how much of it to receive is done prior to the actual reception, and the part that decides and premeditates it is therefore called *Rosh* (Head), and the place where the screen is located is called *Peh* (mouth).

After the decision in the *Rosh* has been made, the vessel receives the light into the part called *Toch* (inside, internality). This is the part of the vessel where the reception is actually made (the sensation of the pleasure inside the will to receive). The light of wisdom (the pleasure) is then received with the intention to delight the Creator. That intent is called *Ohr Hassadim* (Light of Mercy). In Kabbalistic terms it would sound like this: direct light clothes the returning light, and the light of wisdom clothes the light of mercy.

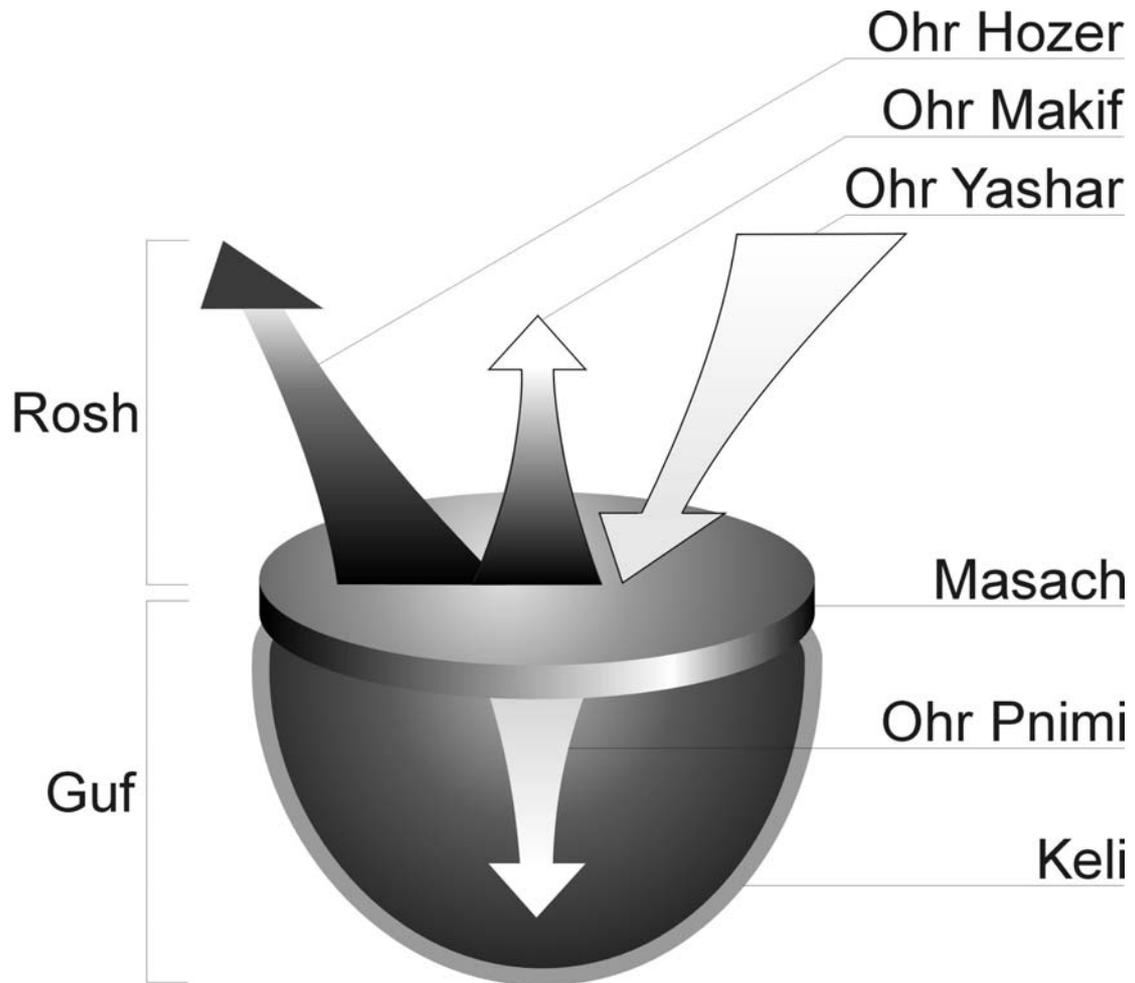
The vessel can receive only a small portion of the light that stems from the Creator because the screen doesn't have sufficient strength to receive all of it. That is why there is a part in it that is filled with pleasure and a part that remains empty. The part that remains empty is called *Sof* (End). We can now see that the creature is comprised of three parts: *Rosh*, *Toch*, *Sof*. Together they comprise what we call a *Partzuf* (Face). The *Guf* (Body) of the *Partzuf* (all its desires) is divided into *Toch*, which receives light, and *Sof*, which remains empty.

The border inside the *Guf* (Body) of the *Partzuf*, where the light stops, is called *Tabur* (Navel).

The light that is received inside the *Partzuf* is called Inner Light.

The part that remains outside the *Partzuf* is called Surrounding Light.

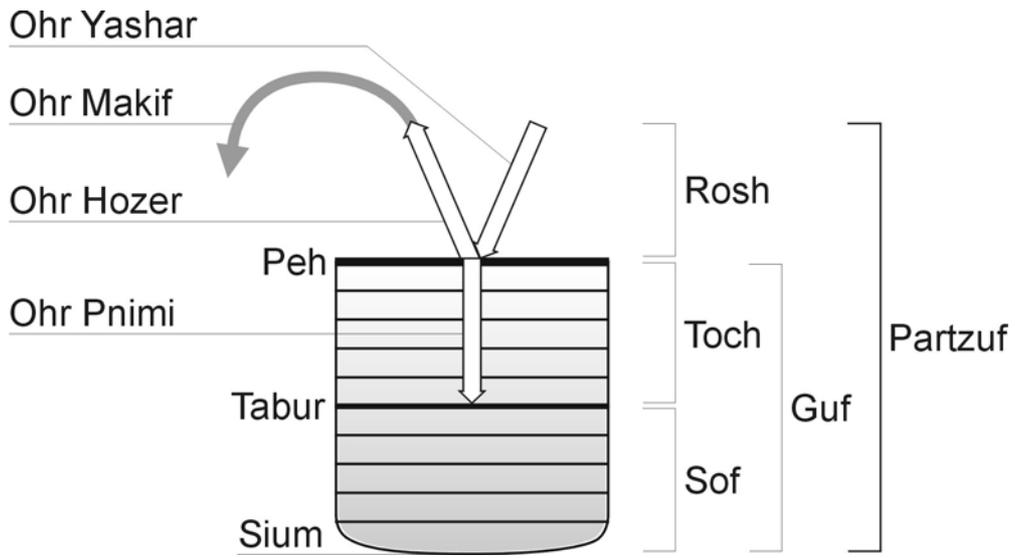
Direct light is divided by the screen into inner and surrounding lights.



The Expansion of the Inner Light Into the *Partzuf*

Malchut consists of five phases. The screen decides how much to receive in each phase. Each phase is then divided into a part that receives and a part that does not, which is why there are five phases in the *Toch* and five in the *Sof*.

Summary: When the light corrects the vessel, it gives it the will of the Creator. That is actually what we need, for the light to come (the very same surrounding light that we awaken during the study if we want to attain the purpose of creation) and correct us to want to become like the Creator in everything we do, meaning to bestow. That is the uniqueness of the Kabbalah, and that is its importance. The study awakens the surrounding light that corrects man.

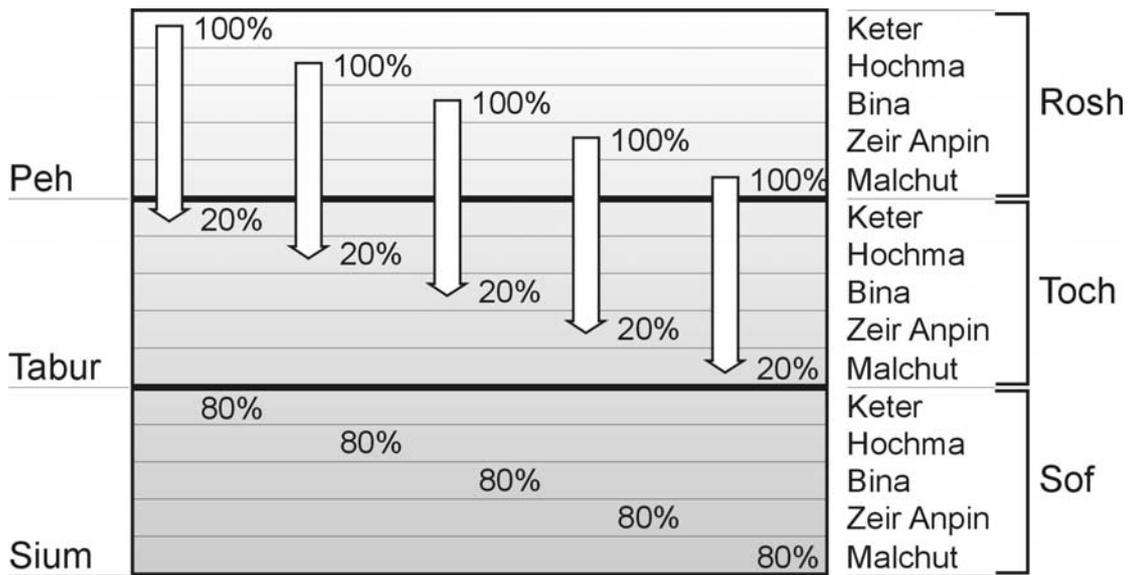


The Inner Structure of a *Partzuf*

Chapter 3.7 - Expansion And Withdrawal of Light

Once *Malchut* decides to receive some of the direct light into her *Toch*, she stops receiving. *Malchut* always calculates in the *Rosh* (head) what is the maximum amount of light she can receive in order to bestow. She always receives only a small part of the direct light because receiving in order to benefit the Creator is against her nature.

The part of direct light that remains outside the vessel is called Surrounding Light. It continues to pressure the vessel, which limits its expansion in the *Partzuf* and wants to break through the screen and fill up the entire vessel, including the *Sof* (end) of the *Partzuf*, just as it was prior to the restriction.



The *Partzuf* understands that if it only receives a part of the light, meaning if it only fills itself as far as the *Tabur* (navel) and remains in that situation, the thought of creation would not be carried out. In order for it to be carried out the entire light must fill *Malchut* as it did prior to the restriction, except with the aim to bestow. But if the *Partzuf* receives more light, meaning it receives below the *Tabur*, that would be reception in order to receive, because it doesn't have a screen with which to activate these vessels in order to bestow.

Thus, the *Partzuf* decides to not receive altogether and return to the situation from before the reception. That decision is taken in the *Rosh* of the *Partzuf*, as do all decisions. Once the decision has been made, the screen that dropped from the *Peh* (mouth) to *Tabur* begins to rise back up to the *Peh*. The ascent of the screen makes the lights exit the *Partzuf* through the *Peh* to the *Rosh*.

The decision to stop receiving the light was made because there is a pressure on the screen that stands at the *Tabur* by the surrounding light to let it into the *Partzuf* and become inner light as well, while the inner light also keeps pushing down. These two lights want to cancel the screen, which serves as a border that doesn't let the lights through. The pressure the lights activate on the screen is called *Bitush* (Beating) of inner light and surrounding light.

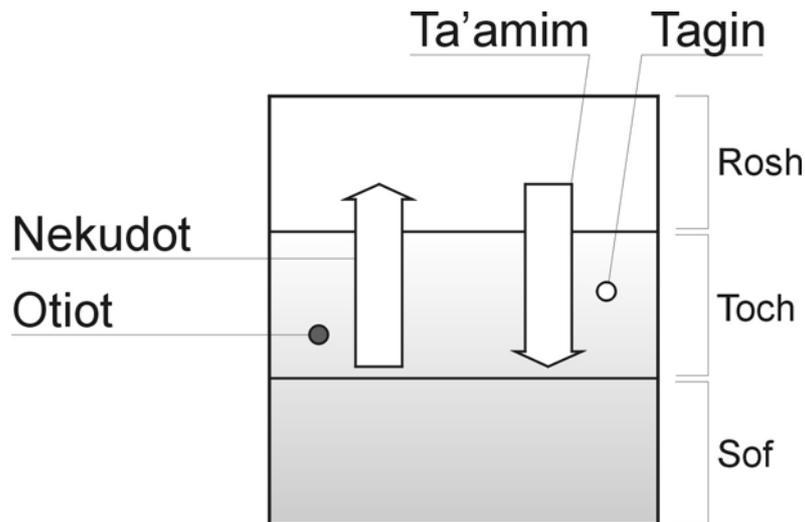
These two lights press on the screen that stands at the *Tabur* and limits the reception of light into the *Partzuf*. They want the screen to drop from the *Tabur* so that the entire surrounding light can enter the *Partzuf*.

That situation is much like a person who receives some of the food given to him by the host, feels great pleasure at the reception and that weakens him, because he feels what great pleasures there are in the delicacies that he did not receive.

As a result, the screen returns from the *Tabur* to the *Peh* and the *Partzuf* empties itself of any light. Just as the light entered the *Partzuf* through the *Peh* so it now leaves. The expansion of the light from above downward, from the *Peh* to the *Tabur* is called *Taamim* (flavours). The withdrawal of the light from the *Partzuf* is called *Nekudot* (points). Once the light withdraws from the *Partzuf* all that's left is a reminiscence (*Reshimo*) of the light called *Tagin*. The *Reshimo* from the light of *Nekudot* is called *Otiot* (letters).

The expansion of the light and its withdrawal makes the vessel fit for its task, because only after the vessel feels the pleasure and the pleasure is withdrawn, does it create in the vessel a real desire for that pleasure. Once the light is gone, there remains a *Reshimo* in the vessel. It is a *Reshimo* of the past pleasure, meaning the *Nekudot*. When the vessel is emptied of the light, the *Reshimo* determines the desire and the yearning in the vessel. The *Reshimo* from the withdrawal of the light is called *Otiot*, or Vessel.





Prior to the restriction, the fourth phase received lights from all four phases. The light came to her from His essence through the root, first, second, third and fourth phases. That is why there are five phases in the fourth phase itself. Each phase of the five phases in *Behina Dalet* (the fourth phase) gets its light from the corresponding phase:

- *Behinat Shoresh* (the root phase) in *Behina Dalet* gets light of *Yechida* (the highest light) from *Behinat Shoresh*.
- *Behina Aleph* (first phases) in *Behina Dalet* gets light of *Haya* from *Behina Aleph*.
- *Behina Bet* (second phases) in *Behina Dalet* gets light of *Neshama* from *Behina Bet*.
- *Behina Gimel* (third phases) in *Behina Dalet* gets light of *Ruach* from *Behina Gimel*.
- *Behina Dalet* (fourth phase) in *Behina Dalet* gets light of *Nefesh* from *Behina Dalet*.

Only *Behina Dalet* in *Behina Dalet* feels that her will to receive pleasure is really hers. Because of that only this *Behina* is regarded as a Creature. The other preceding phases in *Behina Dalet* are desires that *Behina Dalet* gets from *Behinot Shoresh, Aleph, Bet, and Gimel*. The desires in her preceding phases, though they are desires to receive, stem from the Creator, not from *Behina Dalet* herself.

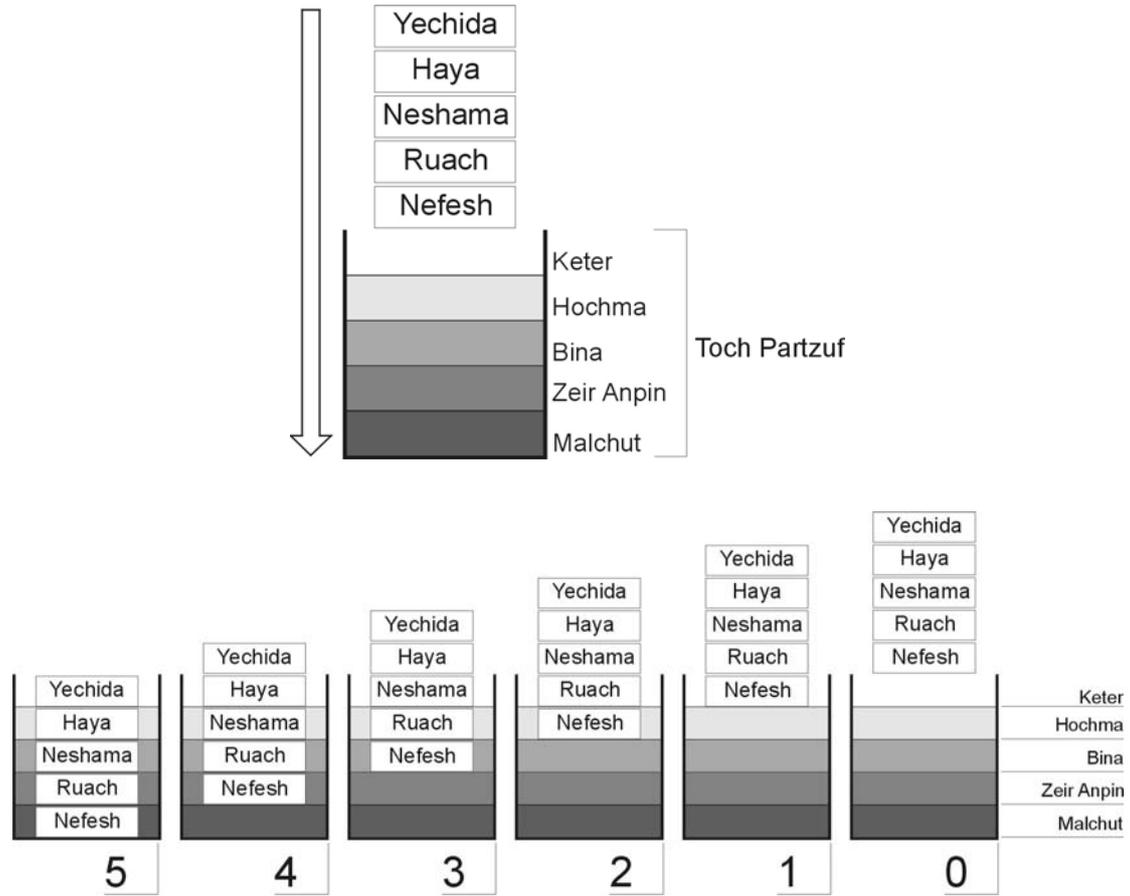
Behina Dalet consists of five *Behinot* (phases). That structure is unchanging. These *Behinot* can be divided, filled, or joined in order to receive light, but their structure nonetheless remains the same. It is named: the tip of the *Yod* (, (Yod , (') He , (7) Vav , (7)He. (7)

The worlds and everything in them, except people, stem from the phases that precede *Behina Dalet* of *Behina Dalet*, and do not possess their own independent will. They are activated by the desires imprinted in them by the Creator, and are therefore not defined as creatures. Only human souls stem from *Behina Dalet* in *Dalet*, where the will to receive is really hers. Hence, only human souls are regarded as creatures.

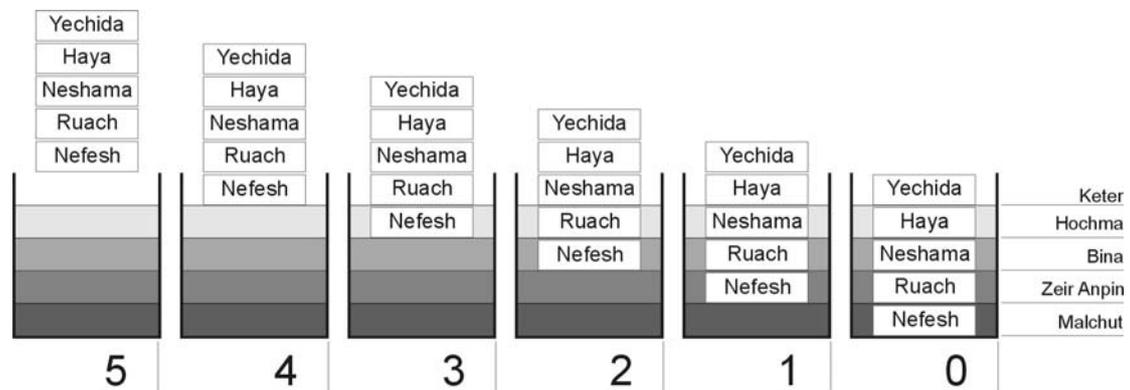
The real desire to receive for herself is created only in *Behina Dalet* of *Dalet*. She is the only one that feels as a receiver; therefore she is also the only one that decides to restrict the reception of the light. But the light leaves the other *Behinot* in *Behina Dalet* as well; because only the *Dalet* of *Dalet* actually receives, and the preceding

Behinot only develop her will to receive. When she stops receiving, the light withdraws from all of them, because all five *Behinot* (plural for *Behina*) are in fact one vessel, the tip of the *Yod* (, (י) *Yod* , (י) *He* , (ה) *Vav* , (ו) *He* . (ה)

After the restriction, when *Malchut* receives the five lights through the screen, they still go inside the same five parts of *Malchut*. The order of the entrance of the lights into the *Partzuf* runs from the smallest to the greatest: *Nefesh* – *Ruach* – *Neshama* – *Haya* – *Yechida*, hence the name *NRNHY* (pronounced as *NaRaNHaY*).



The Entrance of the Lights in the *Partzuf*



Chapter 3.8 - Entrance and Exit of Lights in the Partzuf

The five parts of *Malchut* are called *Behinot Shoresh – Aleph – Bet – Gimel – Dalet*. After the restriction, when those parts receive lights through the screen, they are called *Sefirot*, because the light shines in them (*Sapir* means illumination in Hebrew). Therefore, from that stage on they are referred to as *Sefirot*:

- *Shoresh – Keter*.
- *Aleph – Hochma*.
- *Bet – Bina*.
- *Gimel – ZA (Zeir Anpin)*.
- *Dalet – Malchut*.

The *Reshimot* (plural for *Reshimo*) from the withdrawing lights are called *Otiot*. Once the five lights – *Nefesh – Ruach – Neshama – Haya – Yechida* - have withdrawn from the five *Sefirot – Keter – Hochma – Bina – ZA – Malchut*, there remain five *Reshimot*, or *Otiot*: tip of the *Yod* (, (Yod , () He , () Vav , () He . () Later on we will learn how Kabbalists denote spiritual forces in writing, how they build letters, names and words from lines and dots, which is how all the holy books are written. It turns out that writing is information about spiritual acts and forces. When a Kabbalist reads a book, he can perform the actions according to the instructions he gets from the letters.

When we read in those holy books, we think they are about past events, but the Torah specifically states: “The entire Torah is the names of the Creator.” All the words in the Torah tell us either about the vessels, or their operations. This means that the entire Torah is the very same wisdom of Kabbalah we are studying now, just written in a different language.

As a rule, there are four languages: the language of the Torah, the language of the *Agada* (legends), that of the Talmud and the language of Kabbalah. All of them were invented by Kabbalists who attained spirituality in order to tell us how to attain the purpose of creation.

General Outlook

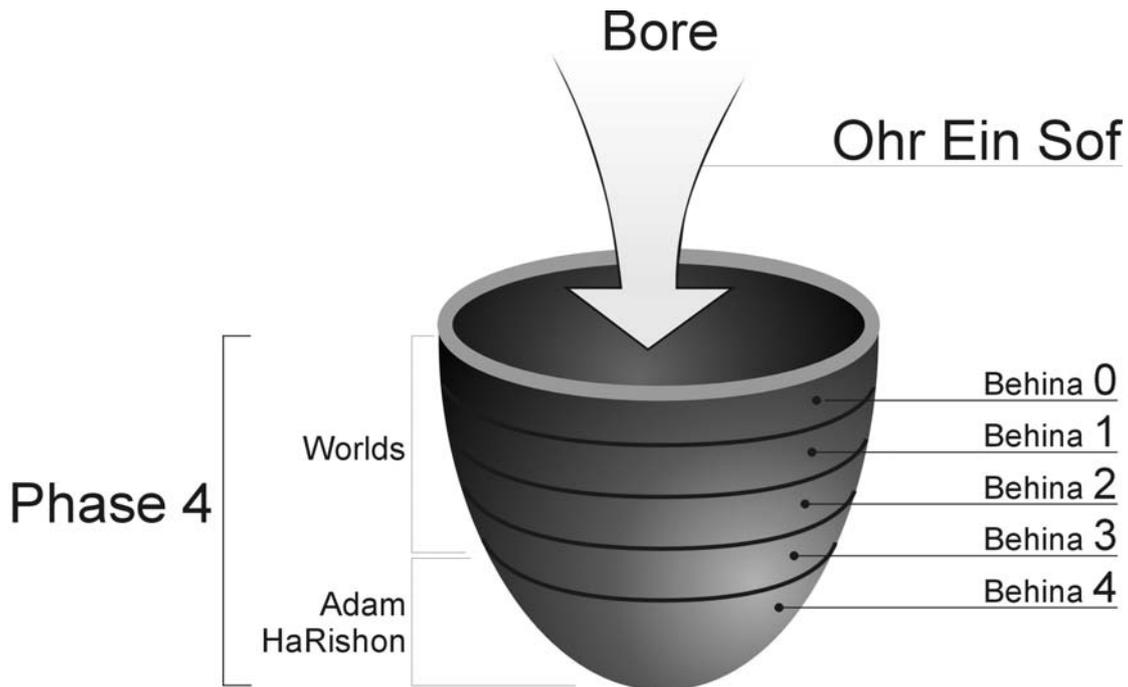
The will of the Creator is to benefit (delight) the creatures. The creatures are the ones that are supposed to acquire and attain the benevolence of the Creator on their own. For that purpose, the Creator created an independent being that is completely detached from him. The creature doesn't feel the Creator because the light is higher than the vessel, and when it fills the vessel, it controls it and determines what the vessel will now want. Therefore, in order to maintain its independence, the creature must be made in concealment from the light, without feeling the presence of the Creator and spirituality. It is born in the farthest point from the Creator, a degree called “This World”. However, when the creature is independent of the influence of the upper light, i.e. the Creator, it is also denied of the ability to understand his situation, reality in general, and the purpose of his life. It turns out that the Creator must prepare such an environment for the creature that would be fitting for it to be born and evolve.

Such an environment would be:

- A. To restrict the light to the minimum possible, step by step. This is how the degrees were built, starting with the closest to the Creator – *Ein Sof* – and ending with the degree of “This World”, the farthest from the Creator. This

recurrence is called “the expansion of the worlds and the *Partzufim*” (plural for *Partzuf*).

- B. Once the starting point has been made ready for the creature, he must also be given a possibility to rise above that situation and attain the degree of the Creator. How can that be done? Our problem is that after the first restriction no light comes to the creature, which is in the degree of “This World”. Therefore, the Creator prepared a *Segula* (remedy) for people in this world – the surrounding light, which shines even into the restricted vessels.



Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag writes about this *Segula* in item 155 of his Introduction to the Study of the Ten *Sefirot*:

“Therefore we must ask: why then, did the Kabbalists obligate each person to delve in the wisdom of Kabbalah? Indeed there is a weighty thing here, worthy of being publicized: that there is a magnificent, invaluable remedy, to those who delve in the wisdom of Kabbalah: that although they do not understand what they are learning, but through the yearning and the great desire to understand what they are learning, they awaken upon themselves the lights that surround their souls.

Meaning, that each man from Israel is guaranteed to finally attain all these wonderful attainments, which God has resolved in the Thought of Creation to grant each creature. But he, who has not attained it in this life, will attain it in the next and so on, until he has completed that which he preliminarily thought of. And while man has not attained perfection, these lights that are destined to come to him, are deemed surrounding lights. That means that they stand ready for him, awaiting his attainment of the vessels of bestowal. Then they will be dressed within the able vessels.

Thus, even when the vessels are absent, when one delves in this wisdom, mentioning the names of the lights and the vessels related to his soul, they right away illuminate

him to a certain degree. However, they illuminate him without dressing in the internality of his soul, since he doesn't have the vessels needed to receive them. Indeed, the illumination one receives time and again when studying, draws to him grace from above, imparting him with a bounty of sanctity and purity, which greatly furthers one toward one's perfection."

In item 156 he adds: "But there is a strict condition in the practice of this wisdom, that they will not materialize matters in corporeal and fictitious forms, for by that they breach the commandment, 'Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor any manner of likeness', for then they are harmed instead of helped."

It follows, that only the correct study of Kabbalah can bring one to the purpose of one's life. That is what the Kabbalists maintain, and who knows reality better?

The surrounding light is the *Segula* with which anyone can begin the ascent from this world to the spiritual world. Without this surrounding light we would have no possibility of overcoming our situation. The vessel can only be corrected by means of the light, and the upper light cannot descend to this world, hence the necessity for the surrounding light.

In order to help beginners to not fail, we made a table of questions and answers and the interpretations of the words and the terms. We do not intend to delve deeply into the subject matter and all the information in this text, but only direct the reader in the right direction, to make it clear that the purpose of the study is adhesion with the Creator. That must be the goal before one's eyes, because only then one awakens on oneself the impact of the surrounding light, as a result of which one will attain the upper world.

The glossary is made for the purpose of correct understanding of the basic terms. But only if one knows how to interpret the words properly, in their true spiritual meaning, and not the way we normally think of them, are we permitted to read and learn anything from the Torah. Otherwise we might interpret the books of the Torah as historic episodes.

When a Kabbalist attains spirituality, he cannot describe it in words, because spirituality contains only feelings. Therefore, the books of Kabbalah are written in the Language of the Branches, when words of this world are used to clarify the spiritual terms.

The spiritual world is an abstract, 'virtual' place. There are only forces and emotions there, no bodies. The spiritual terms must constantly be renewed, because before we have an emotional connection with spirituality, we cannot understand a word of what the Kabbalistic books speak of.

The primary mistake people make is that there are 'Kabbalists' that teach that there is a connection between the human body and the spiritual vessel, as though the spiritual vessel somehow clothes the body, and each corporeal organ has its spiritual counterpart. According to that perception, if a person makes a physical gesture, *any* physical gesture, there is some spiritual content to it. They think that by this one actually performs a spiritual act.

Their mistake stems from the fact that Kabbalists wrote their books in the language of the branches, and used corporeal words to define spiritual concepts. That is why there is such a strict prohibition in the Torah that states, "Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor any manner of likeness". It means that it is forbidden to picture spirituality in corporeal formations, not because it can inflict some harm in the upper

world, but because the false imagination would stop one from understanding how the Creator works and the attaining of one's goal.

Therefore, the student must repeatedly study the primary concepts in the wisdom of Kabbalah, such as Place, Time, Motion, Absence, Body, Body parts or Organs, Mating, Kiss, Embrace etc. until he finally understands every term in its right meaning. That is what Baal Hasulam writes about in his Introduction to the Study of the Ten *Sefirot*. A person who wishes to study Kabbalah in the right way will do well to leave all other books on the subject, except for the Zohar, the writings of the Ari, Baal Hasulam and Rabbi Baruch Ashlag.

The interpretation of the Torah as historic episodes contradicts the statement that the entire Torah is the appellations of the Creator, that it is a Torah of the world of *Atzilut* and that every word in it is a holy name. It is important to remember that it does not speak of this corporeal world and corporeal people.

All the names in the Torah are holy names, even names such as Pharaoh, Balaam, and Balak. The Zohar explains that each name indicates a certain spiritual degree: Pharaoh stands for *Malchut*, Laban stands for *Partzuf Hochma* and so on.

Reshimot

In order to make the right movement, there must be precise knowledge of what it is the vessel wants to achieve, how to achieve it and the strength to attain the desire.

There is only one creature beside the Creator, and that is the Will to Receive. Therefore, reality consists only of a light and a vessel, pleasure and desire, or in Kabbalistic terms – *Hitlabshut* (clothing) and *Aviut* (thickness, coarseness).

After any spiritual act, when the light withdraws from the vessel and the vessel becomes empty after having being filled with light, there remain two 'memories' of the previous situation. They are:

- A. *Reshimo DeHitlabshut*, an imprint of the light that was present in the vessel but has now departed.
- B. *Reshimo DeAviut*, an imprint of the vessel on the screen that remains in use.
(The prefix *De* means "of" in Aramaic, thus *Reshimo DeAviut* means "Reminiscence Of *Aviut*" C.R.)

These two *Reshimot* are in fact considered as one *Reshimo*. If this *Reshimo* does not remain in the vessel, it will not know what to want or how to get it. The entire process of the creation of reality from its beginning in *Malchut DeEin Sof* to its end in this world, is a sequence of situations of *Malchut DeEin Sof*. She experiences these situations by means of the light that surrounds her. It awakens the *Reshimot* in her, which remain after every situation she goes through.

The state where *Behina Dalet* is filled with light is called *Malchut DeEin Sof*. After *Behina Dalet* feels that she is receiving, she decides to restrict the reception of the light. The light then withdraws, and what remains in *Malchut* is a *Reshimo* of the light that was in her. Even after the restriction, light continues to shine in order to fill up *Malchut*, but now she calculates and decides to receive only as much as she can in order to bestow to the Creator.

The data needed for the calculation is:

- A. A *Reshimo* of the clothing of the light in the previous situation
- B. A will to receive in order to bestow.

Once *Malchut* makes these calculations in her *Rosh* (head), she then receives in the *Guf* (body) what she has decided to receive.

When the vessel completes the reception of that part of the light that it decided to receive, the surrounding light beats on the screen and forces it to return to the *Peh* (mouth). The result is that the entire *Partzuf* is emptied of light.

When the screen ascends from the *Tabur DeGalgalta* to the *Peh*, the inner light exits *Galgalta* leaving a *Reshimo* of the light that was in there, a *Reshimo DeHitlabshut*. But the *Reshimo* from the strength of the screen that received the light is not left, because the screen decided to stop receiving the light, and disqualified itself from working with its own strength. Hence the *Reshimo* of the screen disappears.

The screen now rises from *Tabur* and is once more at the *Peh*. Because of that, it feels the upper light in the *Rosh*, which demands to be accepted. That creates in *Malchut* a will to receive the light in order to bestow once more. At this point begins the birth of a new *Partzuf* on the *Reshimot* that remained from the previous situation.

Summary: A *Reshimo* of light is a part of the light that the light leaves when it has withdrawn. It is the nucleus and the root for the creation of the new *Partzuf*. The *Reshimo* from the screen is then lost and a *Zivug* (spiritual mating) is made on a new *Reshimo*.

Reshimot That Create *Partzufim*

| World/Partzuf DeAviut | Name | <i>Reshimo DeHitlabshut</i> | <i>Reshimo</i> |
|----------------------------------|-------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
|----------------------------------|-------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|

The world of Adam Kadmon:

| | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|---|----------------|
| <i>Partzuf Keter</i> | <i>Galgalta</i> | 4 | 4 |
| <i>Partzuf Hochma</i> | <i>AB</i> | 4 | 3 |
| <i>Partzuf Bina</i> | <i>SG</i> | 3 | 2 |
| <i>Partzuf ZA</i> | <i>MA</i> | 2 | 1 |
| <i>Partzuf Malchut</i> | <i>BON</i> | 1 | <i>Shoresh</i> |

Partzuf Nekudot DeSAG:

| | | | |
|------------------------------|--|---|---|
| <i>Partzuf Nekudot DeSAG</i> | | 2 | 2 |
|------------------------------|--|---|---|

The world of *Nekudim*:

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--|---|---|
| <i>Partzuf Katnut</i> | | 2 | 1 |
| <i>Partzuf Gadlut</i> | | 4 | 3 |

The world of *Atzilut*:

| | | | |
|------------------------|--------------|---|----------------|
| <i>Partzuf Keter</i> | <i>Atik</i> | 4 | 4 |
| <i>Partzuf Hochma</i> | <i>AA</i> | 4 | 3 |
| <i>Partzuf Bina</i> | <i>AVI</i> | 3 | 2 |
| <i>Partzuf ZA</i> | <i>ZA</i> | 2 | 1 |
| <i>Partzuf Malchut</i> | <i>Nukva</i> | 1 | <i>Shoresh</i> |

The world of *Beria*:

| | | | |
|------------------------|--------------|---|----------------|
| <i>Partzuf Keter</i> | <i>Atik</i> | 4 | 4 |
| <i>Partzuf Hochma</i> | <i>AA</i> | 4 | 3 |
| <i>Partzuf Bina</i> | <i>AVI</i> | 3 | 2 |
| <i>Partzuf ZA</i> | <i>ZA</i> | 2 | 1 |
| <i>Partzuf Malchut</i> | <i>Nukva</i> | 1 | <i>Shoresh</i> |

The world of Yetzira:

| | | | |
|------------------------|--------------|---|----------------|
| <i>Partzuf Keter</i> | <i>Atik</i> | 4 | 4 |
| <i>Partzuf Hochma</i> | <i>AA</i> | 4 | 3 |
| <i>Partzuf Bina</i> | <i>AVI</i> | 3 | 2 |
| <i>Partzuf ZA</i> | <i>ZA</i> | 2 | 1 |
| <i>Partzuf Malchut</i> | <i>Nukva</i> | 1 | <i>Shoresh</i> |

The world of Assiya:

| | | | |
|------------------------|--------------|---|----------------|
| <i>Partzuf Keter</i> | <i>Atik</i> | 4 | 4 |
| <i>Partzuf Hochma</i> | <i>AA</i> | 4 | 3 |
| <i>Partzuf Bina</i> | <i>AVI</i> | 3 | 2 |
| <i>Partzuf ZA</i> | <i>ZA</i> | 2 | 1 |
| <i>Partzuf Malchut</i> | <i>Nukva</i> | 1 | <i>Shoresh</i> |

Reshimot from the Aviut of the Screen of the Worlds

| | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| World of <i>Keter</i> | World of <i>AK</i> | <i>Aviut</i> | 4 |
| World of <i>Hochma</i> | World of <i>Atzilut</i> | <i>Aviut</i> | 3 |
| World of <i>Bina</i> | World of <i>Beria</i> | <i>Aviut</i> | 2 |
| World of <i>ZA</i> | World of <i>Yetzira</i> | <i>Aviut</i> | 1 |
| World of <i>Malchut</i> | World of <i>Assiya</i> | <i>Aviut</i> | <i>Shoresh</i> |

When the entire reality expands until there is not a single *Reshimo* left in the screen, it is the end of the world of *Assiya*.

Malchut of the world of *Atzilut* creates yet another *Partzuf*, called *Adam HaRishon* (the First Man). That *Partzuf* was broken and divided into many parts that fell below the world of *Assiya*, to a place called “This World”.

The smallest *Reshimo* in the broken vessel is called the Point in the Heart. That is what a person feels as desire for spirituality when he’s awakened from above. These *Reshimot* are clothed in certain individuals in our world and do not let go of them until they correct them with a screen and fill them with light.

If a person feels this *Reshimo*, he is worthy of attaining spirituality, feel the upper world, and come to know the actual reality. He will find the guidance to get there in the books of Kabbalah. Each generation has books that are right for the specific type of souls that descend in that generation.

The books that are intended to guide our generation into spirituality are the books of Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag (Baal Hasulam), and Rabbi Baruch Ashlag (Rabash). Besides these books, there are two more prerequisites that must be met for correct learning:

the study in a group, whose purpose is to attain the purpose of creation, headed by a Kabbalist teacher.

The evolution of reality from above downward created a ladder that man can climb on his way up. A person who reaches a certain degree discovers in it *Reshimot* from an even higher degree, which enable him to continue the ascent. *Reshimot* from higher degrees exist in us too. They are *Reshimot* of our own adjacent degree. By working on those *Reshimot* we can exit our world and enter the spiritual world.

Chapter 3.9 - The Birth of the Partzufim

Behina Dalet is called *Malchut* (Kingship) because it has the greatest will to receive. When it is filled with light it is called *Ein Sof* (No End), because it receives light without limitation. *Malchut* is therefore the only creature. Its parts are called Worlds, (the Hebrew word for it is *Olam*, from the word *Haalama* –concealment) because they conceal the light of the Creator from the creatures. The concealment in each world corresponds to the measurement of light the creatures can receive with the screen.

When *Behina Dalet* received the light of *Ein Sof* she felt that the light came from the giver. The sensation of the giver awakened in her such shame and torment, that she decided never to receive again. A decision in the upper one becomes a binding law for all the following situations, hence, even if some part of *Malchut* wants to receive for itself, it is unable to because *Malchut* controls all her parts. Any new decision is a result of the weakness of the degree, therefore it operates only on the lower degrees.

After the first restriction, *Reshimot* remain in *Malchut* from the light and the vessel. But the light still wants to fill *Malchut* because the intention of the Creator to delight the Creature doesn't change. This thought of the Creator is the only active thing in the entire creation, even when reality appears to not be working in our favour.

The *Malchut* that stands at the *Peh DeRosh* of the *Partzuf* feels the desire of the Creator to please it, as with the example of the host and the guest. But *Malchut* feels that she is not giving the Creator anything. Therefore she decides to receive so that the Creator would enjoy her reception.

Using the *Reshimot DeHitlabshut* and *Reshimot DeAviut* from the previous filling, *Malchut* can calculate how much she can receive in order to please the Creator and not in order to please herself.

A *Reshimo DeHitlabshut* is a *Reshimo* from the light that filled *Malchut*. The screen with which she received that light has now been refined, and the screen hasn't the strength to receive the same amount of light again. All that's left of it is the *Reshimo DeHitlabshut*. The *Rosh DeHitlabshut* of the new *Partzuf* is born on top of the *Reshimo DeHitlabshut* from the previous *Partzuf*. At that point the screen performs a *Zivug* (spiritual mating) on the *Reshimo DeAviut*. That creates the second *Rosh*, named *Rosh DeAviut*, and from there the light expands to the *Guf* (body), which is the *Hitlabshut* of the light in *Malchut*.

The part where *Malchut* decides how much of the upper light she can receive in order to bestow is called *Rosh*. Once the decision in the *Rosh* has been made, *Malchut* receives the amount of light she had decided on inside the *Partzuf*. That light is called *Taamim*. When the light of *Taamim* stops entering the *Guf*, the screen that drew the light stops drawing it into the *Partzuf*.

The screen stops the light from entering, because the decision in *Malchut* is a decision on the maximum amount she can receive without taking for herself. If she receives any more, it would be in order to please herself.

Thus, in the place where the screen stops receiving, *Malchut* feels a further urge by the upper light to receive it. That place is called *Tabur*. If *Malchut* receives any more light, it will be for her own pleasure. Hence, she has no choice but to stop receiving any light.

The decisions are always taken at the *Rosh* of the *Partzuf* and only afterwards they're executed in the *Guf*. And so it is here: once a decision has been made to stop

receiving, the screen rises from the *Tabur* to the *Peh* and pushes the lights out of the *Guf* of the *Partzuf*.

The screen arrives at the *Peh* along with the *Reshimo* of the light that filled the *Partzuf* and a *Reshimo DeAviut* that remains in the screen. The encounter of the screen with the upper light reawakens the screen to want to receive light in order to bestow, hence new *Reshimot* awaken in it. It performs a *Zivug Dehaka* with the light and creates the next *Partzuf*.

In each *Partzuf* there are two screens: one that rejects the light and one that receives it. The screen that rejects the light always remains at the *Peh* of the *Partzuf*. It rejects all the light that wants to enter the *Partzuf*, and by that it adheres to the condition of the first restriction.

Once the first screen has rejected all the light, and he is certain that he will not receive for himself, but only with the intention to please the Creator, he activates the second screen. The second screen weighs how much of the upper light that comes to him he can receive in order to bestow.

Once the decision has been made, the receiving screen begins to receive light. It drops from the *Peh*, followed by the light that enters the *Partzuf*. When the amount of light in the *Partzuf* has reached the amount the screen in the *Rosh* decided on, the screen in the *Guf* stops, because the *Guf* screen always executes the orders of the *Rosh* screen. Thus the new *Partzuf* is born out of the first.

The calculation is performed at the screen in the *Rosh*. But because the *Aviut* in the new *Partzuf* is smaller than in the previous *Partzuf*, the screen drops from the *Peh* of the old *Partzuf* to its *Hazeh* (Chest). It happens because the *Aviut* in the new *Partzuf* is of the third degree, not of the fourth as it was in the first *Partzuf*.

Therefore, once the screen rises from *Tabur* to *Peh*, and takes the desire for a new *Zivug*, it drops to the *Hazeh* and calculates how much it can receive. That calculation creates the *Rosh* of the second *Partzuf*. Once the decision has been made, the screen drops from the *Peh* to as low as it had decided to reach in order to receive light. That place will become the *Tabur* of the new *Partzuf*.

From the *Tabur* and below, down to the *Sium Raglin* (End of Legs, the end of the *Partzuf*), the vessels remain empty, because the screen doesn't fill them for lack of sufficient resistance power. The second *Partzuf*, like all the other *Partzufim* in the world of *Adam Kadmon*, cannot reach below the *Tabur* of the first *Partzuf* due to the weakness of their screen.

After the second *Partzuf*, called *AB* is born and receives what it decides to receive in the *Rosh*, the same beating that occurred in the first *Partzuf* happens here. Here too the screen realizes that it is impossible for it to remain at the *Tabur* for lack of sufficient strength to receive any more in order to bestow, and that if it remains that way, then the purpose of creation will not be realized.

Because of that, the second *Partzuf* too decides to refine itself, and rises to the *Peh*. Here too there is a *Reshimo* left in the screen, and when it is once more included in the *Peh*, it reawakens to receive light. The last *Reshimo DeAviut*, that of *Behina Gimel*, disappears from the screen and the *Reshimo DeAviut* of *Behina Bet* appears. Because of that the screen drops once more to the *Haze*, and performs *Zivug Dehaka* to create the new *Partzuf*, called *SAG*.

The same process now repeats: once *Partzuf SAG* is born, its screen in the *Guf* refines, as a result of the beating of the inner and surrounding lights, the screen rises to the

Peh, drops to the *Haze* and creates the new *Partzuf* in *Aviut Aleph*, called *MA*, or Upper *MA*.

When *Partzuf MA* stops the expansion of the light into it, it feels the beating of the internal and surrounding lights and decides to refine itself. It returns to the *Peh* with *Aviut Shoresh* (root coarseness) because there is no more strength left in the screen to receive light in order to bestow. It can no longer create new *Partzufim* but only a *Rosh*. At this point the process of creation of the *Partzufim* stops.

Chapter 3.10 - Reality in General

After the restriction, *Malchut* decides to receive in order to give to the Creator. This intention is called a Screen. A series of *Partzufim* then comes out on this screen:

- *Partzuf Galgalta* is emanated on the screen that can receive light with fourth degree coarseness.
- *Partzuf AB* is emanated on the screen that can receive light with third degree coarseness.
- *Partzuf SAG* is emanated on the screen that can receive light with second-degree coarseness.
- *Partzuf MA* is emanated on the screen that can receive light with first-degree coarseness.
- *Partzuf BON* is emanated on the screen that can receive light with root degree coarseness.

The names of the *Partzufim* are given according to the quality and the quantity of the lights that fill them. *Malchut* comes out as *Behina Dalet*, meaning the fifth in the evolution of the light of the Creator's essence. For that reason she receives from her previous phases and consists of them. This is also the reason why *Malchut* has five phases of desire, from the smallest, that of *Behinat Shoresh*, to the greatest, that of *Behina Dalet*, and she can take light indefinitely.

After the restriction, *Malchut* decides to receive light only in order to give to the Creator. This kind of reception goes against her natural desire. Therefore, she cannot receive indefinitely, and cannot receive the light all at once as before. For that reason she decides to receive this light in small portions. In the end though, she will be filled to the top and attain the purpose of creation.

Each part inside *Malchut* consists of five parts of will to receive, just like the general *Malchut*, because there cannot be a desire if there aren't four degrees of expansion of light that precede it.

For that reason, there is a fixed formation according to the five degrees of *Aviut*: *Shoresh*, *Aleph*, *Bet*, *Gimel*, *Dalet*. In terms of *Sefirot* they are called – *Keter*, *Hochma*, *Bina*, *ZA*, *Malchut*, which are also named (in Hebrew letters) – the tip of the *Yod* (, (Yod , (He , (Vav , (He . (

There are five worlds, each consisting of five *Partzufim*. In each *Partzuf* there are five *Sefirot*, thus the sum total of degrees turns out to be $5*5*5=125$ degrees or *Sefirot* that each soul must go through on its way from our world to the world of *Ein Sof*, and the adhesion with the Creator.

Each degree, *Sefira*, *Partzuf*, or world, any part of *Malchut DeEin Sof*, and even the smallest particles of reality, consist of five parts of the will to receive, a screen over it and light received by the screen. The strength of the screen determines the kind and the degree of the use of the desire.

There is not a single object, spiritual or physical, that is not comprised of these five parts, the tip of the *Yod* (, (Yod , (He , (Vav , (He . (These Hebrew letters comprise the name of the Creator; it is the mold in which he created the creature. The creature feels, and names the Creator according to how he feels the light.

Every vessel is named according to the extent that it feels the Creator. That is why each degree has its own name, starting with this world, the lowest degree, through the world of *Ein Sof*. When a soul ascends a degree, it means that she receives the light in

that degree, meaning she fills up her *Yod* (י), *He* (ה), *Vav* (ו), *He* (ה) also known as *HaVaYaH* with a certain filling. That specific light, together with the *HaVaYaH*, makes up the name of the degree.

It is written that everyone must attain the degree called Moses. All the names in the Torah are holy names, because they are appellations of manifestations of the light, i.e. the Creator. That is why the whole Torah is names of the Creator, including such names as Pharaoh, Balak, and Balaam etc.

A name of a degree is determined by the light that fills the *Partzuf*, the *HaVaYaH*. For example: if the vessel is filled with the light of wisdom, and the sign for that light is the letter *Yod* (י). It turns out that the filling of the letters (how they're spelt in Hebrew) would be:

- *Yod* (י) *He* (ה) *Vav* (ו) *He* (ה)
- *Yod Vav Dalet* *He Yod* *Vav Yod Vav* *Hey Yod*

That is because each letter in the Hebrew alphabet has its own numerical value:

| | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Aleph</i> (1 = א) | <i>Zayin</i> (7 = ז) | <i>Mem</i> (40 = מ) | <i>Kuf</i> (100 = ק) |
| <i>Bet</i> (2 = ב) | <i>Het</i> (8 = ח) | <i>Nun</i> 50 = נ) | <i>Resh</i> 200 = ר) |
| <i>Gimel</i> (3 = ג) | <i>Tet</i> (9 = ט) | <i>Samech</i> (60 = ס) | <i>Shin</i> (300 = ש) |
| <i>Dalet</i> (4 = ד) | <i>Yod</i> (10 = י) | <i>Ayin</i> (70 = ע) | <i>Tav</i> (400 = ת) |
| <i>He</i> (5 = ה) | <i>Chaf</i> (20 = כ) | <i>Peh</i> (80 = פ) | |
| <i>Vav</i> (6 = ו) | <i>Lamed</i> (30 = ל) | <i>Tzadi</i> (90 = צ) | |

Thus, summing up the value of the letters of the name *HaVaYaH* spelt this way - *Yod Vav Dalet* *He Yod* *Vav Yod Vav* *Hey Yod* - creates:

Yod Vav Dalet (10+6+4) + *He Yod* (10+5) + *Vav Yod Vav* (6+10+6) + *Hey Yod* (10+5) = 72, or pronounced in letters: *AB* (אב). Hence *Partzuf Hochma* is called *AB* (אב).

A *Partzuf* that receives the light of mercy (*Hassadim*) is called *SAG* (סג).

Yod Vav Dalet *He Yod* *Vav Aleph* *Vav Hey Yod* gives: *Yod Vav Dalet* (10+6+4) + *He Yod* (10+5) + *Vav Aleph Vav* (6+1+6) + *Hey Yod* (10+5) = 63, or pronounced in letters: *SAG* (סג).

All the degrees in all the worlds are given these names. Thus, in order to know the name of each degree we need only know the name for each type of light. Then, when we read the Torah, we will understand which spiritual degrees, acts and places it talks about.

Then we will no longer be led to think that the Torah speaks of anything lower than the spiritual world. We will know that it doesn't speak of our corporeal life, about history, or about how to get on in the physical world. We will know that all the books in the Torah are in fact instructions for man that explain how to attain the purpose of our lives, while living in this world, so that we do not have to return to our world time after time and suffer again and again from this empty, useless and purposeless life.

A *Partzuf* consists of ten *Sefirot*: *Keter*, *Hochma*, *Bina*, *Zeir Anpin*, *Malchut*.

Expressed in letters it would be: *Yod* – *Hochma*, *He* – *Bina*, *Vav* - *Zeir Anpin*, *He* – *Malchut*.

But the degree of a *Partzuf* (*Nefesh, Ruach, Neshama, Haya, Yechida*) is not clarified by the name *HaVaYaH*. The letters of *HaVaYaH* make up ten *Sefirot*, the skeleton of the vessel. They explain the state of the empty vessel, without the upper light. The degree of the vessel is determined by the power of the screen. The screen fills up the ten *Sefirot* of *HaVaYaH* with lights. The screen can fill up the vessel with the lights of *Nefesh, Ruach, Neshama, Haya* or *Yechida*. The light in the vessel determines its degree.

There are in fact only two lights: the Light of *Hochma* (Wisdom) and the Light of *Hassadim* (Mercy). The sign for *Hochma* is the letter *Yod* (י), the sign for *Hassadim* is *He* (ה).

- A. The degree of *Yechida* (*Keter*) is written as *HaVaYaH* without any filling: *Yod* (י) *He* (ה) *Vav* (ו) *He* (ה) $26 = 5 + 6 + 5 + 10 = (ה)$
- B. The degree of *Haya* (*Hochma*) is *HaVaYaH* filled with *Yod*: *Yod Vav Dalet* (10+6+4) + *He Yod* (10+5) + *Vav Yod Vav* (6+10+6) + *Hey Yod* (10+5) = 72, or pronounced in letters: *AB* (א"ב). Hence *Partzuf Hochma* is called *AB* (א"ב).
- C. The degree of *Neshama* (*Bina*) is *HaVaYaH* filled with *He*, except that in the letter *Vav* it is filled with *Aleph* and in the letter *He*, it is filled with *Yod*: *Yod Vav Dalet* (10+6+4) + *He Yod* (10+5) + *Vav Aleph Vav* (6+1+6) + *Hey Yod* (10+5) = 63, or pronounced in letters: *SAG* (א"ס).
- D. The degree of *Ruach* (*Zeir Anpin*) is *HaVaYaH* filled with *He*, but only the letter *Vav* is filled with *Aleph*: *Yod Vav Dalet* (10+6+4) + *He Aleph* (5+1) + *Vav Aleph Vav* (6+1+6) + *Hey Aleph* (5+1) = 45, or pronounced in letters: *MA* (א"מ).
- E. The degree of *Nefesh* (*Malchut*) is *HaVaYaH* filled with *He*, except in the letter *Vav* which remains without any filling: *Yod Vav Dalet* (10+6+4) + *He He* (5+5) + *Vav Vav* (6+6) + *He He* (5+5) = 52, or pronounced in letters: *BON* (א"ב).

Chapter 3.11 - Nekudot DeSAG

After the first restriction *Malchut* decides to fill herself with light in order to bestow using the *Reshimot* that remained from the world of *Ein Sof*. Reception in order to bestow goes against the nature of the creature, therefore *Malchut* cannot receive the upper light that filled her in the world of *Ein Sof* all at once, but only in small portions, called *Partzufim*. That way *Malchut* receives five portions of light: *Galgalta*, *AB*, *SAG*, upper *MA*, and upper *BON*. That concludes the surfacing of her *Reshimot* and the expansion comes to a halt.

The third *Partzuf* is *SAG*. Its nature is that of *Bina*. Hence it has no desire to receive anything for itself. It “delights in mercy.” Because of that, this *Partzuf* can descend below *Tabur DeGalgalta* and fill the *Sof* (End) *DeGalgalta* with its lights.

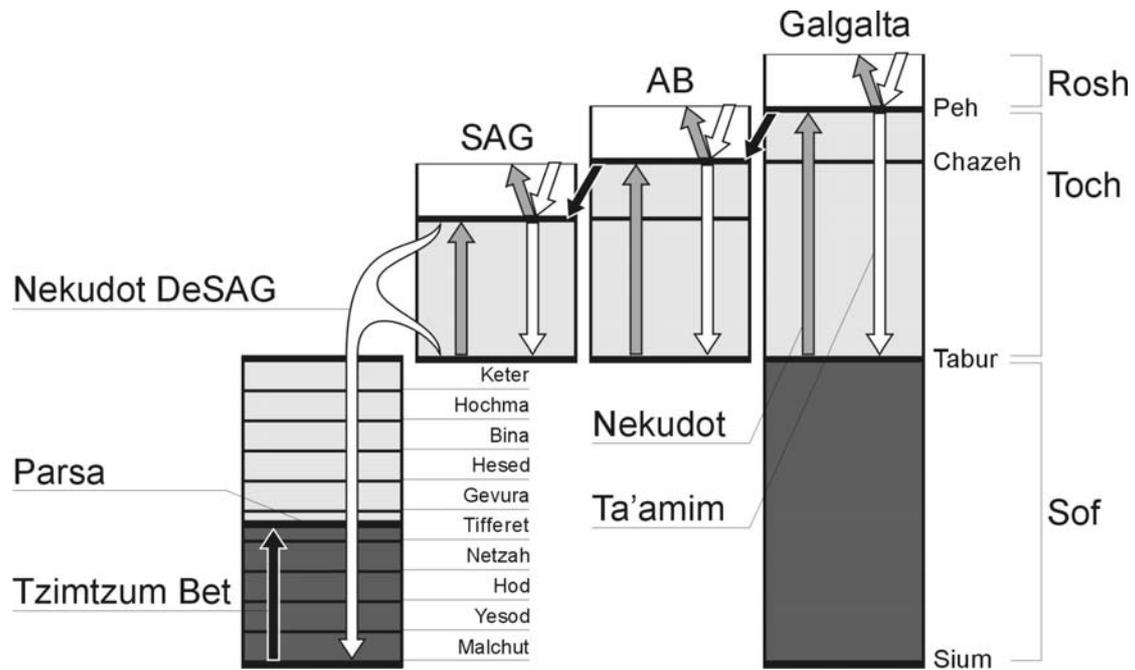
Partzuf SAG comes out on *Reshimot* 3/2 (3rd degree of *Hitlabshut* and 2nd of *Aviut*). The result is that there is the light of wisdom in its *Taamim*. Having a light of wisdom makes it impossible for it to go below *Tabur DeGalgalta*. Only when *Partzuf SAG* begins to refine itself does the light of wisdom retreat, and as the screen refines from *Tabur* to *Peh*, the *Partzuf Nekudot DeSAG* emerges. In this *Partzuf* there is only light of mercy, and it can therefore descend below *Tabur DeGalgalta* and fill the *Sof DeGalgalta* with light of mercy.

The entire reality stems from *Behinat Shoresh*, which is the desire of the Creator to delight his creatures. In accordance with this desire, the light expands by way of cause and consequence in order to execute the thought of creation inside the vessels, so that they will receive the light.

In *Behina Aleph*, which consists of the entire light, there is the entire intent of the Creator to create a vessel and fill it with light. Anything that comes out after *Behina Aleph* is a consequence of it. This is how the thought of the Creator is executed. The Creator imprinted the possibility to bring creation to its goal, i.e. raise it to the degree of the Creator in the nature of the vessels and the lights.

After the first restriction, *Malchut DeEin Sof* decides to receive with the screen, and produces five *Partzufim*: *Galgalta*, *AB*, *SAG*, upper *MA*, and upper *BON*. That concludes the surfacing of all the *Reshimot* and the screen loses its strength, though only a part of *Malchut* has been filled.

If *Nekudot DeSAG* had not descended in order to fill the *Sof DeGalgalta*, *Malchut DeEin Sof* would never have been filled. That is because *Malchut* is only a will to receive, without any mixture of desires for bestowal. But when *Nekudot DeSAG*, which consists of the nature of *Bina* descends below *Tabur* to the *Sof DeGalgalta*, it creates a mixture of *Malchut* and *Bina*. Thus, *Malchut* gets an opportunity to acquire a desire (vessels) for bestowal, correct herself, and be filled with light.



After the first restriction *Malchut DeEin Sof* decides to receive only through the screen, i.e. to the extent of her ability to receive in order to bestow. She makes a *Zivug* on *Reshimot* 4/4 (4th degree of *Hitlabshut* and 4th of *Aviut*) that are left in her after the restriction, and receives a part of the light of *Ein Sof*. That part of *Malchut DeEin Sof* that was filled by this *Zivug* is called *Galgalta*, or *Partzuf Keter*.

After that, *Malchut* receives yet another portion of the light of *Ein Sof* in order to bestow. The part of *Malchut* that was filled by this *Zivug* over the *Reshimot* of 4/3 that remained after *Galgalta* is called *AB*, or *Partzuf Hochma*.

The part of *Malchut DeEin Sof* that was filled in the next phase by the *Zivug* on the *Reshimot* 3/2, that remain after *Partzuf AB*, is called *SAG*, or *Partzuf Bina*. *Partzuf SAG* is the same *Malchut*, the same will to receive, but now it cannot receive in order to bestow with the screen like the *Partzufim* of *Galgalta* and *AB*. It can only resemble itself to *Behina Bet*, to *Bina*.

Bina does not want to receive light; by nature, she only wants to give. There is no limitation on the act of giving, therefore *Partzuf SAG* fills with its light the part of *Malchut* that is still left empty.

Bina consists of three parts:

- The expansion of the light of wisdom.
- The Decision in *Bina* that she doesn't want to receive any light of wisdom, only to give, hence in *Bina* there is only light of mercy.
- Bina* receives a little bit of light of wisdom, but not for herself, but in order to give to *Partzuf Zeir Anpin*.

The upper part of *Bina* is still *Hochma*. Only from the lower part the desire to bestow begins to manifest itself. Hence she can fill the part of *Malchut DeEin Sof* below *Tabur* that hasn't been filled yet.

Partzuf SAG begins to receive light in its *Toch* (its internal part) by performing a *Zivug* on 3/2. The presence of *Reshimo Gimel* (3) *DeHitlabshut* makes for the expansion of the light of wisdom in his *Ta'amim*. Therefore, that part of *SAG* cannot go below *Tabur DeGalgalta*.

But once the screen begins to refine itself and rises from *Tabur* to *Peh*, the part of the *Partzuf* that is only *Bina* can descend below *Tabur DeGalgalta*, because it is pure light of mercy (pleasure from bestowal) without any wisdom (pleasure from reception).

Hence, that part of *Partzuf SAG*, called *Nekudot DeSAG*, descends below the *Tabur DeGalgalta* and clothes its *Sof*.

Chapter 3.12 - The second Restriction

Nekudot DeSAG went below *Tabur DeGalgalta* and filled the empty vessels of the *Sof DeGalgalta* with light of mercy. They felt that in the empty vessels of *Galgalta* there were *Reshimot* from the light that filled the *Sof DeGalgalta* before it had been refined.

The light that filled the *Sof DeGalgalta* was a light of mercy with a little bit of wisdom. After the refining of the screen there were *Reshimot* that were left there: they were *Reshimot* of the light of *Dalet* (4) *DeHitlabshut* and *Gimel* (3) *DeAviut*. The *Sof DeGalgalta* rejected the light from expanding in it, like *Bina*. In that, it is much like *Nekudot DeSAG*. Because of that, *Nekudot DeSAG* mix with the *Sof DeGalgalta* and fill up the empty vessels.

From the mixture of *Nekudot DeSAG* with *Sof DeGalgalta*, they receive *Reshimot* that remained at the *Sof DeGalgalta*. The *Reshimot* from *Galgalta* are stronger than the power in the screen of *Nekudot DeSAG*, which makes *Nekudot DeSAG* begin to want to receive the pleasure that was in *Galgalta* for themselves. The law says that if the pleasure that is felt in the will to receive is stronger than the strength of the screen, the vessel wants to receive it for itself, because the strong (screen or desire) rules.

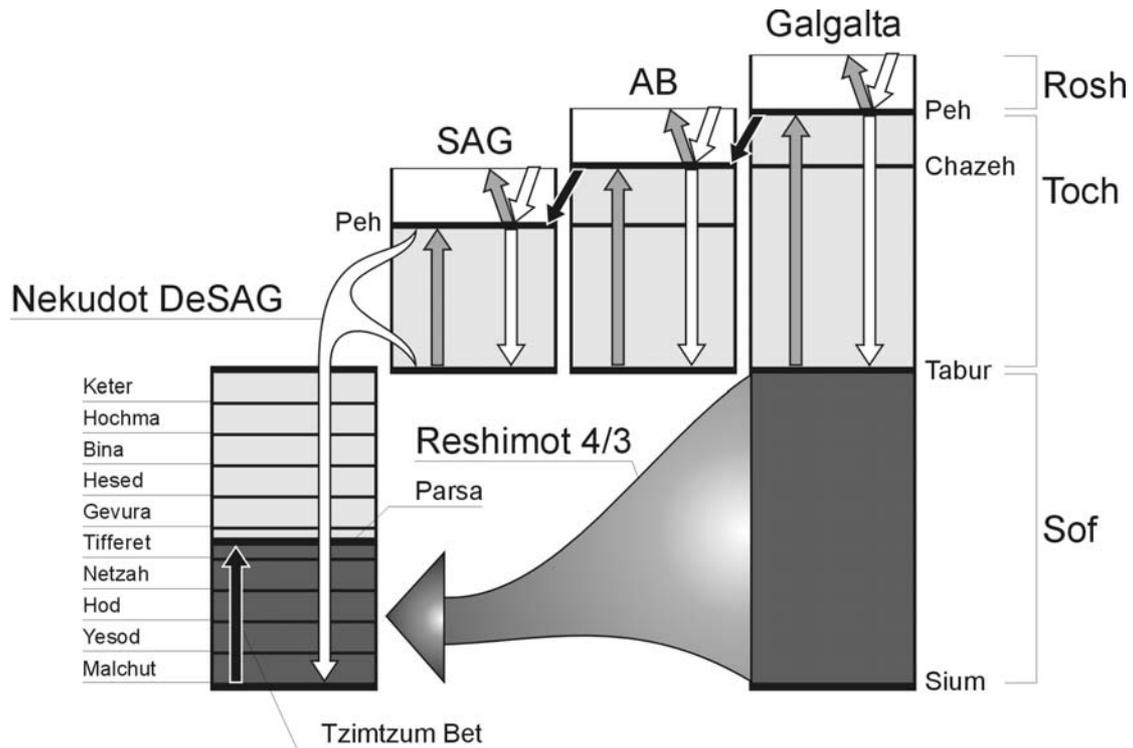
All the worlds and the *Partzufim* are parts of *Malchut DeEin Sof*. That *Malchut* restricted herself and decided never to receive again if it is for her own pleasure. Therefore now, when a desire to receive for themselves awakens in *Partzuf Nekudot DeSAG*, the *Malchut* that performed the first restriction and stood at the *Sof DeGalgalta* rises to the place in *Nekudot DeSAG*, from which *Nekudot DeSAG* began to want to receive the light for themselves.

Each *Partzuf* consists of ten *Sefirot*:

- *Keter, Hochma, Bina, Hesed, Gevura, Tifferet, Netzah, Hod, Yesod, Malchut.*

Nekudot DeSAG is *Partzuf Bina*. *Bina* consists of two parts:

- A. An upper part, comprised of *Keter, Hochma, Bina, Hesed, Gevura*, and *Tifferet*. These *Sefirot* want only to give and receive nothing in return.
- B. And a lower part, comprised of *Netzah, Hod, Yesod* and *Malchut*. These *Sefirot* do not belong to *Bina*. Their role is only to receive light of wisdom from *Hochma* and pass it on to the lower one. It turns out that *Sefirot Netzah, Hod, Yesod* and *Malchut*, do have a will to receive light. They have a screen to receive the light not for themselves, but only in order to pass it to the lower one. But if the screen is gone, the *Sefirot*, meaning those desires, will immediately want to receive it for themselves without giving it to others.



Example: One person was accustomed to receiving a regular sum of money in order to give to the poor. One day he received a much larger sum than usual. He felt he couldn't give the money to the poor now; he wanted it for himself. He couldn't resist the temptation anymore for such a great pleasure.

He could resist the temptation only as long as the sum of money was smaller than his screen, because the pleasure from giving the money was greater than the pleasure of stealing. But when the pleasure from reception became greater than the giving, he immediately wanted to receive it for himself.

This is how the will to receive works in every person and in every creature, because we are all made of a will to receive. And if we do bestow, it is only because it brings us more benefit than reception.

This is what happens in *Partzuf Nekudot DeSAG*. When the part of the *Partzuf* that should receive in order to bestow to the lower ones became exposed to a greater pleasure than its screen could resist, the screen was immediately canceled and the *Partzuf* wanted to receive for itself.

The will to receive for himself was awakened in *Partzuf Nekudot DeSAG* from *Tifferet* and under, because the *Sefirot Keter, Hochma* and *Bina* belong to the *Rosh* and therefore do not want to receive. *Hesed, Gevura,* and *Tifferet* have the same function as *Keter, Hochma* and *Bina* respectively, except they are at the *Guf* of the *Partzuf*, thus, *Tifferet* is like *Bina* in the *Guf* of the *Partzuf*.

Each *Sefira* consists of ten inner *Sefirot*. Hence the *Sefira Tifferet* has its own ten inner *Sefirot*, that like *Bina*, are divided into two parts:

- Vessels that do not receive in *Tifferet*: *Keter, Hochma, Bina, Hesed, Gevura,* and *Tifferet*.
- And parts that do receive: the lower part of *Bina*, and the *Sefirot - Netzah, Hod, Yesod* and *Malchut*.

Partzuf Nekudot DeSAG is divided into vessels of bestowal and vessels of reception. The line that separates them is in the inner *Tifferet* of *Tifferet*. That place is called the *Haze* (chest) of *Partzuf Nekudot DeSAG*.

Some of the vessels of *Nekudot DeSAG* received a greater will to receive than their screen. Hence *Malchut* of the first restriction, that was maintaining the first restriction, rose to precisely that point, the *Haze*, and did not let the light go under that point. The border for the expansion of the light below that point is called *Parsa*.

The rising of *Malchut* to the *Haze* of *Nekudot DeSAG* in order to limit the expansion of light below, is called the Second Restriction. The first restriction is the prohibition on the reception of light of wisdom in order to receive. The second restriction, however, is the prohibition on the reception of any light of wisdom altogether, because from *Partzuf Nekudot DeSAG* onward there isn't enough strength to receive that light in order to bestow.

A desire in the upper one becomes a binding law in the lower one. Hence, in all the *Partzufim* that emanated after the second restriction have a *Parsa* (border, separating line) that will not let any light of wisdom into the vessels of reception.

As a result of that, the area below *Tabur DeGalgalta* was divided into four parts:

1. The place of the world of *Atzilut* – where light of wisdom can shine.
2. The place of the world of *Beria* –under the *Parsa*. No light of wisdom is allowed there, only light of mercy.
3. The place of the world of *Yetzira* – below the world of *Beria*.
4. The place of the world of *Assiya* – below the world of *Yetzira*.

Holiness ends at the end of the world of *Assiya*. Below it there are:

1. The barrier – the border between spirituality and corporeality, which separates the world of *Assiya* from the point of This World.
2. The place of This World.
3. Our world.

Chapter 3.13 - The World of Nekudim

The entire process of the descent of *Nekudot DeSAG* below *Tabur DeGalgalta*, their mixture with *Sof DeGalgalta* and the second restriction, occurred while the screen of *SAG* was rising from the *Tabur* to the *Peh*. Thus, when the screen arrived at the *Peh*, the *Reshimot* of everything that happened in *Nekudot DeSAG*, and in *Tabur DeGalgalta*, were already there.

Once *Partzuf Galgalta* was refined, there were *Reshimot* of *Dalet DeHitlabshut* that remained in the screen from the light that was in *Galgalta*, and *Reshimot* of *Gimel DeAviut* in the screen that remained. After the refining of *Partzuf AB*, the same process occurs, but now the *Reshimot* drop one level, i.e. *Gimel DeHitlabshut* and *Bet DeAviut*. So we see that after the refining of the *Partzuf* there are pairs of *Reshimot* left in the screen: one *Reshimo DeHitlabshut* and one of *Aviut*.

But after the refining of *Partzuf SAG* there are three pairs of *Reshimot* that remain in the screen that come from the *Tabur* to the *Peh*. The screen then performs three *Zivugim* (plural for *Zivug*) on them, in descending order of importance:

1. A *Zivug* on *Reshimot Bet DeHitlabshut* and *Aleph DeAviut* from *Taamim DeSAG*. That produces a *Partzuf* in the degree of *Zeir Anpin* above the *Tabur* called Upper MA.
2. A *Zivug* on *Reshimot Bet DeHitlabshut* and *Aleph DeAviut* from *Nekudot DeSAG* that went below *Tabur DeGalgalta*. These *Reshimot* come from after the second restriction that was done on *Nekudot DeSAG* below *Tabur*. Everything that existed in the *Partzuf* becomes *Reshimot*. Hence there is a 'memory' of the prohibition of the second restriction that is imprinted in the *Reshimot* from *Nekudot DeSAG*, never to use the vessels of reception.
3. In order to adhere to that condition, as the *Reshimot* dictate, the screen of *Rosh DeSAG* rises from the *Peh* to *Nikvei Eynaim* and performs a *Zivug DeHakaa* with the upper light, on *Reshimot Bet DeHitlabshut* and *Aleph DeAviut*. The place in the *Rosh* where the screen performs the *Zivug DeHakaa* with the upper light determines the unique way that the lights extend to the *Guf* of the *Partzuf*.

The screen had to rise to *Nikvei Eynaim (NE)* because of the prohibition on receiving light in the vessels of reception. The light can only reach as far as the *Haze* in each *Partzuf* because the vessels of bestowal only reach as low as the *Haze*. From the *Haze* and under begin the vessels of reception of the *Partzuf*.

The screen that performs the *Zivug* on the restricted *Reshimot* produces a *Partzuf*. The light expands in the *Partzuf*, but fills only the vessels of bestowal. It doesn't fill the vessels for the reception of the light and they remain empty. The *Partzuf* can use only a part of its vessels, hence the name *Katan* (Small).

Question: Why does the screen rise, as the *Reshimot* dictate, from the *Peh* to *Nikvei Eynaim* and performs the *Zivug* there?

Answer: Because the *Reshimot* dictate that a *Zivug* be done only on the vessels of bestowal. That is why the screen must rise to the middle of *Bina* of *Rosh DeSAG*, where the vessels of bestowal end in the *Rosh*, and make a *Zivug* on *Reshimot* of *Bet DeHitlabshut* and *Aleph DeAviut*.

The *Reshimot* below *Tabur* want to draw light only in vessels of bestowal. But how can a *Partzuf* be produced with only the vessels of bestowal? Any *Partzuf* must have its ten *Sefirot*. However, there can be a *Partzuf* that uses only a part of its desires, i.e.

Sefirot. For that purpose *Rosh DeSAG* must produce a *Partzuf* whose vessels of reception are inactive. Those vessels are: the lower half of *Bina*, *Zeir Anpin* and *Malchut*.

The screen of *SAG* must produce the *Partzuf* in this manner so as to prevent it from using its vessels of reception in the *Toch* to begin with, so that these vessels will not be filled. For that, the screen must perform a *Zivug* for the production of a *Partzuf* with only the vessels of bestowal in the *Rosh*.

The vessels of the *Rosh* are called:

Keter – Galgalta

Hochma – Eynaim

Bina – Awzen

Zeir Anpin - Hotem

Malchut - Peh

Chapter 3.14 - The Division of Rosh DeSAG to Five Phases

The vessels *Keter*, *Hochma*, and the upper half of *Bina*, are referred to as *Galgalta VeEynaim* (GE), or vessels of bestowal. The upper half of *Bina* belongs to the vessels of bestowal because it is filled with light of wisdom, and hence wants to receive nothing for itself and wishes only to have the light of mercy. But the lower half of *Bina* wants to receive light for *Zeir Anpin*. *Partzuf Nekudot DeSAG* is *Partzuf Bina*. From the lower half of *Partzuf Bina* meaning, from *Tifferet De Nekudot DeSAG*, and below, there are vessels of reception:

- The lower half of *Bina* wants to receive light for *Zeir Anpin*.
- *Zeir Anpin* wants to receive the light of mercy with illumination of wisdom.
- *Malchut* wants to receive the entire light of wisdom.

That is why that part of *Partzuf Nekudot DeSAG* consists of a will to receive in order to receive.

The Division of *Partzuf Nekudot DeSAG* to *Galgalta Eynaim* and *AHP*

The place where the screen of the *Rosh* stands determines the form of the new *Partzuf*:

- If the screen wants to produce a *Partzuf* that will receive light in all its ten *Sefirot*, it must perform a *Zivug* in the *Peh*. When the screen is situated in the *Peh*, the *Kashiut* (Hardness) of the screen determines its degree, meaning to what extent the screen will be using its vessels.
- If the screen wants to produce a *Partzuf* that will receive only in its vessels of bestowal, meaning using only half the *Partzuf*, it should stand at the *Nikvei Eynaim* and not in the *Peh DeRosh*, because that is the upper half of the *Rosh*. Then the vessels of bestowal will be above the screen, meaning they will be taken into account by the screen.

Once the screen stands at *Nikvei Eynaim*, the *Kashiut* of the screen determines what percentage of its vessels of bestowal the screen will use. When a *Partzuf* is produced under these restrictions it is called *Partzuf* of *Katnut* (smallness) of *Olam HaNekudim* (the world of *Nekudim*).

Once a *Zivug* has been made on the restricted *Reshimot* of *Bet DeHitlabshut* and *Aleph DeAviut* in *Rosh DeSAG*, the *Partzuf* descends to the place where the *Reshimot* came from. It goes under *Tabur DeGalgalta* and expands there complete with *Rosh* and *Guf*. *Rosh DeHitlabshut* is called *Keter*; *Rosh DeAviut* is called *Abba VeIma* (*AVI*, lit. Father and Mother) and the *Guf* is called *ZON* (*Zeir Anpin* and *Nukva*).

Its overall structure, *Rosh* and *Guf*, as well as any other part of it is divided into two parts, *GE* and *AHP*.

- *GE* –are vessels of bestowal. They are always active because only the light of wisdom was restricted, not on the light of mercy.
- *AHP* –are vessels of reception. After the second restriction in *Partzuf Nekudot DeSAG*, no *Partzuf* has the sufficient strength to receive light of wisdom in its *AHP* in order to bestow.

A third pair of *Reshimot* that rose to *Rosh DeSAG* along with the screen are *Reshimot* that moved to *Nekudot DeSAG* from *Sof* of *Galgalta* – *Dalet DeHitlabshut* and *Gimel*

DeAviut. Partzuf Nekudot DeSAG received those *Reshimot* when it filled the end of *Galgalta*. Those *Reshimot* are the ones that need the light of wisdom.

Once the *Partzuf* of *Katnut* of the world of *Nekudim* descended to its place, from *Tabur DeGalgalta* through the *Parsa*, *Rosh DeSAG* gave it the remaining *Reshimo* of *Dalet DeHitlabshut* and *Gimel DeAviut*. In response to the demand of these *Reshimot*, the screen that stood at *Nikvei Eynaim* of *AVI* drops and performs a *Zivug* on *Reshimot 4/3* (*Dalet DeHitlabshut* and *Gimel DeAviut*). Because of that *Zivug*, the light of wisdom drops to the *Guf*, reaches the *Parsa* and crosses it on its way down.

The *Rosh* of *AVI* assumes, judging by the demand of *Reshimot 4/3*, that the vessels of reception below *Parsa* can receive in order to bestow. Because of that, *Partzuf AVI* makes a *Zivug* on *Gadlut*, meaning on *Reshimot 4/3*. For that purpose it joins the vessels of *GE* with the *AHP* in its *Rosh* and the *Guf*, which is *ZON*, and the light of wisdom expands from it down to *ZON*.

Chapter 3.15 - The Birth of a Partzuf From the Upper One

Katnut and Gadlut of Nekudim

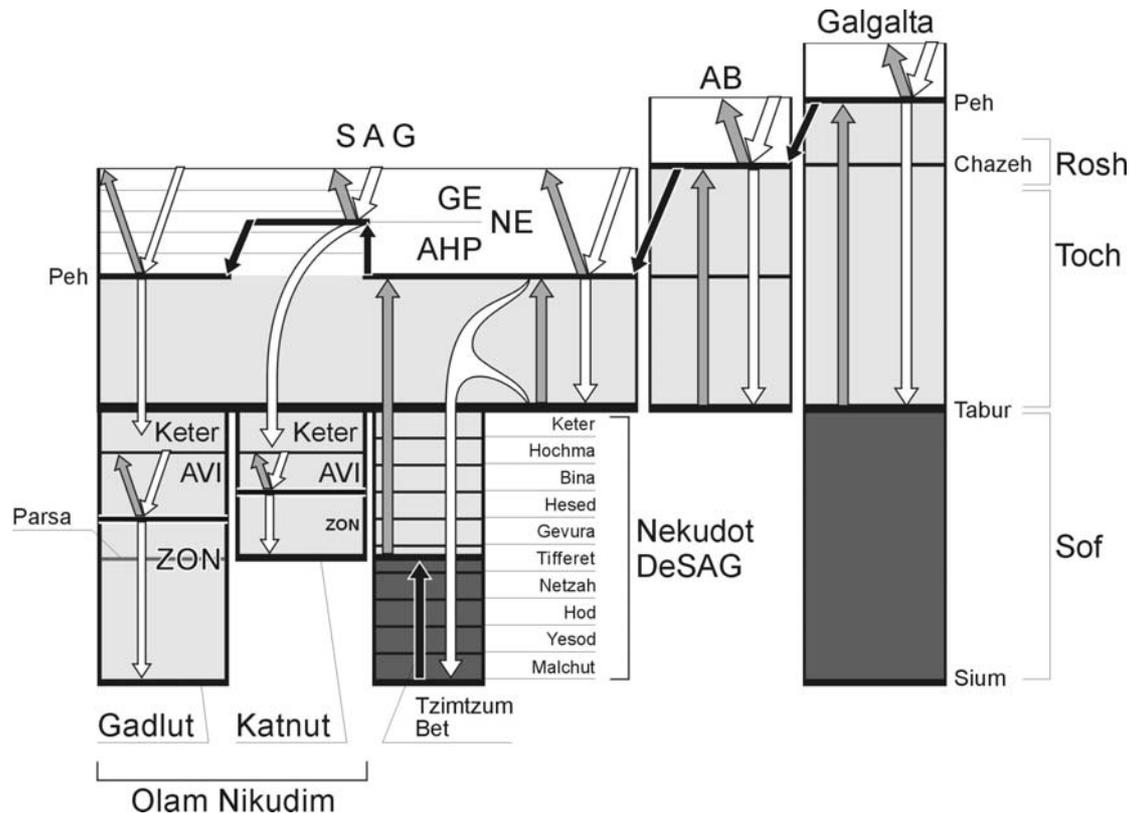
Keter and *AVI* don't know that the light of *AB SAG*, that comes from above and gives the vessel the power to go from *Katnut* to *Gadlut*, cannot go under the *Parsa*. That is why until now the *Parsa* was not cancelled. But now, when light of wisdom begins to fill the vessels below the *Parsa* the vessels begin to break, as they are still working in order to receive.

When *Rosh DeAVI* makes a *Zivug* on *Reshimot 4/3* there is light of wisdom that stems from them and enters the *Guf* of *Nekudim*. The light that extends through *GE* wants to go through the *Parsa* and enter the *AHP* of the *Guf*. At that point, the vessels of *AHP* begin to receive the light of wisdom in order to receive. The vessels of *GE* that stand above the *Parsa* join with the vessels of the *AHP* below the *Parsa* to form one *Guf*, and hence the *GE* break as well, the vessels of bestowal, along with the *AHP*, the vessels of reception.

When light of wisdom comes from the *Peh* of *AVI* and expands to the *Guf* of *Nekudim*, comprised of both *GE* and *AHP*, that creates the first *Partzuf* of *Gadlut* of *Nekudim* and it breaks into two phases:

- A. The *Guf* vessels lose their screen.
- B. They fall from their previous degree because they want to receive in order to receive.

The breaking makes the screen of the *Partzuf* in *Gadlut (AVI)* refine and rise along with *Reshimot 3/2* that remain in it to the *Rosh DeAVI*, perform a *Zivug DeHakaa* on these *Reshimot*, and produce the next *Partzuf*, whose *Rosh* is called *YESHSUT (Israel Saba VeTvuna)*. Once the *Rosh* comes out, it calculates and produces a *Guf*. *Partzuf YESHSUT* breaks and dies as well. Because of that, the screen once more refines and rises to the *Peh* of *YESHSUT* with *Reshimot 2/1*. These *Reshimot* can no longer produce a *Guf* because there isn't sufficient *Aviut* to receive light.



Thus we see that the two *Partzufim* that came out, *AVI* and *ZON*, were broken. Four *Partzufim* of *Nekudot* were produced in the process of the refining of each *Partzuf*, producing a total of eight *Partzufim*, named the Eight Kings, because they are controlled by *Malchut* (kingship), i.e. the will to receive in order to receive. Each *Partzuf* consists of *HaVaYaH*, i.e. four parts, which is the structure of every creature. Each part consists of its own ten *Sefirot* hence the total number of parts adds up to 8 (kings) * 4 (*HaVaYaH*) * 10 (*Sefirot*) = 320 (parts). In *Gimatria* (numerical value of the letters) this number is called *Shach*, comprised of two Hebrew letters: *Shin* (= (ש 300) and *Chaf* (כ) = 20).

The breaking happened in all the *Sefirot*. They were all mixed with one another so that in each broken piece there are 320 parts. Therefore, the entire work of the correction is a sorting out of each of the broken pieces.

The sorting happens by taking the least broken of the 320 broken pieces, and sorting out its inner parts of *Malchut*, which caused the breaking. The 320 parts consist of nine *Sefirot* of *ZON DeNekudim* and *Malchut* being the tenth part in those ten *Sefirot*. Thus, in the 320 parts there are 32 parts of *Malchut*.

The light of wisdom performs the sorting of the parts of *Malchut*: when it shines on each of the broken parts, it can only shine to nine of the *Sefirot*, meaning to 320 – 32 = 288 parts, excluding the tenth *Sefira*, meaning the 32 parts of *Malchut*.

Malchut is the only bad part, which denies man the entrance to spirituality. We naturally stay away from evil, and learn to hate it, because in spirituality, hate separates, and therefore man separates himself from this evil (the will to receive for himself).

He is then left with 288 parts that are worthy of correction, called *Rapach* (comprised of *Resh* ,200 = (ר) *Peh* (פ) ,80 = (פ) *Het* (ח) ,8 = (ח) which together make up 288, and 32 parts that are unworthy of correction (i.e. parts that the creature cannot correct) made

of the Hebrew letters *Lamed* (ל 30 = (and *Bet* (ב 2 = (which together make up 32 parts, also known as the Stony Heart.

After the sorting of the above 32 parts of *Malchut* that cannot be used, there are 288 parts of the broken pieces of the upper nine *Sefirot* that remain. The first to be sorted of those vessels are the vessels of bestowal, the GE (*Galgalta* and *Eynaim*). They comprise the *ZON* of the world of *Atzilut*.

Just as there are ten *Sefirot* in the expansion of the light in the vessel from above downward, so there are ten *Sefirot* inside the vessel, created as a consequence of the mixture of the *Sefirot* with the returning light. The ten inner *Sefirot* are called:

Keter – *Mocha* (Marrow)

Hochma – *Atzamot* (Bones)

Bina – *Gidin* (Tendons)

Zeir Anpin – *Basar* (Flesh)

Malchut – *Or* (Skin)

The rule of the second restriction acts in them just as it does in the longitudinal *Sefirot*.

Chapter 3.16 - The World of Correction

After the breaking in the world of *Nekudim*:

- The **lights** that filled *Partzuf Gadlut* of the world of *Nekudim* rise to the *Rosh* of *Partzuf Nekudim*.
- The **Reshimot** that remained in the screen rose to the *Rosh* of *Partzuf Nekudim* and to *Rosh DeSAG*.
- The **Nitzozim** (Sparks, parts of returning light, the broken screen) fell into the broken vessels that have lost their screen and returned to the will to receive in order to receive. It is called “that they fell to the place of *BYA*, below *Parsa*.”

The difference between the refining of the *Partzuf* by the beating (*Bitush*) of the inner and surrounding lights and the refining of the lights invoked by the breaking of the vessels, is that after the breaking, the vessels have to be corrected first, and only then new *Zivugim* (couplings for production of new *Partzufim* or reception of light) can be carried out for the purpose of the production of new *Partzufim*, meaning to their filling with light.

The *Rosh* of the world of *Nekudim* intended to receive the entire light of the purpose of creation in order to bestow, by filling the *Sof* of *Galgalta*. By that it would attain the complete filling of *Malchut DeEin Sof*. Therefore, when the broken vessels are corrected, all the vessels of reception will be corrected for bestowal, and the end of correction will be accomplished.

But that would still not correct the entire *Malchut DeEin Sof*, only a part of it – *Behinot Shoresh, Aleph, Bet* and *Gimel*, but not *Behina Dalet*, which is in fact, the only creature. *Behinot Shoresh, Aleph, Bet* and *Gimel*, come from its mixture with the upper nine, i.e. the Creator’s influence on *Malchut*, whereas a ‘creature’ is a will to receive that is entirely separated from the Creator and stands on its own.

Only *Behina Dalet* in *Behina Dalet* is a will to receive in order to receive that feels independent. Hence, she is the only one who needs to restrict her will to receive. After the restriction, the *Partzufim* and the worlds intend to fill the desires of the root, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd degree desires in *Behina Dalet*, but not *Behina Dalet* of *Dalet*.

But if what needs to be corrected is *Behina Dalet* in *Dalet* and not *Behinot Shoresh, Aleph, Bet* and *Gimel*, then why do these desires take lights? These desires are not the creature’s, they are properties of the Creator, forces of the Creator. The Creator uses those lights to guide and lead the creature, the *Behina Dalet* of *Dalet*. These forces fill all the spiritual worlds, except for man’s soul.

Behina Dalet itself, which is man’s soul, can’t actually correct itself so as to receive in order to bestow. The entire correction of the creature is in examining his own attributes vs. those of the Creator, and choosing those of the Creator to his own. He doesn’t use his own attribute, i.e. the stony heart, but only the upper nine, the *Rapach Behinot* that he sorts and raises after the breaking for the purpose of unification with the Creator.

All the *Zivugim* performed after the first restrictions are performed on those desires. These *Zivugim* produce the *Partzufim*, the worlds and everything in them, and expand downward. The five worlds with the five *Partzufim* in each world become the ladder from the Creator - the giver, to the creature - the receiver. The degrees are measurements of equivalence of desires between the creature and the Creator.

The emanation of the *Partzufim* and the worlds from above downward builds the degrees, which are like covers over the light of *Ein Sof*. Each *Partzuf* covers the light and hides it from its lower *Partzufim* to the extent that it receives in order to bestow.

We can compare the *Partzufim* and the worlds to the layers of an onion: round, contained in one another and the deeper the layer, the more the light is covered. Thus, at the bottom of the ladder, in the middle point in the onion, there is the point of darkness.

In order to allow the creature to have a free will, and in order for the creature to want to equalize with the Creator and cling to him of his own free choice, and allow him to develop and rise from his state to that of the Creator, the creature must be born in that middle point, the point of darkness. The possibility to correct his desire must also be prepared for him, but because of the creature's weakness, the correction becomes a gradual process, and not all at once.

That is what the ladder was prepared for: the five worlds with five *Partzufim* in each world and five *Sefirot* in each *Partzuf* make up a ladder of 125 degrees from the preliminary state of the creature, to its final completion. Thus the worlds have two functions:

- A. To gradually hide the light of *Ein Sof*. This is done by the descent of the worlds from above downward. That is why the degrees of concealment are called worlds (Heb: *Olamot*, from the word *Haalama* – concealment).
- B. To provide the souls, i.e. creatures with corrections with which they can climb the degrees of the worlds from below upward. Each degree they acquire is a *Partzuf* that was created during the descent from above downward. In order to rise in the spiritual degrees, the creature must be helped by the degree it wants to attain. When the creature receives that help, he uses that force to attain a screen and rise to that degree. When the creature rises to that degree he is given the name of that degree.

This teaches us that all the worlds, with everything in them, is but a ladder that the Creator had prepared for man's ascent. When man climbs these degrees the worlds rise with him, because all the worlds and everything in them is inside man. Thus, aside from the attaining creature, the only thing that exists is the Creator.

Around us, there is only the simple light in a state of complete rest. That means that the intent of the Creator is unchanging, but that in all his acts he means just one thing – to benefit man. But man can feel the Creator only to the extent that he equalizes his attributes with those of the Creator, i.e. the attribute of bestowal:

- If man's attributes (desires, intentions) are the total opposite to those of the Creator, then he has no sensation of the Creator whatsoever. This state is called "This world."
- If man can change even one attribute to having some measure of equivalence with the Creator's attribute of bestowal, it will be considered that man has risen from "This World" to the "Spiritual World." He steps on the first rung in the ladder that leads to closeness with the Creator.

All the changes occur inside us, in our vessels of reception, and depend on the measure of the correction of the screen. Besides us, there is only the unchanging upper light. By obtaining some of the upper light, one attains and feels a part of the Creator. He names the Creator according to that feeling – merciful, gracious, glorious etc.

The Torah is a documentation of what one who attains spirituality feels, meaning what a person who comes nearer the Creator feels. It turns out that the entire Torah is comprised of appellations of the Creator. One who attains the Torah attains a portion of the collective light. The degrees of the attainment are called by the names of the *Sefirot* (the *Partzufim* or the worlds) or by the names of the lights that he receives (*NRNHY*).

Besides man, there is only the Creator. Hence, what we all feel, want, and think, comes from the Creator. Everything we always feel – is only the Creator.

When the creature climbs from the lowest point (This World) toward the Creator, and until he attains complete equivalence of form with him (the end of correction), he will go through 620 degrees, also called the 613 *Mitzvot* of the Torah, and the seven *Mitzvot* of our rabbis. A *Zivug* (mating) with the upper light in the screen is called a *Mitzva*. The light that the creature obtains inside his vessel is called inner light, or the light of *Taamim*, or Torah. That is why Kabbalists always say: “Taste and see that the Lord is good.”

The creature, *Behina Dalet* of *Dalet*, corrects his will to receive, in order to be able to bestow. The correction is not of the desire itself, but in the way it is used - it must be done with the intention to give. That correction, the setting up of the intention to bestow, is done with small bits of the desire of the creature, from the smallest to the greatest, but not on all of it all at once. Thus the creature rises from one degree to the next in the ladder of degrees. The worlds are in fact the degrees by which man climbs from below upward.

The correction of the will to receive in order to bestow is a very hard one to make, because it goes against the very nature of the creature. Hence the Creator has divided the way into 613 smaller degrees. He also split the creature into 600,000 small parts called “souls.” When the souls come together they are referred to as “the Collective Soul,” or the “First Man.”

However, the correction of the desire begins even before that, in an even lower state called “Our World.” In this state there is no sensation of a Creator whatsoever, or of spirituality. In this state there is not even the sensation of a need to recognize the Creator. We are all born in that degree. It is comprised solely of desires for pleasures that we can feel in our five physical senses.

The world is led by the orders of the Creator. We call this leadership - Nature. In it, the will to receive pleasure in every degree (still, vegetative, animate and speaking), necessarily determines our every reaction. The law is that every creature always chooses the greater pleasure and escapes pain.

In every generation there are people whom the Creator plants a ‘point’ in their hearts, a desire to feel the Creator. Such a person begins to seek satisfaction for his new need. He doesn’t know that it is a need for the Creator, which can only be satisfied by the upper light.

The *Partzufim* that emerge after the breaking are called the “World of Correction.” Everything that happens must be and is necessary for the evolution of the creature, so that he will be able to attain the perfection of the acts of the Creator, and delight in what the Creator had prepared for him.

Hence, the breaking of the World of *Nekudim*, also called the “breaking of the Worlds,” and the breaking of the First Man, also called “the breaking of the Souls” were both premeditated. In the breaking of the World of *Nekudim* the vessels of

reception were mixed with the vessels of bestowal in such a way that each of them contained all 320 parts of the desire inside it. The consequence of that is that:

- A. The vessels of reception will be corrected by being contained in vessels of bestowal.
- B. Each desire will now consist of *NRNHY* of lights instead of just the light of *Nefesh* that was there previously.

Without the mixture caused by the breaking, the vessels of reception would have no way of receiving light, but would always be separated from the light by the *Parsa*. Now however, after the breaking, they can be brought up to *Atzilut* (by a process called *AHP DeAliah* – raising the *AHP*) and filled there.

The breaking of the world of *Nekudim* is also called “the breaking of the worlds,” because *Malchut DeEin Sof* consists of five parts, four of which produce the worlds and everything in them as they evolve from above downward. They comprise the entire creation except man, who was born from *Behina Dalet* of *Dalet*, from the last part of *Malchut*, the actual will to receive, the independent part that was completely detached from the Creator’s desire to bestow.

Hence, it is only man that is the goal and the purpose of creation. Besides man, the rest of creation is not independent. They belong to the Creator because it is he who determines their behaviour and actions, just as the still, vegetative, animate, and speaking behave in our world.

Man’s desire isn’t fundamentally different to that of animals. Only a person who shows a desire for the Creator, a part of the desire of the first man, is called “man.” A person, who does not show that desire, has nothing to correct, and he doesn’t feel the need to come closer to the Creator.

The entire reality is divided in this world into the four parts of creation, which are still, vegetative, animate and speaking, ranked by the intensity of the will to receive and hence by the ability to harm or benefit.

A person in this world must go through four phases of development: still, vegetative, animate and speaking, increasing and developing his will to receive, until the Creator finally plants in his heart a ‘point,’ a desire to attain the goal.

Therefore, humanity has been under nature’s press for thousands of years, developing of the will to receive from the degree of still, to that of the speaking in the evolution of the generations as we know it.

From generation to generation each and every soul in humanity goes through four phases of development of the will to receive:

1. Plebs – the “still” in the human species. Through desire they develop the degree of “rich.”
2. The Rich – the “vegetative” in the human species. Through the inclination for honors (government) they develop to the degree of “heroes.”
3. Heroes - the “animate” in the human species. Through the inclination for knowledge (government) they develop to the degree of “educated.”
4. The Educated – the “speaking” degree in man. In the “speaking” degree in man the desire is unlimited by space and time, he is jealous of past events, of previous generations, he is jealous of things he does not need simply because others have them. Because he wants what he sees in others, he can increase his will to receive indefinitely, and thus become worthy of attaining the purpose of creation.

5. If the Creator 'plants' the point in the heart, then man begins the search.
6. Search for the Creator and the root of his soul.

The order of correction from below upward is as follows:

- A. To receive in order to receive in our world.
- B. To bestow in order to receive in our world.
- C. To bestow in order to bestow in the worlds of *BYA*.
- D. To receive in order to bestow in the world of *Atzilut*.

The entire system of creation is corrected by the world of *Atzilut*. Hence, the world of *Atzilut* is also called the World of Correction.

Chapter 3.17 - The World of Atzilut

Once broken, the screen refined and rose to *AVI* together with the *Reshimot*. The *Reshimot* in the screen demanded to be corrected and to have a *Zivug* over them for the reception of the light. But the *Rosh* of *AVI DeNekudim* returned to a state of *Katnut* and could not do it, hence the screen rose to the *Partzuf* of the adjacent *Partzuf*, that of *Rosh DeSAG*.

There is no difference between the refining screen from the *Bitush* (beating) of the inner light and the surrounding light, and the screen that refined after the breaking. After the breaking there were also *Reshimot* left in the screen that demanded to be realized:

- Restricted *Reshimot Aleph DeHitlabshut* and *Shoresh DeAviut* that remained from *Partzuf Nekudim*.
- *Reshimot Dalet DeHitlabshut* and *Gimel DeAviut* from the end of *Partzuf Galgalta*.

The restricted *Reshimot Aleph DeHitlabshut* and *Shoresh DeAviut* came from *Partzuf Nekudim* itself; hence the screen performs its first *Zivug* on them. Once a *Partzuf* is realized from them, the screen would satisfy the 4/3 *Reshimot* that produced the exit of the *Gadlut* of the *Partzuf*.

Therefore, once the screen rose to *Rosh DeSAG*, it continues to rise by the *Reshimo DeAviut Shoresh* that was restricted to *Bina* of *Keter DeSAG*. The five *Behinot* of the *Rosh* are called:

Keter – Galgalta – Aviut Shoresh

Hochma – Eynaim – Aviut Aleph

Bina – Awzen – Aviut Bet

Zeir Anpin – Hotem – Aviut Gimel

Malchut – Peh – Aviut Dalet

In each of the *Sefirot* of the *Rosh* there are also five inner *Sefirot*: *Keter*, *Hochma*, *Bina*, *Zeir Anpin*, *Malchut*. The restricted *Reshimo* of *Aviut Shoresh* demands a *Zivug* only on the vessels of bestowal. The *Reshimo* wants to create a *Partzuf* that would work only with vessels of bestowal, *GE* of *Aviut Shoresh*. Hence the screen that creates that *Partzuf* must perform a *Zivug* only on the vessels of bestowal of *Aviut Shoresh* in the *Rosh*.

Because of that, the screen rises from the *Peh* to *Keter* of *Rosh DeSAG* and further up from there to *Bina DeKeter* and stands above the *Sefirot KHB DeKeter*. It turns out that above the screen there are only the vessels of bestowal of *Keter*, meaning those of *Aviut Shoresh*. The place where the screen now stands is called *Metzach* (forehead).

The *Partzuf* that was created, as a result of the *Zivug* on the restricted *Reshimo DeAviut Shoresh*, is called a “fetus.” There cannot be any lesser degree than that in spirituality; this is the minimal degree. Once born, the *Partzuf* descends to the place where the *Reshimot* come from, meaning below *Tabur DeGalgalta*, and expands there from *Tabur* and below.

Once the *Partzuf* of the fetus has taken its place, *Reshimot Dalet DeHitlabshut* and *Gimel DeAviut* (from the *Sof* of *Galgalta*) awaken in it. It is over these *Reshimot* that the *Gadlut* of the *Partzuf* comes out: the screen performs a *Zivug* on *Reshimot 4/3* and the degree of *Gadlut* spreads from *Tabur DeGalgalta* to the *Parsa*. That *Partzuf* is

called *Atik* (Detached but also Ancient), because it is detached from the attainment of the lower ones, i.e. the souls.

Atik is the first of a series of new *Partzufim* called the “world of *Atzilut*.” *Partzuf Atik* serves as the *Keter* of the new world.

Once *Partzuf Atik* comes out in *Gadlut*, *Rosh DeSAG* passes it all the *Reshimot* that rose to it after the breaking. Of all these *Reshimot*, *Atik* chooses the finest *Reshimo*, makes a *Zivug* on it, and creates the next *Partzuf*: it first creates it in the fetus degree, and then performs a *Zivug* on *Gadlut* for it (4/3). The new *Partzuf* expands from the *Peh* of *Atik* to the *Parsa*. It is called *Partzuf Hochma*, or *Arich Anpin (AA)*.

Once the *Gadlut* of *Arich Anpin* expands, *Partzuf Atik* gives all the remaining *Reshimot* from among those that rose to *Rosh DeSAG*. *Arich Anpin* chooses the finest of the *Reshimot* among them, performs a *Zivug*, which creates *Partzuf Bina* in the world of *Atzilut*, first in *Katnut* and then in *Gadlut*. That *Partzuf* expands from the *Peh* of *Arich Anpin* to *Tabur* of *Arich Anpin*. It is named *Abba VeIma (AVI)*, literally meaning Father and Mother.

After *Partzuf AVI* is created in *Gadlut*, *Arich Anpin* gives it the remaining *Reshimot*. Of all the *Reshimot* that *Arich Anpin* gives it, *AVI* chooses the finest, and performs a *Zivug*, which creates *Partzuf Zeir Anpin* of the world of *Atzilut*. Here, for the first time, there are three situations: Fetus, *Katnut* and *Gadlut*. *Partzuf Zeir Anpin* takes its place from *Tabur* of *Arich Anpin* to the *Parsa*.

Once *Partzuf Zeir Anpin* is out, it is given all the remaining *Reshimot*. *Zeir Anpin* performs a *Zivug* on them and creates *Partzuf Malchut* of the world of *Atzilut*. That concludes all the *Zivugim* (couplings) that can be performed on the *Reshimot* that rose to *Rosh DeSAG* after the breaking of the vessels.

The permanent state of the world of *Atzilut* is *Katnut*, i.e. *GE*, vessels of bestowal. There cannot be any less than that in *Atzilut*. In that state it is exactly the same the world of *Nekudim* was in *Katnut*, before it broke. But the world of *Atzilut* came about in order to bring creation to the end of correction, so that *Malchut DeEin Sof* would be filled with the light of *Ein Sof*, with the intent to bestow, and that hasn't been accomplished yet.

The breaking of the vessels caused the vessels of reception to mix with the vessels of bestowal and create four distinctions in each vessel:

- A. Vessels of Bestowal.
- B. Vessels of Bestowal inside vessels of reception.
- C. Vessels of reception inside Vessels of Bestowal.
- D. Vessels of reception.

The **first sorting** is done by selecting the vessels of bestowal from the mixture. They are used to construct the *Katnut* of the world of *Atzilut*.

The **second sorting** sorts the vessels of bestowal that are inside the vessels of reception. They construct the world of *BYA*. These worlds are vessels of bestowal, *GE* just like the world of *Atzilut*, but they remained contained in the *AHP*, the vessels of reception. But in and of themselves, these vessels are vessels of bestowal, hence the light can expand in them.

Therefore, once the world of *Atzilut* comes out, *Malchut* of *Atzilut* rises to *AVI* and performs a *Zivug* on the vessels of bestowal inside the vessels of reception. She creates the world of *Beria*, then the world of *Yetzira*, and then the world of *Assiya*:

- The *Zivug* on *GE* in the vessels of receptions of *Bet DeAviut* creates the world *Beria*.
- The *Zivug* on *GE* in the vessels of receptions of *Gimel DeAviut* creates the world *Yetzira*.
- The *Zivug* on *GE* in the vessels of receptions of *Dalet DeAviut* creates the world *Assiya*.

The **third sorting** takes out the vessels of reception that were mixed with the vessels of bestowal. That sorting and correction is done by souls of people. They sort these vessels and raise them above the *Parsa* to the world of *Atzilut*. This work is called an “awakening from below,” because it is done by the souls. The broken vessels that rise to *Atzilut* are called “*AHP DeAlia*” (the rising *AHP*).

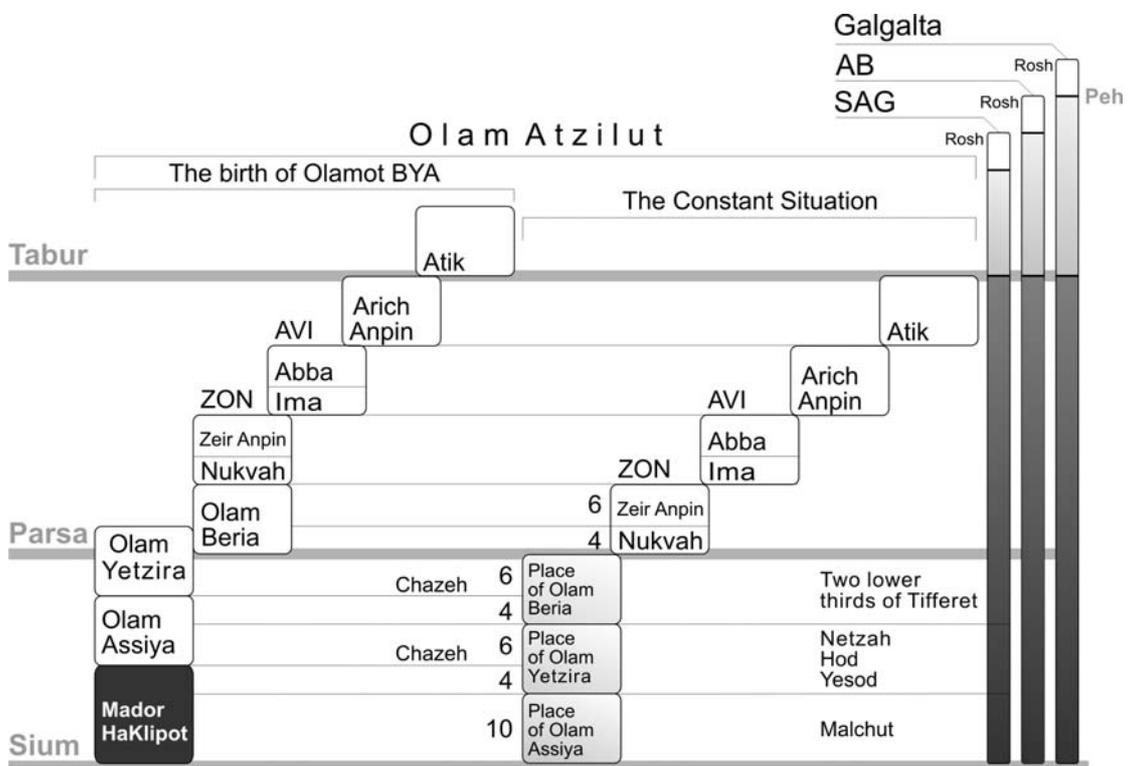
The **fourth sorting** is the sorting of the vessels of reception that were not mixed with the vessels of bestowal. Those are sorted out as ones that remain in their attribute of reception and hence they are disqualified for use. Those vessels are called *Klipot* (shells), or *Lev HaEven* (the stony heart) because they cannot be corrected before the end of correction.

Chapter 3.18 - The Worlds of BYA

The *Zivug* for the creation of the world of *Beria* was performed in *Bina* of *Atzilut*, and hence took the place of *Zeir Anpin* of *Atzilut*.

The world of *Yetzira*, which was created after the world *Beria*, expands below it in the place of *Malchut* of *Atzilut*. *Partzuf Malchut* of *Atzilut* clothes only the four lowest *Sefirot* of *Partzuf Zeir Anpin* (*NHYM*) so that only the first four *Sefirot* of *Malchut*, *KHB* and *Tifferet* are in *Atzilut* facing the four *Sefirot* *NHYM* of *Zeir Anpin*. The *Sefirot* *Gevura*, *Tifferet*, and *NHYM* of *Partzuf Malchut* are below *Parsa*.

Hence, when the world of *Yetzira* was created, its first four *Sefirot* dressed the four first *Sefirot* of *Malchut*, while its six lower *Sefirot* came in the place of the bottom six *Sefirot* of *Beria*. The place of *BYA* consists of 30 *Sefirot*. In the future, after the sin of the first man, the worlds of *BYA* descend to this place. The place where the lower six *Sefirot* of *Yetzira* end is called the *Haze* of the place of the world of *Beria*. After the breaking of the soul of the first man, that would become the *Haze* of *Beria*.



After the world of *Yetzira* was created and took its place, *Malchut* of *Atzilut* created the world of *Assiya*. It expanded below the world of *Yetzira*, meaning from the *Haze* of the place of the world of *Beria* to the *Haze* of the world of *Yetzira*.

The *Haze* of the place of the world of *Yetzira* is called the *Haze* of the place of the worlds of *BYA*. In that place the expansion of the worlds of *BYA* stops. Below that place there is no light. In that place, from the *Haze* of the place of the world of *Yetzira* and under, it is called *Mador HaKlipot* (the “shell section”). Under it there is the point of “this world.”

A place (in spirituality) means desire. The point of “this world” is a will to receive in order to receive (for oneself), a desire to enjoy pleasures in worldly clothes, such as

sex, respect, control and envy. The shells are higher up than that, because they wish to take pleasure in the Creator, the opposite of holiness.

In the wisdom of Kabbalah the reference point is always that which is to be attained. Hence, he who learns that his desires are aimed only at reception in order to receive, and never to bestow, can be referred to as an attaine. He is in the state of “this world.” But someone who does not learn that all his desires are directed at reception in order to receive is not in this place (desire). He is even lower down than that, i.e. even before that discovery, in a place (desire) called “our world,” the place of the unconscious (of their desires), who do not feel their own unconsciousness.

Humanity as a whole is in the degree of “our world,” i.e. unconsciousness. From this degree begins the evolution of man’s desire to receive. The evolution is a natural process, pushing everyone through the harsh force of *Din* (judgment) toward correction.

The entire human history is a generation-by-generation evolution of the will to receive, promoted by three factors: envy, desire and honor (the pursuit of glory).

The reason for all the suffering in the world is the will to receive, thus suffering will bring man and the whole of mankind to the decision to leave it. Those whose will to receive has evolved enough, receive a push from above to want something beyond this world. That push makes man begin to search for the source of satisfaction for his new desire, until he finds the right teacher. It often takes years, and sometimes an entire lifetime is not enough. But if the Creator brings one to a place where Kabbalah is taught as he did with me, it is a sign that he is given a chance from above to correct his soul and attain the goal.

Chapter 3.19 - The First Man

The First Man is a different creation than anything that preceded it. He is the only one that was created from the actual *Malchut DeEin Sof*, and is therefore the only one that can be called a ‘real’ creature. He too was created by *Malchut DeAtzilut*, which rose to *AVI*. She (*Malchut*) created *Partzuf Adam HaRishon* just as she had created the worlds of *BYA*. Consequently *Adam HaRishon* is always inside the worlds of *BYA*.

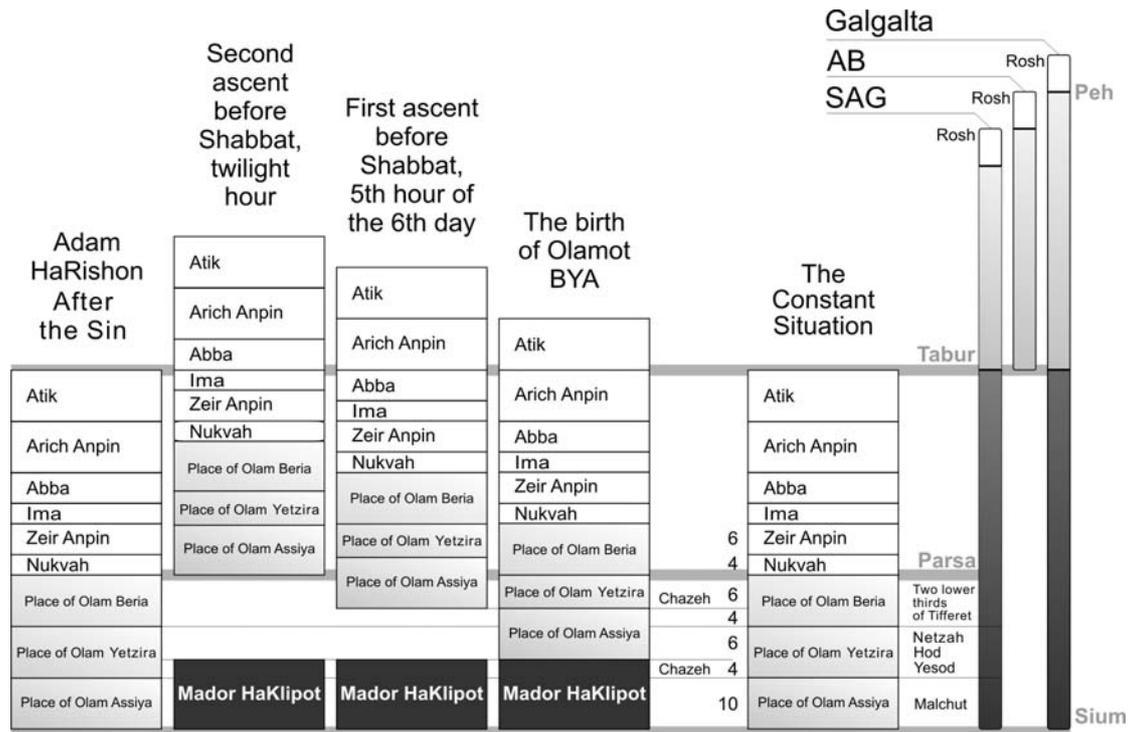
The worlds of *BYA* were created standing at *AVI*, and continued down to the *Haze* of the place of the world of *Yetzira*, with *Adam HaRishon* contained in them. When born, he was at the height of all three worlds of *BYA* and received from *BYA* the lights of *Nefesh, Ruach, Neshama (NRN)*. *Adam HaRishon* received additional lights – *NRN DeAtzilut*, because *BYA* were in *Atzilut*.

The state of the worlds at the time of the birth of *Adam HaRishon* is called the “Eve of *Shabbat*” (Saturday evening). Then, by an awakening from above, the worlds rose one degree (meaning ten *Sefirot*) along with *Adam HaRishon*, so that the end of *BYA* rose along with *Adam HaRishon* to the *Haze* of the place of the world of *Beria*.

In that situation, *Adam HaRishon* wanted to receive all the lights in order to bestow, as it was before the breaking of the vessels in the world of *Nekudim*. But back in *Nekudim*, *Rosh* of *AVI* didn’t understand that *ZON* were not corrected, and hence gave them lights of *Gadlut*, and consequently *ZON* broke. That understanding lacked here with *Adam HaRishon* as well, but the difference from the first breaking is, that after the first reception, which was an innocent mistake on the part of *Adam HaRishon*, he wanted to receive a second time, this time fully aware that it’s a sin (an act of reception in order to receive). He could no longer stop himself from receiving for self-pleasure.

Hence, this breaking produced the shells – the desires to receive in order to receive. The worlds of *BYA* fell below *Parsa* to their permanent state, from *Parsa* to the end of *Galgalta*. The “permanent state” is called by that name because there cannot be any lower state than that for the worlds of *BYA*. But they are not fixed in this place, they do have a possibility to go up and back down.

Besides the descent of *BYA* to their permanent place, as a result of the breaking of *Adam HaRishon*, the impure worlds of *BYA* were created as well. They consist of the weaknesses and stand opposite *BYA*. Because of that, *BYA* is ‘clean’ from any will to receive and are therefore named the “holy *BYA*.” Their opposite worlds are therefore named the “impure *BYA*.”



The impure worlds are called:

- *Esh Mitlakachat* (Fire Catches Fire) – opposite the world of *Beria*.
- *Anan Gadol* (Great Cloud) - opposite the world of *Yetzira*.
- *Ruach Se'ara* (Stormy Wind) - opposite the world of *Assiya*.

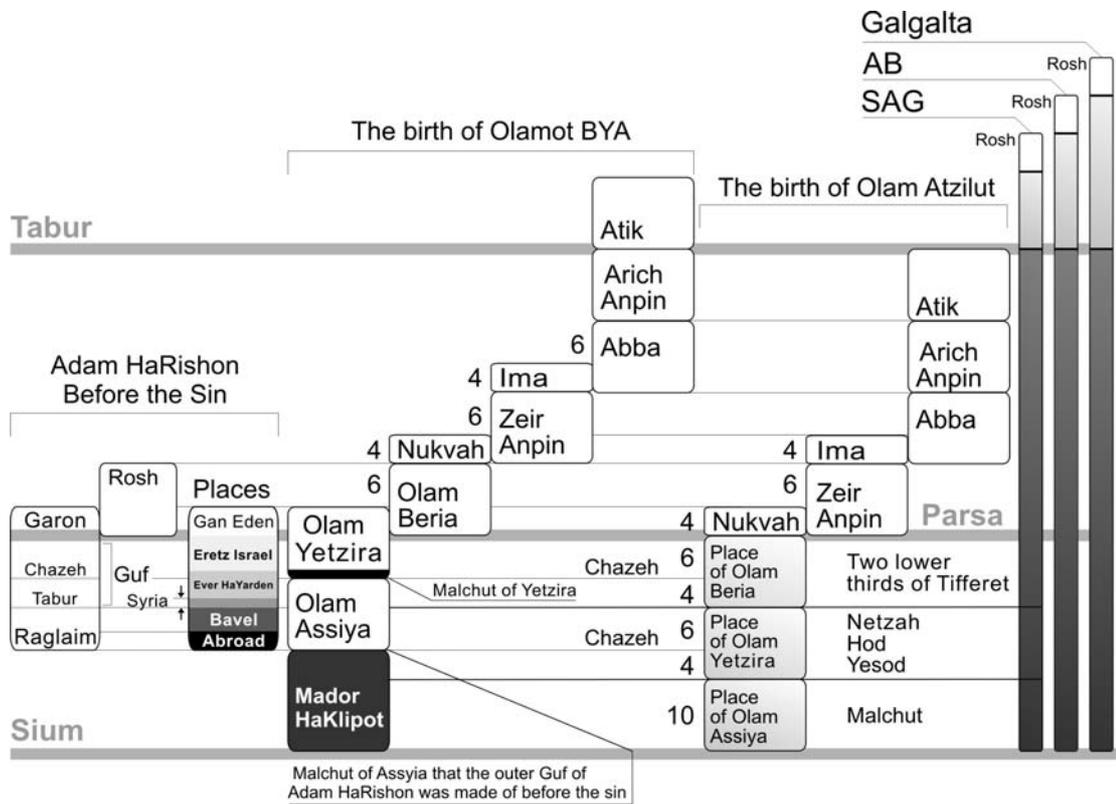
After the sin, *Partzuf Adam HaRishon* broke into 600,000 pieces. The pieces continued to break (the Torah describes them as the killing of Abel, the flood, Babylon, and there is more). Consequently, all that was left of *Partzuf Adam HaRishon* are fragments that have a will to receive in order receive, with just a spark of light. These parts, with sparks in them, clothe people in this world and awaken them to spirituality, to the light, to the Creator. This is how people are pushed to join the group of Kabbalah students.

There is yet another shell: it is called *Klipat Noga* (the Noga Shell). It consists of a mixture of good and evil. The term mixed indicates, that when this shell receives light, she receives it in the good part, but immediately passes it to the evil. The correction of the entire reality concentrates solely on the correction of the Noga Shell: to detach it from the three impure *Klipot* - *Ruach Se'ara*, *Anan Gadol*, and *Esh Mitlakachat* – that she is connected with in the evil part, and join them with the good part to holiness, to *Atzilut*.

Chapter 3.20 - The Rising of the Worlds

The real place of all the worlds is the phases before the sin:

- *Zeir Anpin* standing in the place of *Arich Anpin*
- *Malchut* standing in the place of *AVI*
- *Beria* standing in the place of *YESHSUT*
- *Yetzira* standing in the place of *Zeir Anpin*
- The first four *Sefirot* of the world of *Assiya* standing in the place of *Nukva* of *Atzilut*, dressed over *TNHYM* of the world *Yetzira*.
- The last six *Sefirot* of the world of *Assiya* standing in the place of the world of *Beria*, below *Parsa*.
- The first six *Sefirot* of the place of the world of *Beria*, meaning the place from *Parsa* to the *Haze* of the place of the world of *Beria*, is called the “outskirts of the city,” because they belong to the world of *Atzilut*, called *Ir* (city).



The *Parsa* is called the “wall of the city.”

- From the *Haze* of the place of the world of *Beria* to the general *Sium* (end) there are 24 *Sefirot*, a space vacant of light.
- The 16 *Sefirot* from the *Parsa* to the *Haze* of *Yetzira* are called the “Shabbat zone.” It consists of the outskirts of the city plus ten more *Sefirot* from *Haze* of *Beria* to *Haze* of *Yetzira*.

Every ten *Sefirot* is called 2000 *Amah* (measurement unit). Hence the entire place of the worlds of *BYA* is called 6,000 *Amah*, or 6,000 years of the life of the world.

- The 14 *Sefirot* from the *Haze* of *Yetzira* to the *Sof* of *Galgalta* is called the “shell section.” That is were the shells reside prior to the sin of the First Man, but after the sin they become the four worlds of the impure *ABYA*.

Cause and Consequence

The Four Phases of direct light:

1. *Behinat Shoresh*: light stems from His essence, i.e. His desire to delight His creatures. Because He has a desire to benefit, He creates *Behina Aleph*, which is the will to receive, the desire to take pleasure in the light.
2. *Behina Aleph*: once she feels that she is receiving she decides to stop receiving. That new desire is called *Behina Bet*.
3. *Behina Bet*: once completely empty of the light of wisdom, *Behina Bet* feels the lack of it and decides to receive a little bit of light of wisdom clothed in light of mercy, thus creating *Behina Gimel*.
4. *Behina Gimel*: when she receives the light of wisdom and the light of mercy, she decides that she wants to receive all the light – and this is *Behina Dalet*, also called *Malchut* (Kingship) because the will to receive dominates her. She wants to receive light like *Behina Aleph* did, but with a supplement. The additional desire is a new vessel, called “yearning,” which is the sensation of *Malchut* that her desire is an independent one; it comes directly from her.
5. *Behina Dalet*: receives all the light without limitation, consequently called *Olam Ein Sof* (the world of no end).

The first restriction: *Behina Dalet* makes the first restriction. The restricted *Behina Dalet* is called the world of *Tzimtzum* (the restricted world).

The work of the screen: *Behina Dalet*, *Malchut*, decides to receive lights in her desires for bestowal, meaning in her inner *Behinot Shoresh*, *Aleph*, *Bet*, *Gimel*, but not in her *Behina Dalet*, which is pure will to receive.

Partzuf Galgalta: *Malchut*, using the screen with the *Reshimot* of *Dalet DeHitlabshut* and *Dalet DeAviut*, makes a *Zivug* with the upper light that was removed because of the restriction. Mating with the upper light, the screen decides how much light it can receive inside *Malchut*.

Once the decision has been made, it descends to the *Guf* with the amount of light it decided to receive. The lights that enter the *Partzuf* are called *Taamim*. The place where the screen stops descending and limits the reception of the light is called *Tabur*.

The light that enters the *Partzuf* is called inner light. The part of the light that remains outside the vessel is called surrounding light. The screen that stands at the *Tabur* goes under the *Bitush* (beating) of the surrounding light and inner light, as they both want to remove the limitation on the reception.

The screen decides not to use the *Reshimo* of *Aviut Dalet* and refine. It rises from *Tabur* to *Peh* and the inner light leaves the *Partzuf*. The departing lights are called *Nekudot*. The entire *Partzuf*, from the first *Zivug* in the *Rosh* to the end of its refining is called *Partzuf Galgalta*.

Partzuf AB: The screen of *Partzuf Galgalta* that rose to the *Rosh* of *Galgalta* is contained in the perpetual *Zivug* in the screen at the *Peh*. The encounter of the screen with the upper light in the *Rosh* makes the screen want to receive a part of the light in the *Rosh*, but according to its own *Reshimot*, meaning those of *Dalet DeHitlabshut*

and *Gimel DeAviut*. The last *Reshimo DeAviut* (for the reception of the light) disappears as a consequence of the decision to stop receiving.

Following the *Reshimo* of *Gimel DeAviut*, the screen descends to *Haze of Galgalta* and makes a *Zivug* on *Reshimo Dalet DeHitlabshut* and *Gimel DeAviut*. This is the place of the *Peh* of the next *Partzuf*. After the *Zivug*, the screen descends from the *Peh* down to the *Tabur* of the new *Partzuf*, and the lights of *Taamim* enter the *Toch* of the *Partzuf*.

The screen that stands at the *Tabur* is being 'Bitushed' in order to cancel the limitation. The screen then decides to refine and the *Reshimo* of *Gimel DeAviut* disappears and the screen rises from *Tabur* to *Peh*. The exiting lights are called *Nekudot* of *AB*.

Partzuf SAG: When the screen reached the *Peh*, it was included in the constant *Zivug* with the upper light that exists there, and wanted to receive a part of the light in the *Rosh*. Hence, the screen descends to the *Haze* of *Partzuf AB* and makes a *Zivug* on the *Reshimot* of *Gimel DeHitlabshut* and *Bet DeAviut*. It receives light and stops in the place it had decided on in the *Rosh* – the *Tabur*. The *Bitush* of the inner light and surrounding light happens immediately because the lights want to cancel the limitation that the screen sets in the *Toch*, the screen decides to refine.

Nekudot DeSAG: The lights that are created during the refining of the screen are called *Nekudot*. *Nekudot DeSAG* are of *Bet DeHitlabshut* and *Bet DeAviut*. This is the nature of *Bina*. These lights can appear anywhere (in any desire), and hence the lights of *Nekudot* descend below *Tabur DeGalgalta*, and fill the *Sof* of *Galgalta*.

The *Sof* of *Galgalta* and *Nekudot DeSAG* mix. *Partzuf Nekudot DeSAG*, which is *Partzuf Bina*, divides to *GAR DeBina* and *ZAT DeBina* (the upper three of *Bina* and the lower seven of *Bina*). *ZAT DeBina*, which are vessels of reception, are influenced by the *Reshimot* at the *Sof* of *Galgalta* and want to receive those lights in order to receive. It happens because the power of the screen of *Nekudot DeSAG* is of *Bet DeAviut*, and the *Reshimot* at the *Sof* of *Galgalta* are 4/3, i.e. stronger than the resistance power at the screen.

That situation creates a will to receive in order to receive from *Haze* of *Nekudot DeSAG* and below. That necessitates *Malchut*, which performed the first restriction to rise from the *Sof* of *Galgalta* to *Haze* of *Nekudot DeSAG*, and limits the expansion of the light below the *Haze*.

All these processes at *Nekudot DeSAG* took place during the rising of the screen of *Guf DeSAG*, from *Tabur DeSAG* to its *Rosh*. But now the *Reshimot* from the first restriction, and from the *Sof* of *Galgalta* were added to it.

The second restriction: The rising of *Malchut* of the first restriction to the *Haze* of *Nekudot DeSAG* is called the second restriction.

MA and BON above Tabur DeGalgalta: When the screen at the *Guf DeSAG* reaches the *Peh*, it mates on *Reshimot Bet DeHitlabshut* and *Aleph DeAviut* that remain from the lights of *Taamim DeSAG*, above the *Tabur*, and creates *Partzuf MA Elyon* (upper *MA*) from *Peh DeSAG* to *Tabur DeGalgalta*. After the refining of *Partzuf MA Elyon*, *Partzuf BON Elyon* (upper *BON*) comes out from *Peh* of *MA* to *Tabur DeGalgalta*.

The world of Nekudim (Katnut): When the screen of *Guf DeSAG* rises in its refining to *Peh DeSAG*, and wants to make a *Zivug* on its *Reshimot* (*Bet DeHitlabshut* and *Aleph DeAviut*), it rises from the *Peh* to *Nikvei Eynaim* of *Rosh DeSAG*, because the *Reshimot* 2/1 are restricted, meaning they want to receive light only in their vessels of bestowal.

Hence, the screen stands below the vessels of bestowal at the *Rosh*, below *Keter* and *Hochma* at *Rosh DeSAG*. The screen always mates on the *Behinot* at the *Rosh*, which are above it. Hence, it stands at the *Rosh*, where it wants to receive the light into the *Guf*.

After the *Zivug*, the screen passes what it received to the *Guf*. The light expands to the place where the restricted *Reshimot* 2/1 come from, meaning below *Tabur DeGalgalta*. That *Partzuf* is called *Partzuf Nekudim* because it is created on *Reshimot* from *Nekudot DeSAG*.

That *Partzuf* consists of:

- *Rosh DeHitlabshut* called *Keter*.
- *Rosh DeAviut* called *Abba VeIma (AVI)*
- *Guf*, called *ZON (Zeir Anpin and Nukva)*

Each of them contains only vessels of bestowal. Their vessels of reception are concealed.

Gadlut of the world of Nekudim: When the *Katnut* of the world of *Nekudim* is complete, the screen at the *Rosh DeSAG* descends (because the *Reshimot* 4/3 demand it) to *Peh DeSAG* and mates. This *Zivug* brings light of wisdom to *Rosh* of *Keter* of *Nekudim* and to *Abba* of the *Rosh* of *AVI*. *Imma* is *Bina*, who doesn't want any light of wisdom, except if *ZON* asks for it. The light of wisdom shines from the *Rosh* of *Nekudim*, even as far as the *Sof* of *Galgalta*, and that's where the request comes from, through *ZON* of *Nekudim*, for *AVI* to give them *Gadlut*, i.e. light of wisdom. When *ZON* asks of *AVI*, they mate and bring light of wisdom to *ZON*.

The breaking of the vessels: light of wisdom expands from *Rosh* of *AVI* to *ZON* and crosses the *GE* down to the *Parsa*. When the light wants to reach under the *Parsa* and fill the vessels of *AHP DeZON*, it encounters the will to receive and rises. The vessels of *GE* and *AHP* break together and 320 broken pieces fall below the *Parsa*.

The vessels of reception and the vessels of bestowal were mixed in the breaking and created four types of vessels:

1. *GE* –created *GE DeZON* of *Atzilut*.
2. The mixture of *GE* with *AHP* –created the worlds of *BYA*.
3. The mixture of *AHP* with *GE*–created the *AHP DeAliya* (the rising *AHP*).
4. *AHP* –created the shells, which are desires to receive in order to receive, unworthy of receiving light. They consist of 32 *Malchuts*, of 320 parts, which couldn't be corrected before the end of correction (using them to receive in order to bestow). Those 32 *Malchuts* are called the “stony heart.” Their correction is to separate them from the other 320 parts and refrain from using them.

288 (320 - 32) of the 320 parts in every broken piece can be corrected because they are not parts of *Malchut*, but of the upper nine *Sefirot*. Those that belong to the *GE* need only be sorted and taken out of the pile, because they are vessels of bestowal in and of themselves. They are the ones that construct *Katnut* of *ZON DeAtzilut*.

Chapter 3.21 - The Formation of the Worlds of ABYA

The Formation of the World of Atzilut

Atik: The screen rose along with the *Reshimot* to *Rosh* of *Nekudim* and from there to *Rosh DeSAG*. The screen sorted the finest *Reshimot* - *Aleph DeHitlabshut* and *Shoresh DeAviut*, and rose from *Peh* to *Keter* of *Rosh DeSAG*, and from there, even higher up to *Bina DeKeter*. There it stopped above the *Sefirot KHB HGT* of *Keter*, so that above the screen there are only vessels of bestowal of *Keter*, meaning those of *Aviut Shoresh*. That place is called *Metzach* (forehead). The screen mates there, creating *Partzuf Keter* of *Atzilut*, called *Partzuf Atik*.

The *Partzuf* that is created by this *Zivug* is called a “fetus” because it’s got only vessels of bestowal in *Aviut Shoresh*. There cannot be less than that in spirituality. Once created, the *Partzuf* descends to the place where the *Reshimot* came from, meaning below *Tabur DeGalgalta*.

When *Partzuf Atik* is born and descends to its place, the *Reshimot* 4/3 awaken in it and demand *Gadlut* from the *Partzuf*. The screen mates with the light on these *Reshimot* and builds the degree of *Atik* in *Gadlut*. That *Partzuf* expands from *Tabur DeGalgalta* to the *Sium* of *Galgalta*. It reaches lower than the *Parsa*, because it is in fact *Partzuf Keter* that still belongs to the first restriction, hence the name *Atik* (Ancient, but also Detached), from the lower ones, i.e. the lower *Partzufim*.

Arich Anpin: When *Partzuf Atik* was created in *Gadlut*, *Rosh DeSAG* passed it all the *Reshimot* that it took after the breaking. From among those *Reshimot*, *Atik* selected the finest ones, and made a *Zivug* on them, creating the next *Partzuf* in line - *Partzuf Hochma*, first in the “fetus” degree and then in *Gadlut*. That *Partzuf* expanded from *Peh* of *Atik* to the *Parsa* and was named *Arich Anpin (AA)*.

Abba VeIma: When *Partzuf Arich Anpin* was created in *Gadlut*, *Atik* passed it all the remaining *Reshimot* from among those that rose after the breaking to *Rosh DeSAG*. *Arich Anpin* selected the finest ones, and made a *Zivug* on them, creating the next *Partzuf* in line, *Partzuf Bina* of *Atzilut*, first in the “fetus” degree and then in *Gadlut*. That *Partzuf* expanded from *Peh* of *Arich Anpin* to its *Tabur*.

Zeir Anpin: When *Partzuf Abba VeIma* was created in *Gadlut*, *Arich Anpin* passed it all the remaining *Reshimot*. *Arich Anpin* selected the finest ones, and made a *Zivug* on them, creating *Partzuf Zeir Anpin* of *Atzilut*, first in the “fetus” degree, then in *Katnut*, and then in *Gadlut*. *Partzuf Zeir Anpin* expanded from *Tabur* of *Arich Anpin* to the *Parsa*.

Malchut: When *Partzuf Zeir Anpin* was created in *Katnut*, *Abba VeIma* passed it all the remaining *Reshimot* that haven’t been corrected by the previous *Partzufim*. *Zeir Anpin* selected the finest ones, and made a *Zivug* on them, creating *Partzuf Malchut* of *Atzilut* as a dot, as it was in the world of *Nekudim*. That concludes the corrections of all the *Reshimot* of *Katnut* of the world *Nekudim* that rose to *Rosh DeSAG*.

The Formation of the Worlds of BYA

The *Partzufim* of *GAR*, of the world of *Atzilut*, came out on *Reshimot* of *Rosh* of *Nekudim* that refined, but did not break. From *ZON* of *Nekudim* and under, the birth of any *Partzuf* is done by sorting and correcting the broken pieces, because the breaking of the vessels in the world of *Nekudim* mixed the vessels of bestowal above the *Parsa*,

with the vessels of reception, so that in each of the 320 broken pieces there are four types of vessels:

1. Vessels of Bestowal.
2. Vessels of Bestowal inside vessels of reception.
3. Vessels of reception inside Vessels of Bestowal.
4. Vessels of reception.

The vessels of bestowal were sorted out first off the 320 parts, by order of coarseness, from fine to coarse, and corrected; i.e. a *Zivug* was performed over them. The screen that descends from *Rosh DeSAG* created all the *Partzufim* in the world of *Atzilut* in *Katnut*, and then in *Gadlut*. *Katnut* of the world of *Atzilut* is parallel to *Katnut* of the world of *Nekudim*.

ZON DeAtzilut then rose to *Abba VeIma* of *Atzilut*: *Zeir Anpin* becomes like *Abba* and *Malchut* becomes like *Ima*. A lower degree that rises to the upper degree becomes like the upper one. Consequently, *Malchut* attained the degree of *Bina* so that she could mate on the light of wisdom and create new *Partzufim*.

When *Malchut DeAtzilut* rose to *Ima*, she took the vessels of bestowal that were inside the vessels of reception from each of the 320 parts, in order of coarseness from fine to coarse. In that order she then created new *Partzufim*:

- From the sorting and mating on the vessels of bestowal, that fell in the part of *Bina*, under the *Parsa* (GE included in *Bet DeAviut* of the *AHP*), came out five *Partzufim*: *Keter – Atik, Hochma - Arich Anpin, Bina - Abba VeIma, Zeir Anpin - Zeir Anpin, Malchut – Nukva* of the world of *Beria*.
- From the sorting and mating on the vessels of bestowal, that fell in the vessels of *Zeir Anpin*, under the *Parsa* (GE included in *Gimel DeAviut* of the *AHP*), came out five *Partzufim*: *Keter – Atik, Hochma - Arich Anpin, Bina - Abba VeIma, Zeir Anpin - Zeir Anpin, Malchut – Nukva* of the world of *Yetzira*.
- From the sorting and mating on the vessels of bestowal, that fell in *Malchut*, under the *Parsa* (GE included in *Dalet DeAviut* of the *AHP*), came out five *Partzufim*: *Keter – Atik, Hochma - Arich Anpin, Bina - Abba VeIma, Zeir Anpin - Zeir Anpin, Malchut – Nukva* of the world of *Assiya*.

Malchut of *Atzilut* performs those couplings standing at the place of *Ima DeAtzilut*. Hence, the world of *Beria* stands below her, in the place of *Zeir Anpin* of *Atzilut*.

The world of *Yetzira*, created from *Malchut* of *Atzilut*, after the world of *Beria*, comes from her and takes its place below the world of *Beria*, taking the place of the four *Sefirot* of *Malchut* of *Atzilut* and six *Sefirot* of the place of the world of *Beria*.

The world of *Assiya*, created by *Malchut* of *Atzilut* after the world *Yetzira*, takes its place below the world of *Yetzira*, from the *Haze* of the world of *Beria*, to the *Haze* of the world of *Yetzira*.

The worlds end at *Haze* of the world *Yetzira*, because all the vessels of bestowal, and the vessels of bestowal that are inside the vessels of reception, have been sorted out from the broken pieces. Below *Haze* of *Yetzira* begins the *AHP* of the place of *BYA*, the place of the vessels of reception that were included in the vessels of bestowal and the vessels of reception (the stony heart).

The rising AHP: The sorting and correction of the vessels of reception that were included in the vessels of bestowal, adds vessels of *AHP* to the world of *Atzilut*. Those vessels take the light of wisdom and the world of *Atzilut* attains *Gadlut*.

The light of wisdom expands only in genuine vessels of reception, whereas here there are vessels of reception that were included in the vessels of bestowal during the breaking. Hence, the light that expands on the couplings of these vessels is not a real light of wisdom, but an illumination of wisdom.

There is a special correction in the *Rosh* of the world of *Atzilut* that guarantees there will never be another breaking, as in the case of the world of *Nekudim*. There is a limitation in the *Rosh* of *Partzuf Arich Anpin*, so that from *Arich Anpin* and below, there will not be a *Zivug* on the actual *Malchut*, but only on the *Malchut* that is included in the *Sefirot* above it, in the desires for bestowal.

Consequently, the world of *Atzilut* is born in *Katnut*, and every *Partzuf* has only the vessels of bestowal, the vessels of *GE*. The vessels of reception (*AHP*) remain below the *Parsa*. It is impossible to join the *AHP* with the *GE* and make a *Zivug* on the entire ten *Sefirot* in their actual place, as it was in the world of *Nekudim*, because it causes the vessels to break.

Hence, any addition of vessels of reception to *Atzilut* is done by raising some of the vessels of reception included in the vessels of bestowal. The ascent is from under the *Parsa* to over it, thus adding parts of *AHP* to *Atzilut*, which brings illumination of wisdom to *Atzilut*.

This is how the vessels of reception rise from under the *Parsa* and join *Atzilut*. All the vessels of reception that can join the vessels of *Atzilut*, i.e. vessels of reception that are included in the vessels of bestowal, rise in order of coarseness, from fine to coarse.

The correction of the stony heart can only be with the light of Messiah

After all the above corrections, only vessels of reception remain in *BYA*, named the “stony heart.” They are not included in the vessels of bestowal, and hence cannot be corrected. Their correction is in being separated and excluded every time there is a sorting on the 320 broken parts. In each sorting there are 32 parts of that nature. When using the 288 remaining parts and building *Partzufim*, a decision must be made to refrain from using the stony heart that belongs to that part. Once the correction of the 288 parts is completed, there will be a light of wisdom that will come from above, named Messiah, and correct these vessels by giving them a screen. Then the entire *Malchut DeEin Sof* will be corrected with a screen. That state of *Malchut* is defined as the “end of correction.”

All the vessels in the worlds of *BYA*, except the stony heart, are corrected from the finest to the coarsest. In each of the worlds of *BYA* there are 2,000 phases of correction, named “years” or “degrees.” All and all there are 6,000 degrees in the three worlds of *BYA*, called the six days of the week. The worlds of *BYA* are considered the weekdays and the world of *Atzilut* is the holy *Shabbat*.

- Once all the worlds of *BYA* and the stony heart are corrected, the world of *Atzilut* will expand below the *Parsa* to “this world.” That state will be called the “seventh millennium.”
- Afterwards, the worlds of *ABYA* will rise to *SAG* and that will be called the “eighth millennium.”
- Then the worlds of *ABYA* will rise to *AB* and that will be called the “ninth millennium.”

- Then the worlds of *ABYA* will rise to *Galgalta* and that will be called the “tenth millennium.”

Thus, after the correction of *Malchut DeEin Sof* is completed she will be filled as prior to the first restriction, but in addition will benefit from the endless ascents in the degrees of bestowal to the Creator. But because the wisdom of Kabbalah teaches only those acts concerning man’s correction, these situations are not taught. They do not even appear in books of Kabbalah because they belong to a part that is forbidden in telling, called the “Secrets of Torah.” Only a chosen few practice them, and under strict conditions.

Chapter 3.22 - The First Man

Throughout the corrections of *Malchut* that we have been discussing, *Malchut* of *Malchut* still has not been filled, the central *Malchut* of all the worlds. Everything that happened up to now, the first and second restrictions, the breaking of the vessels, and corrections, were all done on the upper nine *Sefirot* of *Malchut*, not on *Malchut* itself, *Behina Dalet* of *Dalet*. That is because she was restricted not to receive anything inside it, meaning within the will to receive. Any light that is received after the first restriction is received only in the vessels of bestowal, i.e. the vessels of *Malchut DeEin Sof*, that were impressed with the upper nine, from the will to bestow of the upper light.

Malchut of *Malchut* will be corrected and filled with light of wisdom, as before the first restriction, only if that *Malchut* will obtain desires for bestowal, and mix with *Malchut*'s desires for reception. *Malchut* was mixed with its upper nine *Sefirot* in the breaking of the vessels, consequently creating the worlds. But that still corrected nothing of *Malchut* itself, because she did not mix with the desires for bestowal.

After the descent of the worlds of *BYA*, *Malchut* of *Atzilut*, (which stands at the place of *Ima*) makes a *Zivug* on *Katnut*, on the joining of the vessels of bestowal with *Behina Dalet* of *Dalet*. That is why this *Partzuf* is strictly forbidden to use its vessels of reception, its *AHP*. This *Partzuf* is called *Adam HaRishon* (the First Man), who was forbidden to eat from the tree of knowledge, meaning to make a *Zivug* on the vessels of reception, the *AHP*.

At the birth of *Adam HaRishon*, the worlds of *BYA* expanded to the place of *Haze* of *Yetzira*. Then came the light from *Ein Sof*, named "awakening from above," and raised all the worlds by one degree, so that the end of the world of *Assiya* rose from the place of *Haze* of *Yetzira* to the place of *Haze* of *Beria*. Then came another awakening from above and raised the worlds one more degree, so that the end of the world of *Assiya* rose above *Parsa*.

Being inside the worlds of *BYA*, *Adam HaRishon* rose along with them to *Atzilut*. He thought that now he could receive all the light in his vessels of reception in order to bestow, meaning in the *AHP*, the *Behina Dalet* of *Behina Dalet*.

But just as in the case of the breaking of the vessels in the world of *Nekudim*, when he drew the light of wisdom into the vessels of reception, he broke, meaning he lost the screen, the aim to bestow. His body was divided into 600,000 pieces, called "organs" or "souls," that fell into the shells and received an aim to receive in order to receive.

All the parts together, and each separate part fell deeper down (those are the sins that the Torah tells us about in the first generations after the sin of *Adam HaRishon*). These parts are dressed in people of our world. A person who has such a part feels in it the desire to rise and unite with his origin at *Adam HaRishon*. That origin is called the, "root of man's soul."

In order for the creature to earn that name (creature), he must become independent, meaning not influenced by the Creator. Hence the Creator hides himself, thus helping the creatures equalize with Him through their own labour. It turns out that a person in our world, whose soul clothes a part of the First Man, is the creature.

A creature is a part of *Adam HaRishon* that is inside a person of our world. All creatures, meaning souls, are parts of the body of *Adam HaRishon*. They all need to correct his breaking, thus returning to the state that was before the sin, and add adhesion with the Creator. They sort the parts from within the shells. Anyone should

come to the root of his soul while in this physical world, otherwise he returns here until he realizes the purpose of his creation.

Chapter 3.23 – Basic Terms

A General Outlook On Creation

Sefirot: properties, clothes that the Creator ‘wears’ in order to appear before the creatures this way. They are **not** His real properties and there is nothing we can say about them, because we cannot grasp their meaning. We can only grasp what He wants to reveal to us. We regard these external properties as “attributes” or “*Sefirot*”.

We feel the properties of the Creator as a certain light that awakens a certain feeling in us. We name each *Sefira* according to that feeling. Every light that comes from the Creator is a certain form or providence, a sign that awakens a certain response. Generally speaking, all the forms of light that emanate from the Creator toward us are denominated “the light of divinity”.

One feels the light of the Creator to the extent that he attains corrections. If there is not a single mended property in man, he cannot feel the light that comes from the Creator, although unknowingly, he is still controlled by Him. When that is the case, one cannot believe that the Creator exists.

One feels that light comes from the Creator only to the extent that his own attributes resemble His. Then he begins to understand that the Creator’s operations on him are types of bestowal of love and mercy, and even former negative emotions, such as fear and cruelty are now interpreted this way.

All the light-forms of the *Sefirot* are monitored signs of how the Creator relates to creation. That means that the *Sefirot* convey the Creator’s rule to mankind. These light-forms, these *Sefirot* are different types in which the Creator watches over us and relates to us. Those forms are divided by ten primary kinds, ten *Sefirot*. The wisdom of Kabbalah studies what the Creator extends to the creatures, meaning the ten *Sefirot*. That is why the fundamental textbook of Kabbalah is titled “The Study of the Ten *Sefirot*.”

There are ten forms (*Sefirot*) in which the light emanates from the Creator. These forms beget creation. The vast variety of creatures in creation stems from various combinations of the properties of these ten *Sefirot*, because these combinations create ten inner *Sefirot* in each *Sefira*, inside which there are another ten *Sefirot* and another inner ten *Sefirot* and so on and so forth indefinitely.

Every property in creation stems from the properties contained in those ten *Sefirot*. That is the reason for the differences between people. The various ‘branches’ of creation are interconnected and thus create new branches. It is therefore possible to compare creation to a tree that has a root, which is the source, a trunk and branches and leaves that are a replica of the root. This means that everything that happens in the root, happens later in the branches. There cannot be an event in the branches that does not happen first in the root.

Restriction: This is the law of creation. It states that the creatures were not created perfect, but with a certain flaw. Perfection is a complete match (identicalness) between every creature and the Creator.

The world of *Ein Sof*, the collective form of creation, which is the beginning of everything, was created perfect by the Creator. But the perfection is concealed from the creatures. They must discover it gradually, according to their individual desires.

Therefore, although creation is complete, eternal and in utter bliss, one cannot feel it at first, but only when one changes one's attributes to match those of the *Sefirot*, the light. Then he begins to feel the actual reality denominated "the next world".

The entire creation is made in such a way that it is compelled to discover its real state. This is how the Creator uses the *Sefirot* to control creation.

Place: A place is an absence. The concealment of the Creator creates a "place" – a feeling of emptiness. The Creator created that sensation of emptiness deliberately, so that one would strive to feel the Creator independently, and discover Him by himself, through the properties that he corrects to match the *Sefirot*.

The World of Restriction: First the Creator created everything in its complete and final state. Afterwards He concealed Himself from the creatures, thus creating a vacant space, an absence, called "The World of Restriction".

Reshimot (1): Those are reflections, reminiscence that remain from the past, after everything is no longer felt. It is a memory of what it could be like if it hadn't all disappeared.

It is through these *Reshimot* that the creatures can survive inside the empty space, without being filled with the light of the Creator. Without any pleasure, the creatures would simply cease to exist. The *Reshimot* keep changing and it is those changes, which awakens us to move, to want and to obtain whatever it is the *Reshimot* awaken in us. The changes of the *Reshimot* give us the sensation of movement, time and life.

The *Reshimot* make the good things and the bad things appear in our sensation equally, and it for us to understand that they are equal and determine which way they will go through thoughts and acts in a positive direction. The *Reshimot* give us the freedom of choice, the ability to decide between the two, because if there is too much of the good feeling, or too much of the bad, then everything is predetermined.

For instance: if the Creator were not concealed and His perfection was exposed, we would not be able to make a single independent act, through to our own choice; we'd have to act like the Creator does; His perfection would compel us to.

Line: It is a form of leadership of the Creator by which the creatures are corrected and regain their completeness. The line is a part of the perfection that all the creatures will feel in the future, once they are corrected through the providence of the Creator that descends on them through the line, depending on their momentary state.

There are *Reshimot* in the creatures, and the light pours on them from above through the world of *Ein Sof* that is filled with light. The line fills the creature according to the *Reshimot* and gives him a certain portion of his own perfect state in the world of *Ein Sof*. The purpose of creation is to perfect man's imperfection, the sensation of the absence of the Creator, of the absence of the light in the creatures.

In order to bring us to that perfect state, the Creator uses a providence of good and bad, although man can feel only good and bad, since the providence of the Creator is always of benevolence. But it is our corrupted properties that make the absolute good feel like bad. It is according to our measure of correction that we can begin to feel the 'bad' providence as good. That is why it is said that within the providence of "good and bad" there is the providence of the "absolute good".

Reshimot (2): *Reshimot* are a part of the collective and complete light of *Ein Sof*. The line transmits the light to the creatures that are in the empty space, concealed from the Creator and feeling incompleteness in accordance with the nature of the *Reshimot* in this or that creature.

That is why it is said that the *Reshimot* awaken and move the body-desire. But the line does more than just fulfill the body. While fulfilling the desire, it corrects it, in accordance with the *Reshimot*.

A tube is a light that comes from the world of *Ein Sof* and descends to the creatures in the empty space, feeling incompleteness. The light fills them according to the line, and consequently, the creatures unite with the Creator.

The Creator gives to all creatures, regardless of the light that passes through the tube. However, His leadership is felt only by those who are already in the upper worlds, according to their labour.

At the end of correction the Creator will once again reveal himself to all the creatures as the absolute benevolent leader of the world. Meaning, He will not appear through the tube, according to our personal attributes, but as the absolute good who is equally good to every one at all times.

This is the state of the end of correction. When everyone feels the absolute good, love, eternity, absolute knowledge and perfection. That state has been prepared for us ahead of time by the Creator in the world of *Ein Sof* and all creatures will see it according to their individual degree of perfection.

Inner light and surrounding light: When the light comes from *Ein Sof* to the creatures, it divides by inner light and surrounding light, or a filling light and casing light. Inner light is what the Creator reveals to the creature by filling it with it. The surrounding light is what the creature has yet to attain from the perfection.

Hence, the entire light of *Ein Sof*, meaning that perfect state that the creature will come to in the future, is divided to a partial state that the creature already attained by acquiring a certain degree in the spiritual world, and a part of the perfection he has not attained yet.

Since the creature does not receive the entire light, but limits the amount it receives, the partial light that the Creature receives is measured against the light of *Ein Sof*. The measurement unit that is used is the five lights *NRNHY* (*Nefesh, Ruach, Neshama, Haya, Yechida*).

Adam Kadmon: It is the first and the highest of the spiritual worlds. Since all the other worlds are 'lower' than *Adam Kadmon*, they descend from it. Thus, it is obvious that the properties that they receive from the light transmitted through it from the world of *Ein Sof* contain the properties of the world of *Adam Kadmon* as well.

Otiot (letters): *Otiot* are vessels. The light from *Partzuf AB* does not carry with it any *Otiot* because the *Otiot* are so filled with light there, they are completely satiated. The light from *Partzuf SAG* is expressed in the letter *Hey* (ה) which represents the root of the future vessel. The light that comes from *Zeir Anpin* contains the letter *Vav* (ו) which is the actual beginning of the future vessel. The light that comes down from

Partzuf BON contains *Otiot*, especially on the departure from the *Partzuf* when they collide and vanish, thus begetting the twenty-two Hebrew *Otiot*, meaning the vessels.

After the breaking of the vessels in the world of *Nekudim*, each vessel is left with *Reshimot* from the breaking. Those stay with it until the end of correction. Each light leaves its vessel during the breaking and that creates the flaws in the vessels. This is where the domination of the body over the soul comes from, because the extent of the control of the body over the soul is as the amount of corruption of the body, meaning the desire.

But that happened deliberately so as to create the egoism in us, the independent desire to take pleasure in the light of the Creator. However, that also creates the conditions to correct the body-desire. In the end, that will result in the beginning of the process of correction, which will end in attaining the level of the soul-light, when there will not be a difference between the body and the soul, or between man's desire and the Creator's.

The end of this process is when the body-desire declines even lower, until finally it declines to the level of a beast (animate degree). This is all preordained in the breaking of the vessels in the world of *Nekudim*, but since the corrected state is also preordained even before the breaking of the vessels, every desire will be reconstructed to resemble the light, and the more identical it is to the light, the more light will enter it.

During the six thousand years, meaning before the souls complete their correction and only a few individuals become Kabbalists, spirituality, meaning the revelation of the Creator is unfelt in this world. But when all the souls are corrected we will come to a state called the "end of correction", and the Creator will be evident to everyone in this world. Then this world will become a perfect place, because the light from the world of *Ein Sof* will come down to it and the *Parsa* in the world of *Atzilut* will no longer be an obstacle to the expansion of the light. That state is called the "seventh millennium".

Since the desires of the body (the *AHP*) consist of egoistic desires that contain three degrees of *Aviut – Bet, Gimel* and *Dalet*, their correction is not like that of the raised *AHP*, but occurs gradually.

The correction of *Aviut Bet* and its filling in its place below the *Parsa* is called the "eighth millennium". The correction of *Aviut Gimel* and its filling in its own place under the *Parsa* is called the "ninth millennium", and the correction of *Aviut Dalet* and its filling in its place under the *Parsa* is called the "tenth millennium".

No one knows or can know of what will happen at the end of the correction of all the souls, when the light of the Creator becomes evident in our world. Even Kabbalists who climbed through all the degrees of the spiritual worlds can attain only the degrees until the seventh millennium. But they cannot know how the Creator will appear in our world after that. However, Baal HaSulam writes that there are souls that do attain these situations. These souls come to our world once every ten generations and his soul is one of them. However, he cannot explain how it happens, because that is a situation that we have to attain by ourselves.

The state of the end of correction is characterized by the original desire (the egoism) obtaining an identical nature to that of the light, something that is right now unimaginable.

Providence operates through the worlds of *ABYA*, but they will exist only while there is concealment.

The world of *Nekudim* is the root and origin of the evil in our world. The Creator uses it to show how, “light excelleth darkness,” by inverting the darkness to become like the light. All the worlds exist for the sole purpose of revealing the perfection of the Creator in man and in creation. Because of that there are two kinds of worlds: in the beginning there is concealment, and afterwards completeness is attained.

The worlds of *BYA* were created from the broken vessels of the world of *Nekudim*. The vessels of the *Rosh*, meaning the three upper *Sefirot* continue to the world of *Atzilut*. After that, the world of *Atzilut* completes itself at the expense of the vessels of the worlds of *BYA*.

Shabbat and Holiday: Those are states of *Katnut* and *Gadlut* of *Zeir Anpin* of the world of *Atzilut*. The state of *Katnut* means, “sucking” (breast feeding). The state of *Gadlut* means redemption. However, these states are only temporary, and last just as long as correction is still needed.

Image of the Creator: The Creator demonstrates His leadership in the form of “circles” and “straightness”: during the descent from above, He demonstrates His power and marks of His leadership. “Superior” means stronger and greater; it is defined as the inner circles, when at the very center there is our world.

Malchut: *Malchut* is called the “similitude of God” because that is the only place where one can feel the Creator, with attributes that were given to him from above. We attain in our innermost feeling, in our *Malchut*. However, we do it with the attributes we receive from above.

Chapter 3.24 – Questions and Answers

What is Kabbalah?

Q: What is Kabbalah?

A: Kabbalah is an ancient teaching that covers a number of languages and many forms of expression. There is the language of tales that the bible uses and the language of rules that the Talmud uses. There is also the language of Kabbalah itself, which uses drawings, formulas and matrix. Kabbalah utilizes pure mathematical rules in order to express spiritual phenomena. There are many ways to depict our sensations and feelings, but the language of Kabbalah is the most accurate of all, the most scientific. It is also possible to convey spiritual sensations through music. Though we do not know the music that former Kabbalists composed, we know that music and songs did exist and that Kabbalists used it in order to convey feelings that relate to the spiritual world. The latest Kabbalistic music, the only original music that has reached us is that of Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag and his eldest son, Rabbi Baruch Ashlag. The advantage of the music over the text is that it gets to everyone's ears, even if they are completely illiterate with regards to the language of Kabbalah. It also allows a person who does not feel the spiritual realm to feel and participate in the emotions and experiences that the Kabbalist felt while being in the spiritual world.

Q: What are the principles of the wisdom of Kabbalah?

A: The only law that exists in reality is the maximum pleasure that creation derives from the Creator. All other laws are based on that law and are in fact, particular incidents of it. Everything that happens in reality is an implementation of that law. Anything in the universe, at any given moment is motivated by the power that drives mankind to reach the state of ultimate delight, the filling of the creature with the light of the Creator. The Creator acts like gravity: He is at the center of the universe. First, He pushes the souls to a distance of five worlds from Him: *Adam Kadmon, Atzilut, Beria, Yetzira* and *Assiya*, and the farthest point is called "this world". Afterwards He began to pull us toward Him.

We feel this process as compulsory, accompanied by all kinds of torments and pain. That anguish is intended to motivate us to replace our egoistic nature with an altruistic one. The Creator is altruistic by nature. Nearing or distancing from the Creator means changing one's spiritual attributes to altruism or egoism respectively: the more altruistic we become, the more intensely we are drawn to Creator, and the more egoistic we are, the farther we draw from the Him.

If we strain ourselves to obtain spiritual nearness with the Creator and not wait until His pulling force will affect us painfully, we will be able to reduce our pain and feel His pulling force as something good and pleasurable. If, however, we insist on retaining our corrupt properties and refuse to adopt the altruistic nature of the Creator, we will be pushed to it by means of financial problems, sickness and death.

The wisdom of Kabbalah allows us to realize ourselves in every way, so that we can consciously advance toward the Creator, and not need the influence of His harsh compelling force. A person who studies Kabbalah increases his spiritual strength and knowledge, until he is able to pass the entire way of nearing the Creator quickly and easily. By doing that, he spares himself pain, distressful events and wars. All the negative phenomena in our world are a consequence of that compelling power of the Creator, which pushes us toward correction.

You, the reader, are already taking part in the conduct of the upper world by the very fact that you have begun to think, analyze and argue, agree or disagree with what you are reading. You awaken the point of connection with the Creator in your soul and thus draw the correcting light to our world. That process softens providence and turns it from rougher to softer. That is why the wisdom of Kabbalah is the most practical science of all; it explains how we can all ‘live well’.

Q: What is the mathematical structure of the wisdom of Kabbalah?

A: The mathematical structure of the wisdom of Kabbalah is very complex. It consists mostly of *Gimatria*, but there are tables and complex interdependencies and formulas there too. There are mathematic like sequences in it, and there are Hebrew letters involved too. In fact, it is impossible to understand the entire system before one begins to feel emotions that relate to the situations being taught. Kabbalah is not a theoretical study of the spiritual world, the heavens, as many like to think. It is **the most** practical science of all, because it is taught and comprehended only out of the influences it bears on the student himself. This means that one not only studies about some spiritual operation, but also actually experiences it.

Only the student can know precisely what he is doing, and only he can feel the consequences of his actions. These feelings are conveyable to others only through a unique language, but only one who can repeat the operation can experience it. That is why the wisdom of Kabbalah is a guide to spiritual operations.

The Creator

Q: What is the difference between the perspective of the Creator and the perspective of the creature?

A: The perspective of the Creator means that the entire creation emanates from His thought. It is created through four phases (*Behinot*) of direct light that finally reach a state entitled “the world of *Ein Sof*”. Creation is already completed in the world of *Ein Sof*, but the creatures will be able to feel it only when they rise from below, from this world to the world of *Ein Sof* in their emotions. Then the creatures too will see what has always been there judging from the perspective of the Creator.

Q: What is the work of God and why is it called by that name?

A: God’s work is the work that God does. If that is the case, why do we normally think that it means our work? The entire work from above downward was done by the Creator. However, if we want the Creator to do the same work on the way up, we must demand it of Him. We have to demand this work to be done by a higher spiritual degree than our own (any higher degree is the Creator to us).

The entire creation begins with the Creator. There is a superior force that wants to create a creature that equalizes with His completeness. If that complete force had created an incomplete creation that would mean that He is incomplete.

Thus, the purpose of the Creator is to create a creature that is as complete as He is, since being as complete as He is, He cannot create anything else. That desire is imprinted in the light; it is entitled, “the purpose of creation.” This purpose determines the entire evolution of creation from beginning to end. Everything that happens in every single step in the spiritual worlds, all the agony the creatures feel in this world, come to serve a single objective – to bring the creature to its complete, best possible state.

There is no other creature but man. We will not only read about it in books but also feel it and see it in every level of creation, not just in our world, but also in every

single world. If the Creator is complete, His operations are also complete and final. However, as long as we are in our intermediary phases, when we are suffering, when there is injustice in the world; can we honestly say that He is complete?

The intermediary situations too are complete, even the ones we are in right now. Our only problem is that we cannot experience them as such. It stems from the system of the impure forces, which makes it impossible for us to feel the state we are in as perfect.

The wisdom of Kabbalah allows each person to neutralize the influence of the impure forces and according to the degree of that neutralization feel eternity and endlessness in every situation, not just in our tiny limited world.

Q: What is the meaning of the name *HaVaYaH*?

A: The meaning of the name *HaVaYaH* is that the Creator creates and revives in the past, present and the future, meaning above time, just as we must attain the Creator in the spirit, above time.

Q: What is the difference between the names of the Creator and His appellations?

A: The names of the Creator are what we call the “ten names that cannot be erased” that correspond to the ten *Sefirot*: *El, Elokim HaVaYaH* etc. The appellations are the attributes of the Creator: “Gracious”, “Merciful”, “Keeping mercy unto the thousandth” and so on. These attributes were given to Him according to what Kabbalists attained of Him.

Q: Does the Creator have a concept of “benevolence”?

A: The concept of benevolence is a little different with regards to the Creator than the concept we normally think of. That is because we regard as “good, and doest good” everything that satisfies our egoistic desires. I regard as good anything that is **good for me**, and bad, anything that is **bad for me**. It is all measured according to my level of development.

Q: What does *Heichal Hashem* (the Palace of the Lord) mean?

A: The word *Heichal* (Palace, Hall) consists of two words: *Hey* (the letter that represents God), and *Kol* (everything). When put together they form the word *Heichal*. This means that anyone who enters the King’s palace receives everything the Creator had prepared for him. If one attains an inner state called *Heichal*, he attains eternal and complete connection with the Creator. As long as he has not attained it, his soul continues to experience gradual corrections of attributes.

The Creator is also called *Makom* (Place). A place is the distance between man and the Creator. Therefore, one must come to a state where he will be completely cleaved to the Creator, blend with Him. The border that he feels between himself and the Creator is also called *Makom*. When one completes his corrections and cleaves to the Creator, he enters a state called “the revival of the dead,” meaning the revival of his own attributes. The revival of the dead is also called *Kima* (rising), hence the word *Makom*, and his sensation of the Creator and the sensation of his own attributes he feels as *Heichal*.

Worlds

Q: What is “our world”?

A: Our world is what we feel in our egoistic sensations, the corrupted ones that haven't been corrected. We begin to feel a more external world, as we progress in the correction of our ego.

Q: What is the meaning of the term “This World”?

A: The state called “this world” designates the farthest point from the Creator (in terms of properties). That is what one should feel when he begins to work on himself and study Kabbalah, when the surrounding light begins to shine on him. One awakens the illumination of that light on himself during the study, and gradually begins to feel himself as more and more corrupted (a process known as the recognition of evil). It is the consequence of the comparison that one begins to make between himself and the light.

When that light shines in full power in this world, he will feel himself completely opposite to the Creator, and then he'll shout for help. In response, the Creator will save that person from this world and take him across the barrier to the first degree of the spiritual world.

We can see that our problem is actually to acknowledge our own egoism as bad, our own nature. The only way to come to that is through the affect of the light of the Torah, or the surrounding light that shines on us when we study Kabbalah. The light is given the name “Surrounding” because as long as there is evil in us, it cannot enter and therefore stays around us on the outside.

Q: Why are we and our world built the way we are?

A: The light that comes from the Creator passes through four phases during which it increases its density, before finally creating a ‘vessel’, meaning the desire to receive the light and enjoy it. That desire is the fifth phase. But the minute this fifth phase, meaning *Malchut*, begins to feel the light inside it, it decides to try and resemble it. That is why it tries to resemble the four previous phases, which is also why the fifth phase has five inner phases. The fifth phase resembles itself to the previous four as much as it can, and the parts it cannot resemble itself to remain unchanged.

The third phase is divided to six subdivisions, which is why we count ten parts in each creature, or ten *Sefirot*. They are also called *Shoresh*, *Neshama*, *Guf*, *Levush*, *Heichal* (root, soul, body, clothing, palace – respectively). The first three unite in man's body, while the remaining two exist separately, like clothes and the world around us. This is a result of the second restriction, since the remaining two (*Levush*, *Heichal*) designate the vessels of reception that were forbidden to use after the second restriction.

Q: Why are there so many worlds?

A: There are many worlds because the egoistic desire is built in a gradual process of increasing remoteness from the Creator. The first world is *Ein Sof*. It is a desire, the root of the creature to be. The will to receive for myself is created after the second restriction, but the desire also restricts itself from doing it. Afterwards, when the breaking of the vessels occurs, the impure desires appear, the shells, which already want to use the egoistic desire. After the sin of *Adam HaRishon* there are entire worlds of impure forces created. The impure system consists of the same structure, but opposite to the system of the pure worlds. The creature is in between them, so as to be given the conditions for free choice.

Q: What are parallel worlds?

A: There are no other worlds. All five worlds – *Adam Kadmon*, *Atzilut*, *Beria*, *Yetzira* and *Assiya* are parallel. Try and imagine five rings with a joint center. Imagine the same picture in parallel, one under the other, five times. What we get is five parallel

areas each consisting of five inner circles. All the areas are worlds entitled - *Adam Kadmon*, *Atzilut*, *Beria*, *Yetzira* and *Assiya*. Imagine taking these areas and putting next to them another area with five circles. That new area will be called *Ein Sof*. There are five worlds between us and the world of *Ein Sof*, and one cannot gradually connect himself with these worlds and attain equivalence of form (properties) with the world of *Ein Sof*. One feels the transitions from world to world according to the changes in his inner properties (inner feelings); he begins with feeling himself in this world, and gradually comes to feel himself completely identical to the world of *Ein Sof*, to the Creator.

Lights

Q: Why is the light of wisdom assigned a male gender and the light of mercy a female, motherly gender?

A: The light of wisdom is the root of the male properties and the light of *Bina* is the root of the female properties. Men and women differ in properties, skin texture, physiology etc. You can even see the differences in their handwriting. What separates between the two genders are the (Hebrew) letters *Yod* (י) (for male) and *Hey* (ה) for female). The letter *Yod* represents the *Sefira* of *Hochma*, while the letter *Hey* designates the *Sefira* of *Bina*, in *Malchut*. Since all parts of reality are interconnected and complement one another and each part contains something of the other, we can always explain each part or property that we examine in different ways, though it will always be about the Four Phases of Direct Light.

Q: Why is the light of wisdom the principal light and not the light of mercy?

A: The light that extends from the Creator is called the light of wisdom. It is written about it: “form the light, and create darkness,” meaning, the lack of the light of wisdom. That is why the eyes are the highest vessels of the *Partzuf* and that is why it says that a “bride whose eyes are beautiful needs no further examination,” because the eyes are the highest degree of the *Guf* (body) of the *Partzuf*. The lowest and darkest part is *Malchut*. It transfers light from itself to the eyes of the lower *Partzuf*, which demonstrates the difference between the *Partzufim*.

Q: Who is a Gentile and what does the name mean?

A: As soon as one changes his fate, his progress in life and his correction system to a private one, he is called a Jew. That is because he makes the unification with the superior spiritual force the basis of his life. A Gentile or a Jew are spiritual concepts.

Q: Does one feel his soul rather than his physical body?

A: The physical body is an illusion. One must obtain a state where he will feel his soul. That is what Kabbalah initiates: one’s sensation of one’s own soul. Afterwards, one can continue developing it to an immense vessel that the Creator can fill.

Q: What is the upper force?

A: It is the absolute good, the benevolent force that leads us. However, because we are not corrected, we feel the power as bad and harmful.

Q: Does the wisdom of Kabbalah teach sorcery? Is it permitted and if so, what is the way to practice “practical Kabbalah”, is there real power to charms, Kabbalistic charts and drawings?

A: The wisdom of Kabbalah strictly prohibits any kind of activity of the sort. The purpose of the study of Kabbalah is to give one a desire and spiritual power, to be able to evolve to the spiritual degree of the Creator.

Q: What is a vessel?

A: A vessel is a desire that has been corrected by the screen. Using the screen (aim), the vessel becomes able of receiving in order to benefit the Creator, and thus fulfill the desires for pleasure. A desire without a screen is still not considered a vessel, but a *Reshimo* or a shell.

Q: What is the reason that one is born as a man or a woman? Why does one need to realize his destination in the land of Israel and the other away from it, and by what criteria are the relatives chosen?

A: These questions relate to the mechanism of the superior providence, called *ZON* of the world of *Atzilut*. That system consists of two parts: *Zeir Anpin* and *Nukva*, meaning male and female that have their own relationship. That relationship creates 'time' (days, weeks, months and years) and their mating creates the souls. The properties of the souls define the characteristics of the physical body that the soul clothes. The soul is created and descends to this world even before a child is born into it.

I am using earthly terms of time, space and motion, although they do not exist in the spiritual world. We must understand that relationship between the male and female parts of *ZON* of the world of *Atzilut* determine everything that happens in our world. There is no other way to easily explain and describe the complete variety of possibilities of the relationship between these two parts, how they connect and how they clothe one another, how they mate and how they create new souls. It is a very complex system. About 1600 pages of the 2000 pages of *The Study of the Ten Sefirot* are dedicated to the description of *ZON* of the world of *Atzilut*.

Q: How can a spiritual object divide into ten Sefirot an indefinite number of times?

A: Each part in the spiritual world, even the smallest particle can be isolated and divided once more to ten inner parts. It is an indefinite process. The desire that the Creator created does not change; what does change is the measurement of its use with the aim to bestow to the Creator; it depends on the screen. A spiritual object is a part of the uniform and unique desire that the Creator created and that the screen must be put over.

Q: What is the difference between Ani (I, ego) and Ein (nothing, nil)?

A: These two words consist of the same letters: *Aleph, Yod, Nun*, but in a different order. The order depends on the beholder. *Malchut* of a *Partzuf* is called *Ani*, to the extent that it exposes its situation and degree. However, at the same time it is the basis and the parent of the next lower *Partzuf*. Thus, it is considered the *Keter* of the lower *Partzuf*, or *Ein*, because the lower *Partzuf* cannot attain anything of the higher *Partzuf* beyond its operations of the upper one inside it. For this reason we cannot attain the Creator himself but only through His actions, hence the phrase: "From Your acts we know You."

Q: Why do we say that blood is the soul?

A: The soul, meaning the light of the Creator that fulfills the corrected desire has five names, degrees: *Nefesh, Ruach, Neshama, Haya, Yechida*. It is said that the blood is the soul because the word blood (*Dam*) comes from the Hebrew word still (*Domem*), meaning the still degree in spirituality. The blood vessels are the powers of the soul called angels, messengers of the soul that revive the body.

Q: Where does matter comes from?

A: *Yesod* is the lowest border in the attainment of any object or phenomenon. But it is not the *Yesod* that has already been separated to its particles and is now indivisible, since there is not a substance in our world that cannot be divided into smaller particles but only in the spiritual root of that object or phenomenon. The Kabbalistic names of the elements are: Fire, Wind, Water and Earth. The Earth elements, for example, refer to dust, or ashes. Something that can never melt, disintegrate or be turned from solid to liquid. That is the reason for the commandment of covering blood with ashes. Over the element of Earth there is the element of water, which consists of gas despite its liquid appearance. The element above the water is the wind, which consists of several types of gasses and is always in the form of gas. Over the wind element there is the element of fire, which is above all other elements. It never disintegrates and never changes. The earth (dust, ashes) is the lowest element of all, since earth is the foundation of all four elements. Because the water is the element above the earth, there is water above the earth in our world too. The water is above the earth, the wind above the water and fire above all.

Q: What is the connection between the four directions and the four elements of matter?

A: There are four directions to the earth: east, west, south and north, and there are four respective elements: fire, wind, water and earth. In terms of *Sefirot* it is *Hochma*, *Bina*, *Zeir Anpin* and *Malchut*. When the light of wisdom enters fire, the light of *Bina* enters water, the *Zeir Anpin* enters the wind and *Malchut* enters the earth, all the lights are in their appropriate vessels and that is when the revival of the dead is attained.

Q: What is a voice?

A: The creation of voice stems from the meeting of the upper one, the *Rosh* of the *Partzuf*, with the lower one, its *Guf* (body) at the *Peh* (mouth). The end of the *Rosh* is the upper lip, and the beginning of the *Guf* is the lower lip. The Hebrew word *Safa* (language) comes from the word *Sof* (end). When two degrees meet, it creates something new that was concealed before, and it is born in the form of speech.

Q: What is time?

A: Time is the sensation of corruption, a deficit. The length of time is the measurement of the sensation of the corruption that must be fixed and filled with light. In other words, a place and time (a desire that must be corrected) come from the same source – the sensation of imperfection. It is a most wonderful feeling to discover the rules and properties of creation, which stem from the expansion of the simple light from the Creator. The greater the distance from the Creator, the greater the imperfection that appears, and hence, the more rules, categories and properties are needed.

Q: Is there an intermediary state between good and evil?

A: Good – is mercy, evil – is judgment. In between there is compassion.

Q: What does it mean that the entire creation was built in Man's image?

A: The term man's image refers to ten *Sefirot* that were corrected with three lines, and consist of *Rosh*, *Toch*, *Sof* that consist of 248 organs. It is called the image of man because our world is built from a different substance, but as a replica of spiritual *Partzuf*.

Chapter 3.25 – English Meaning of Hebrew Terms

1. Bavel – Babylon
2. Bore – Creator
3. Keli – Vessel
4. Mador HaKlipot – The Shell Section
5. Masach – Screen
6. Ohr Hassadim – Light of Mercy
7. Ohr Hochma – Light of Wisdom
8. Ohr Hozer – Returning Light
9. Ohr Makif – Surrounding Light
10. Ohr Pnimi – Inner Light
11. Ohr Yashar – Direct Light
12. Raglaim - Legs
13. Tzimtzum Aleph – 1st Restriction
14. Tzimtzum Bet – 2nd Restriction

Part Four: Man's Study of Himself

Part One: The Beginning *Error! Bookmark not defined.*

Chapter 1.1 - The Great Illusion. The Internal Desire in the Study of Kabbalah *Error! Bookmark not defined.*

Chapter 1.2 – Between Creator and Creature..... *Error! Bookmark not defined.*

Chapter 1.3 – The Evolution of the Soul..... *Error! Bookmark not defined.*

Chapter 1.4 – The Awakening of the Point in the Heart.....*Error! Bookmark not defined.*

Chapter 1.5 – Kabbalah as a Means *Error! Bookmark not defined.*

Chapter 1.6 – Land Marks..... *Error! Bookmark not defined.*

Chapter 1.7 – From Above Downward *Error! Bookmark not defined.*

Chapter 1.8 – Cause and Consequence *Error! Bookmark not defined.*

Chapter 1.9 – What is Between This World and the Next?..*Error! Bookmark not defined.*

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Chapter 1.11 – Freedom of Choice – To Operate Above Nature*Error! Bookmark not defined.*

Chapter 1.12 – Questions and Answers..... *Error! Bookmark not defined.*

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Chapter 2.1 – The Purpose of Creation *Error! Bookmark not defined.*

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| Chapter 2.4 – The Attributes of the Light | Error! Bookmark not defined. |
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Part Four: Proper Study

Chapter 4.1 – About the Study

Who Is Permitted to Study?

Every single person is permitted to study the wisdom of Kabbalah. For that reason Kabbalists have always tried to circulate this wisdom in both Israel and the world over, to bring this option to everyone's awareness, especially those who have come to a state where their soul is ripe for the study of the wisdom of Kabbalah. Through the study, they can correct themselves and attain the purpose of creation. For all the others who still don't feel it necessary to study Kabbalah there should be an awareness of this system in case they want to study it. It should be available for them in case they take an interest, and even want to study a little. This way they can accelerate their progress toward the correction phase.

* * *

If we read *The Study of the Ten Sefirot*, one of Kabbalah's most prominent works, written by Baal HaSulam in the previous century, we will see that from the very first page, Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag (Baal HaSulam) explains that each and every individual can and should study Kabbalah, but it is necessary only to those who have a single question burning in their hearts: "What is the meaning of my life?"

Although the wisdom of Kabbalah is a vast and complex science, he chooses to open his book with a simple humane question, one that is known to all of us. And only one who feels dissatisfied with the answers to that question can find the answer in the wisdom of Kabbalah, and only there. There is no other way! A person who does not ask himself, "What is the meaning of my life?" will benefit nothing from the wisdom of Kabbalah.

Past Prohibitions

In the past, men under forty years of age who were not married and women were forbidden to study Kabbalah. But it was the Ari who determined that from his generation onward, the Kabbalah is permitted to all: men, women and children, provided they are imbued with a desire for spirituality, which testifies to the maturity of their souls. The desire and one's passion for spirituality, one's search for the meaning of life, those are the only testimonies to one's readiness to study the wisdom of Kabbalah. Moreover, Rabbi Kook answered the question of, "Who can study Kabbalah?" with the simple words: "Anyone who wishes it."

Prior Knowledge

There is no need for any prior knowledge in order to study Kabbalah. It is a science that deals with one's spiritual contact with the Creator. Just as a child leaves its mother's womb naked and wet, so does a person who decides to study Kabbalah. If one feels inside him a spiritual need to study about the upper world, the knowledge he has acquired in this world will not help him, because he wants to understand the laws of the upper world, not the laws of this world! Therefore, such a person should not be met with demands and prior conditions of a specific education that is needed before he can start his studies. The only thing that is required of him is to read the right books and have a genuine desire for spirituality. Meaning, the light is attained only by

the desire for the correction of the desire. The human mind serves as an aid to carry out our egoistic desires. If we try and understand the Torah only through our intellect, we will be able to perceive the science of it, but not the light.

Therefore, people who learn only about the practical laws of the Torah and perform them mechanically, without correcting their hearts, are called Gentiles. They have the knowledge, but not the light. The Torah is the light of the Creator that enters one's corrected vessels, while the knowledge is a proficiency in what is written where and how. One can be proficient in the entire Torah, know the entire Talmud by heart, but still not have any real spiritual attainment.

The phenomena exists in the study of Kabbalah too: one can be proficient in all the texts of Kabbalah, master the text like a university professor, but does that mean that he has corrected his desires? Has he replaced his egoism with altruism? That is in fact the purpose of his creation and the purpose of the giving of the Torah. If he learns and applies the text he studies, he corrects his nature. Only then is it considered that he is studying Torah. But if one learns only to acquire knowledge, it is considered that he is only acquiring knowledge. Therefore, a real teacher does not demand proficiency from his students. On the contrary, he wants to see their doubts, their weakness, their sensation of lack of understanding and their dependency on the Creator. These signs testify to the beginning of the process of one's equalization with the upper forces.

If a beginning student becomes proud of his knowledge and demonstrates confidence and self-esteem, it is because the more he learns the more proficient he becomes, just like in any other knowledge. However, the wisdom of Kabbalah, unlike any other study, and against commonsense, should not increase one's knowledge, but the sensation of the lack of it.

During The Study

Baal HaSulam, Introduction to the Study of the Ten *Sefirot*, item 155:

“Therefore we must ask: why then, did the Kabbalists obligate each person to delve in the wisdom of Kabbalah? Indeed there is a weighty thing here, worthy of being publicized: that there is a magnificent, invaluable remedy, to those who delve in the wisdom of Kabbalah: that although they do not understand what they are learning, but through the yearning and the great desire to understand what they are learning, they awoken upon themselves the lights that surround their souls.

Meaning, that each man from Israel is guaranteed to finally attain all these wonderful attainments, which God has resolved, in the Thought of Creation, to grant each creature. But he, who has not attained it in this life, will attain it in the next and so on, until he has completed that which he preliminary thought of. And while man has not attained perfection, these lights, that are destined to come to him, are deemed surrounding lights. That means that they stand ready for him, awaiting his attainment of the vessels of bestowal. Then they will be dressed within the able vessels.

Thus, even when the vessels are absent, when one delves in this wisdom, mentioning the names of the lights and the vessels, related to his soul, they right away illuminate him to a certain degree. However, they illuminate him without dressing in the internality of his soul, since he doesn't have the vessels needed to receive them. Indeed, the illumination one receives time and again, when studying, draws to him grace from above, imparting him with a bounty of sanctity and purity, which greatly furthers one toward one's perfection.”

A Spiritual Guide

It is hard to tell a genuine spiritual teacher from one who pretends to be such. These days, everyone wants cheap and easy fun, quick answers and quick solutions. People can easily be misled by eloquent speakers and overlook the properties of spiritual guidance, which by nature are not theatrical.

If that is the case, how can we identify a spiritual teacher in this incredulous generation? A spiritual teacher may be proficient in many fields, science, religious laws and customs, education etc. but it is not enough to know what is written in the Kabbalah books to become a spiritual guide. Such a person can only understand the wisdom, and our sages warn us: “Wisdom in the gentiles – believe, Torah (light) in the gentiles – do not believe.” The word gentile refers not to a non-Jew, but to an egoist who hasn’t been corrected yet. Such a person may display impressive knowledge in Kabbalah and boast about it before his students, displaying his knowledge with accurate citations from the texts etc.

That display of knowledge may at first lead beginners to think that this ‘rabbi’ is indeed a spiritual one, because beginning students cannot see what spirituality is, and without it there is no way to examine its absence or presence in anyone. A beginner goes through such fundamental changes in the beginning of his way, that he cannot understand what is going on with him, much less assess correctly the person standing before him.

A beginning student is illiterate even with regards to the written Torah, and might take any person for a great rabbi. However, there is a fundamental difference between a Kabbalist and a person who is proficient in the Torah: in Kabbalah, a rabbi is more than just a rabbi, he is a spiritual guide. The meaning of the Hebrew word *Rabbi* is Great. The teacher experiences the spiritual path along with his student.

The purpose of the teacher is not that his students will fear and respect him; on the contrary, he wants them to study in such a way, that they will develop fear, respect and love for the Creator; he wants to place them face to face with His power. He wants to teach them how to turn directly to the Creator. Any person who goes through the spiritual development feels at some point, the sensation of his ignobility, weakness, his egoism and the vileness of his own desires.

After a person experiences these feelings he can no longer be proud of himself, since he begins to see that everything that he receives comes from the Creator. That is why a Kabbalah teacher is a modest person who lives his daily life just like every one of us, and not some sage who is disconnected from this world.

That is why neither a Kabbalistic teacher nor his students are arrogant; they do not compel their ideas on others, they do not force and do not preach. The purpose of the rabbi is to turn the student toward the Creator in every single matter, not to himself. In all other methods, even when they pretend to be a Kabbalist, the student begins to feel awe toward the teacher, not toward the Creator.

The wisdom of Kabbalah is the most practical science of all. Everything is experimented by the student on himself. That is why a Kabbalistic spiritual guide is not just any rabbi, but a guide, a coach that works alongside his student. Even when the student does not feel it, the rabbi always helps him and directs him.

Where Can He Be Found?

Finding a spiritual guide is a pretty tough task. I've already pointed out the fact that finding my rabbi was a great miracle. Our world is headed toward correction, whether we like it or not. The general design of the Creator is carried out even against our will. He has developed us to the point where we can listen to what He wants to tell us.

For that to happen, we had to develop our mind and technology to believe the possibility of an infinite speed, of energy and thoughts traveling great distances, and one kind of substance being turned into another, we had to be brought to the point where we could believe in the possibility of space warps and time warps etc...

This development was achieved by mankind, and it is now at the borderline of the understanding of its egoistic desire. We think that there are advantages to this development, though we are approaching the exact opposite: the understanding that evolution should be internal, spiritual, and not external.

The Creator makes us develop our technology, and at the same time He also sustains our internal evolution, both individually and in the whole of mankind. The Creator uses messengers for that purpose, secret Kabbalists who live among us.

We are not even aware of their existence, but they are around us, next to us, working and living just like we do. They absorb our desires, thoughts, pleasures and pains, mingle our egoistic egos with their altruistic desires and thus pass the correction on, so as to bring each and every one of us to listen to the spiritual ideas and accept them.

The spiritual altruistic desires of these secret Kabbalists and their vessels are huge compared to our egoistic desires, because their desire is to give everything to the Creator, whereas ours is only to delight in what we find before our eyes in this world. Thus, a secret Kabbalist can easily absorb the desires of millions of people, correct them on a general level and promote them to a state where each of them will commence his individual correction.

Furthermore, and this is difficult to understand, our world exists thanks to these people. These individuals need kindergartens for their children, books, clothes etc. and that justifies the existence of these items in our world.

In fact, this is the justification for the existence of anything. That is why all these things exist and become corrected later on. These words may sound untrue, exaggerated or disconnected from reality, but time will prove that this is precisely how the world is managed.

It is impossible to find these Kabbalists because it is their task to stay in hiding and work secretly with all mankind. So how does one find a teacher? Everyone must search for himself, and where he ends up, that is where he or she belongs.

The most important thing about this search is not to lie to yourself that you are in the right place for you. Do not make compromises with yourself, do not settle and do not follow other people's example. The only way for a person to find the right place for himself is to listen to himself and not to others. One must sense inside one's soul to see if that is where he feels at ease, if that is where his soul finds its 'nourishment'.

There are people among us who look at others and try to follow them; they silence the voice of their soul when it demands spiritual evolution. They force themselves by shutting their eyes and settling for 'dry' wisdom instead of spiritual development. Naturally, as soon as one mingles with the collective, one feels confidence, but that is self-deceit, as this feeling should only come from a direct and personal contact with the Creator!

Therefore, he who takes the path of individual growth feels less secure, and more dependent. These sensations are sent by the Creator precisely so that one will need

Him! Then one's own egoism will seek the connection with the Creator, attempting to find confidence and peace, and connection with the Creator is indeed the purpose of creation.

A Wise Disciple

(A talk during a banquet on the eve of the Day of Atonement)

A wise disciple is a person who wishes to learn from the Creator Himself. But what can we learn from the Creator? The Creator's sole property is His desire to delight His creatures. To the extent that one wishes to acquire this precise property, meaning delight the Creator, he merits the title "a wise disciple", meaning the disciple of the wise (the Creator).

The student must labour intensely in the spiritual work in order for his prayer to equalize his attributes with those of the Creator to be heard. One whose heart is empty and who seemingly wants to attain spirituality, and only displays his 'work' before others will receive nothing! One cannot deceive the Creator or one's own heart.

When a person wants nothing but the Creator and makes every effort possible to attain this goal, then his desire will be granted by the Creator.

One who takes the spiritual path is forbidden to speak about the degree he is in, because where feeling begins, words end. He must first and foremost know what he needs for his correction, because we still don't understand what is the vessel that is worthy of receiving the upper light, or even what is that light.

A person who attends lessons gradually begins to feel that he does not understand anything. That is already the attainment of a basic truth. The Creator gives him that feeling because He wants to bring him near. When the Creator does not want someone near Him, He gives him satisfaction in life, in his family and work. It turns out that it is only possible to evolve through a perpetual sensation of dissatisfaction.

There is another way to evolve, or better phrased, to be educated: it is the development of a sense of completeness in a person. However, that way, the educator prevents any possibility of ascent or descent from his disciple. This is the basis for the traditional upbringing. The sensation of completeness halts one's progress because it satisfies his egoism and quiets him down.

It is the intensity of the dissatisfaction that determines the desire to break the indolent routine that is important in spirituality. That is the power that pushes toward the spiritual growth. Only sufficient effort and labour in both quality and quantity, which are individual for each person, only those can bring one to the desired goal. Therefore, any form of teaching Kabbalah and circulating the wisdom is beneficial to those who practice it, because they serve as tubes through which the knowledge of the Creator pours to our world.

Kabbalistic knowledge is not valid before it goes through one's heart, one's emotions. One may study any science in the world without changing his attributes; there is not a single science that demands of the scientist to change his view and correct himself. This is because all sciences revolve around accumulating knowledge about the outer part of our world, though I must say that even science is beginning to find out about the dependency between the results of an experiment and the attributes of the scientist that held it. In the future, scientists will discover that any real knowledge can be attained only if the researcher equalizes his own properties with those of the subject of study.

Therefore, if we wish to understand the structure of the world in the degree where these events are formed, where our souls dwell before they come down to this world and where they ultimately return, if we want to see the picture of reality as it is, without being dependent on the element of time that controls our lives (it is the dream of many physicists), then we must come to be like that upper reality by ourselves.

Kabbalah teaches us how we can acquire a sensation of the upper layers of reality. A light of wisdom can be felt only by a vessel that has been made ready for it, by progress in a state called “faith above reason”. The interesting and beautiful thing about this entire process is that a spiritual vessel begins only when one actually performs actions in order to bestow. But a person who studies and remains at the level of his own reason, remains with the knowledge he had acquired at his animate level, his knowledge only feeds his egoism, not support his creation of a vessel with a screen.

One should monitor the desires that surface in him. Our every desire is sent to us from above, including the desire for the light, or for honor, for money, knowledge and so on. One must scrutinize the desires that surface in him every single moment and choose the one he must realize not according to his own ‘gut feeling’, but according to the principles of Kabbalah.

It appears to be extremely difficult for us to give up the pleasures of this world, when we are offered them so abundantly that all we have to do is just reach out our hand and grab them. It doesn’t seem possible that we can give them up in favour of some future spiritual pleasure we don’t understand.

However, once our properties are a little closer to those of the Creator, we will see the illusion of our worldly pleasures, the futility and meaninglessness of them compared to even the tiniest drop we receive through our adhesion with the Creator. Then we will naturally prefer the egoistic spiritual delight to the egoistic corporeal delight.

We are all given many chances to begin our progress in the right direction. It is important to identify them and not miss out on an opportunity that we are given by the Creator. We must strive for Him alone and try to see His guidance in everything that happens to us, in every thought that comes to our mind.

The greatest Kabbalists described in their books how one must advance toward the spiritual world. The Creator gives us so much more than we need for it; we must be thankful to Him and to the Kabbalists for having given all that to us.

The teachers that have conveyed to us the desire of the Creator and the purpose of His guidance, were at such a high spiritual degree, that is beyond our imagination, all the more so before we attain even the first and lowest spiritual degree.

The concept of ‘receiving for myself’ doesn’t even exist in the degrees our spiritual leaders are. They relate even the pleasure they receive from the contact with Him back to Him! The great Kabbalists found special words to describe the operations of the Creator for us; they clothed His light and His actions in words and phrases. The Kabbalists wrote on a level we could perceive in the beginning of our way, so that afterwards, through the labour and the delving in the text, we will be able to feel His light directly and completely.

The Learning Environment

According to the design of creation, we must come to a state where we can live by spiritual laws. The troubles we all experience, the global disasters and catastrophes,

all come in order to bring each of us as individuals, and mankind as a whole, to keep the spiritual commandments while still living in this world.

Baal HaSulam writes about Kabbalah: it is a method for, “the revelation of His Godliness to His creatures in this world” ([Matan Torah](#)). He doesn’t write about what happens after death, but specifically of what must happen to us while we are here in this world. Kabbalah is only about the things we need in this world, the things we must attain if we don’t want our lives to be wasted and to have to reincarnate and finish what we did not finish before. That is why the wisdom of Kabbalah is the most practical and necessary science there is.

It is inescapable; life itself compels us to operate this way, and at the end of all the suffering, we still have to complete our individual correction. It is not as if anything will really change at the end of correction; it will be the same universe, with the same stars, the same birds and the same trees. But our consciousness will change! Our perception of the surrounding reality will change because we will be different inside. Nothing else needs to change, only continue naturally, guided by the Creator. The only difference will be that man will become a real Man, instead of the beast he is today.

That can be attained by studying in a special group, with the right books and guided by a rabbi, meaning a real spiritual guide. It is written that the better the students understand what it is he is required to do, the closer he bring himself and the group to perfection. That is what Baal HaSulam writes about; he describes before us how we should be in our corrected state.

First we learn about the concatenation of the worlds, *Partzufim* and *Sefirot* from above downward. In the second phase, one must begin to climb the spiritual degrees that have been prepared for him in advance from below, in order to correct himself, while living in our world. All and all, there are 125 degrees that separate us from the Creator and that we must climb on our way up the spiritual worlds. Those degrees are the phases of the attainment of the Creator.

In my current state I operate according to the understanding of my egoistic nature. I regard this or that thing as good or bad; I learn from my environment and act accordingly.

The more I connect with my surroundings, the freer I feel in it. The world around us changes according to how we want to see it.

Every generation is characterized by its souls; they are of a unique kind in each generation. We see how different each generation is by seeing how different our parents are from us. That is because the souls accumulate more and more experience in every life cycle, and their demands increase compared to the former generation. Because of that, each generation wants new discoveries, which induces an even greater progress in every generation.

When one begins to question his spiritual world, he is driven to change and aim his environment and the entire world toward equivalence with the Creator. The last phase of this change will be that the world will attain absolute equivalence with the Creator. That generation is called, “the last generation”, but not because there won’t be anything afterwards, but because this generation is the most perfect, one that needs no further correction.

Kabbalah does not speak about the evolution that will come after that; this part belongs to the secrets of Torah. The Torah (Kabbalah) speaks only about how to climb the 125 degrees of the attainment of the Creator.

On the one hand, one's environment is the place where he keeps the spiritual laws and changes his surroundings, but on the other hand, one always retains the possibility to change himself along with the environmental changes. Whatever one does in order to change one's environment operates on him too, but with an equal power to the number of people in that environment. For example: a group of students is both a place for correction and a source of correction for each of its members. Even if someone is not strong, and cannot momentarily contribute to the group, he still gets strength from the group to correct himself as a kind of down payment.

That is why each person must build the right environment for himself, in order to take forces from it for spiritual correction and to ascend after each descent. In a group that is as yet unable to provide sufficient forces for correction, there will be many low-spirited people, who haven't the strength for progress. In an able environment, though these situations do appear, they do not last.

Each degree consists of the following: 'on the right' there is the altruistic power of the Creator; 'on the left' there is the egoistic force of the desire that is created by Him. In between there is the creature. That is how one feels himself. Now he must take the right amount of forces from the right and left sides and use them to rise to the next degree.

The terms "right" and "left" are symbolic, as are all other Kabbalistic symbols, but we use them for lack of a better way to define characteristics of the upper worlds.

This process of right, left and middle continues until the 125th degree. These degrees are divided to five worlds, with twenty-five inner degrees in each. The first spiritual world from the bottom, the one that is above us, is called the world of *Assiya*. Above it there are the worlds of *Yetzira*, *Beria*, *Atzilut* and finally *Adam Kadmon*. Our world is below the lowest degree of the world of *Assiya* and is separated from it by the barrier.

The powers of right and left both help overcome the difficulties in the passage from one degree to the next. When one begins to work against one's egoism, one feels power and desire to ascend. This is the first phase, the right side, that of the powers of the Creator.

The second phase is simply when one turns to the 'left' and adds more egoism to work with. In this state, he is in a completely opposite state than his situation in the 'right': he is low-spirited, depressed and weak. However, being on the 'right' side depends on the Creator, not on us.

It is necessary to be on the 'left' side so as to feel the egoism, but the time one remains there depends solely on him. He can shorten it to the minimum.

The bad feeling depends on how long he remains in the 'left line'. If one understands that the currently bad state comes only to correct his future, he will regard the situation as good, and the pain will be experienced as a necessity and therefore good.

This is how the perception of good and bad changes. The group and the environment can help correct these feelings, because one can take spiritual forces from them while he is still not in the spiritual world. All creations are in fact parts of the body of *Adam HaRishon*, and only our uncorrected desires, meaning bodies separate us.

When the egoism is removed, we can receive knowledge from other souls, we can feel them, because everyone is willing to do anything for the other. A group must be built with only one goal in mind. That goal should be to become a whole with a uniform spirit. An even level should be strictly kept among all members of the group; everyone should always be willing to help one another and mingle with one another.

One receives the spiritual ‘charge’ from the group only to the extent that he is willing to nullify his own ego before each member and before the group as a whole. A lower may receive from the upper, but for that to happen, each member must regard the others as higher than himself.

The focus of the group should always be the greatness of the Creator. That goal must dictate every move. When that happens, everyone will be able to receive the ‘spiritual charge’ from the group and the descents will pass by smoothly.

Each degree of souls builds for itself the right environment for its degree. It all depends on the degree, meaning on the inner level of the souls. This environment should be built according to different rules in every world.

A good group is a flexible one, the principle of change should dominate it, even if that means constant changes that would only testify to its progress. Life, work, family, the physical life in the corporeal body, all have to change according to the spirituality of the members of the group. That is what the Creator wants from us.

Our body will be in this world, while our soul will be in the spiritual world. The more spiritual operations the soul performs, the better the physical body will accustom itself to the spiritual laws. At the end of our spiritual development, family relationships and relationships among group members must be built according to the laws of the world of *Atzilut*.

Adam HaRishon was deliberately made with its body-desire consisting of nine *Sefirot*, and the *Malchut* divided to a part that can absorb and adopt the properties of the upper nine *Sefirot*, meaning the properties of the Creator, and a part that cannot adopt these properties, called “the stony heart”.

Adam HaRishon sinned hoping to receive the light into *Malchut* from the upper nine *Sefirot* in order to bestow to the Creator; but because *Malchut* is unable to acquire that property, that altruistic aim, he received the light in order to receive. As a result, his soul disintegrated into 600,000 separate souls that cannot feel the complete soul that they were, or one another.

Each part of that soul is a will to receive pleasure. It is called “ego” and needs to be corrected. It is corrected by raising it by 125 degrees, meaning each correction is a correction of 1/125 in each of the 600,000 souls-desires. Each time a part goes from the right side to the left and the returns to the middle, it takes the power of the Creator from the right, meaning the will to bestow, acquires a will to receive from the left, and the middle line is the summation: a will to receive in order to bestow.

One always gets sufficient forces from above with which to overpower the egoism of the left side, meaning correct the relevant egoistic part from in order to receive to in order to bestow. One gets only what one can take. If an individual does not get the strength from above, he will also not be given a bad situation.

If a member of the group wishes to promote his spirituality, he must always have the possibility to take from the group both the spiritual power and the egoism. For that reason, these two properties must always go hand in hand in the group.

A person who comes to Kabbalah is normally very egoistic and very independent. He needs time to begin to want the Creator and understand the importance of the purpose of creation. Only then can he begin to ‘lessen’ himself before the group in order to give to it and receive from it. At first, there might be unwillingness to contribute the group, but the collective cause must obligate him to finally do it. If everyone

understands that there is nothing more important than the purpose of creation, it will be easier for him to become beneficial to the group.

If one still cares more about worldly pleasures and cannot break free from them, it means that his time has not come yet, and he should not be in the group. His soul isn't ready yet to take upon itself the spiritual laws. When one finishes all the pleasures of this world, then he is pushed to spirituality. He doesn't have to experience every possible experience in this world before he decides he doesn't need them. He attains that by receiving proof from above of the baseness of the beastly pleasure hunt.

What attracts us about spirituality is the relatively greater pleasure that we find in it compared to the corporeal world. That is the reason we want it and it is not a fraud. Our entire world exists and gets its nourishment from only a tiny spark of spiritual light that broke through the barrier and penetrated our world. Now picture a spiritual world that is completely filled with light, billions and billions of times greater than the spark of this world, just think what kind of pleasures exist there!

But how do we get over there? We know that for that we need to alter our entire egoistic nature from a will to receive to a will to bestow. But what we don't understand is what in fact is it this will to bestow, and I haven't the words to explain it. Our mind simply doesn't have the 'curves' to help us perceive something like that, because it operates in an egoistic system.

Furthermore, we are told that it is enough to change the **aim** of the desire, not the desire itself, in order to obtain the pleasure. This means that we are discussing a completely psychological concept, but I will receive pleasure anyhow, so what is the difference what, or for whom I receive it?

This brings up the question: so where is that valve I need to turn in order to get it? It is in the border between the egoism of our world and the altruism of the spiritual world. It is called, "the barrier". Crossing the barrier indicates that one has completed one's preparations and that his emotions are now ripe for the spiritual world. In order to come to such a state one needs a group and perseverance in the study. The group is needed in order to develop the desire for spirituality to the necessary intensity. Then there is an inner 'breakthrough' and one begins to receive the spiritual power and knowledge from above.

Books

In every generation, the Creator sends special souls to this world, whose goal is to rectify this world and convey the knowledge of the Creator to humanity. It is said that, "The Creator saw that there were not enough sages, so He planted them in every generation." That is why there are leaders and spiritual guides in every generation, who adapt the wisdom of Kabbalah to the unique properties of their time.

There are hundreds of books that were written over the years on the subject of the wisdom of Kabbalah. Beginning with the very first book on the wisdom of Kabbalah, "Raziel the Angel" that was written by *Adam HaRishon*, and the second book, "Sefer Yetzira" (Book of Creation), which was written by Abraham the Patriarch. However, the most popular book in the wisdom of Kabbalah is the book of Zohar. It was written in the third century AC by Rabbi Shimon Bar-Yochay.

The contemporary Kabbalist, Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag (1885-1954) wrote a commentary on the Zohar and on all the writings of the Ari in a language that is adapted to our generation so that we can understand it. Today, the souls that descend to our world are such that only the Zohar and the books of the Ari with the commentaries of Baal

HaSulam (Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag) and his own books are efficient sources that can help us enter the spiritual world.

The commentary of Rabbi Ashlag is called the *Sulam* (ladder) commentary because when one studies by the book of Zohar, he ascends spiritually from below as if on a ladder. The commentary that Rabbi Ashlag wrote on the Ari's Tree Of Life is called, "The Study of the Ten *Sefirot*". In addition, Rabbi Ashlag wrote a great number of complementary books such as "Matan Torah", "The book of Introductions", "Beit Shaar Hakavanot" and others. I recommend studying Kabbalah only according to the books of this great Kabbalist, because they are written in a simple and clear language, and can provide an insight to all the hidden knowledge of the Zohar and the sources that preceded it. I also recommend reading the books of Rabbi Baruch Ashlag and the books that I published. I don't recommend reading other sources for fear the text will not be understood properly.

However, once a student acquires the basics of the wisdom of Kabbalah through his studies in the books of Rabbi Ashlag, he can read any available literature on Kabbalah, because he will know by himself if the book in his hands is spiritual or not. He will be able to understand precisely what is written there, and distinguish the true sources from the false.

The correct order of reading the books of Baal HaSulam is: Matan Torah, Preface to the Zohar, Inner Reflection of the first part of The Study of the Ten *Sefirot*, Preface to the wisdom of Kabbalah, Introduction to the Study of the Ten *Sefirot*.

Language

Kabbalists normally wrote in Hebrew or in Aramaic, so it is very difficult to study Kabbalah without knowing Hebrew. The Hebrew language has a special meaning. Each word, a combination of letters or a form of writing conceals spiritual knowledge within it that cannot be translated to another language. One can only understand the Hebrew words and sentences according to the degree of his spiritual development. That is because the understanding pertains to one's equivalence of properties with the hidden meaning of the words. It is impossible to convey that information with a simple translation to another language, but it is certainly possible to begin the study of the wisdom of Kabbalah in a foreign language. Only afterwards will he need the Hebrew, according to his spiritual progress. Having said that, one will be able to feel the spiritual degrees he is going through and understand them by himself, even without a language, as it is said: "One's soul shall teach him."

Most major Kabbalah texts were written in Hebrew. A profound study of these texts does require a minimal knowledge of Hebrew. However, Kabbalah can be written in any language. The Zohar, for example, was written in Aramaic, which was the spoken language in ancient Persia two thousand years ago. Kabbalah speaks of emotions and experiences one goes through. They can be explained in any language, or even without it, but through music or other means.

Everyone learns languages: musicians must know a little Italian, doctors – some Latin, computer personnel must know English and so on. Each science has its own language. The language of Kabbalah is Hebrew, though it could and have been explained in other languages as well.

When to Study?

The Kabbalah is studied at night, when other people are normally asleep and there are no obstructions from their egoistic thoughts. The efforts to awaken the physical body and subdue it for the spiritual purpose are rewarded from above and the students obtain altruistic properties.

The Kabbalist behaves according to his destination: he either isolates himself and remains in hiding, or exposes himself to everyone with wide publicity in order to attract students and raise the next generation of Kabbalists. In the latter case, he establishes a group of students. Group study is much more beneficial than individual study.

It is said in the Introduction to the Study of the Ten *Sefirot*, item 155, that there is surrounding light that shines around every person who studies Kabbalah, which purifies and prepares his soul to receive the inner light. The intensity of that light depends on the intensity of one's desire to attain the text he is reading. You may have noticed that when one is in a group, he begins to take interest in the things that interest the people around him, just as our appetite increases when we watch someone else eat. A person who sees his friends studying Kabbalah becomes envious of them and thus affect the development of his spiritual desires positively and as a result, he increases the power of the surrounding light.

In addition, if a number of people study together, it does not mean that they are simply sitting in the same room reading from the same book. They share the same desires, the same intentions, they share an aspiration to break free from their egoism and relate to their friends as they do to themselves. In that case, their desires for spiritual development unite and extend an immense amount of surrounding light that affects each and every one of them individually. That is why it is so much easier to obtain good results in a group than alone.

The Study Method

The study method should be based on group work and at the same time, emphasize individual work. Baal HaSulam and Rabash wrote a great deal about how we must be attentive to the thoughts and desires of our friends. If a friend asks a question during class, each of the participants must try and understand, grasp that thought. It is called *Hitkalelut* (mingling, mixing) of one with the other. This way the entire group lives inside each of its members. In order to come to that, one must lessen his own value in his eyes compared to his friends, so that he can collect the others' thoughts, desires, and internal and spiritual properties. Thus, each of them will gain and enrich himself. It is unadvisable to speak of spiritual issues when not in class. If you do speak, you can explain spiritual processes in the language of Kabbalah: *Partzufim*, *Sefirot*, worlds, which lights goes where etc. It is all a science, knowledge. That knowledge can be explained because it doesn't impose anything on anyone. You can convey your understanding of Kabbalah to others, but not what is inside your inner feelings and desires. At first, one wants things like health and wealth from the study, promotion at work and so on. He thinks, "perhaps Kabbalah will help me tell the future, I could win the lottery," in short one wants to better his life. We seek self-gratification in everything we do in this world, that is our nature. Even a person who commits suicide does it because he doesn't want to feel pain, meaning he too seeks to 'better' his situation.

The considerations keep changing, but the most important thing is to see why I do it.

The Course of Development

When one is at a certain degree, he determines by himself how he relates to what fills his vessels (what he wants), meaning which desires are pure (altruistic) and which are not (egoistic). It is that examination that determines one's spiritual degree. By that he improves his inner properties. We do not climb up or down any ladder of spiritual degrees; all that changes is the ratio between the corrected and the uncorrected part. That is what determines our degree and the level of our spiritual development. In the physical sense, everyone remains the same, but inside – everything changes. It is inside that we rise from this world to the world of *Assiya*, *Yetzira* and so on up to the world of *Ein Sof*.

There are five holy (pure) worlds, meaning five degrees in the evolution of the vessel, the screen: *Shoresh*, *Aleph*, *Bet*, *Gimel*, and *Dalet*. It is written in the Introduction to the Study of the Ten *Sefirot* that if one learns by the right method and makes every effort with the right intent, he can attain the spiritual world within three to five years. Meaning, he can correct himself and begin the actual spiritual ascent. It should all be according to one's actual ability. It doesn't mean that you have to stop all other activities, on the contrary, you have to work, study, raise families, and experience the problems and difficulties that life poses. That is how we evolve.

One must only labour as much as one can. It is not as if we are demanded to do something that is beyond our abilities. Let us say that one needs 6-7 hours of sleep a day. He works about 8 hours, 'wastes' one and a half to two hours getting back and forth from work, eats, baths and gives time to his family. This is not what the Kabbalah speaks of. Kabbalah speaks of the time that remains after all the necessary occupations have been carried out. If you invest all of that free time in Kabbalah that will certainly be enough.

The most important thing about our study is to dedicate the time from 3:00 or 4:00AM to 6:00AM to the study. One takes that time only from himself. These 2-3 hours are enough. It is important to learn with the right intention; ask yourselves why you do it. Aim is the single most important thing!

As we mentioned earlier spirituality can be attained within three to five years. However, that process may also take six years or longer. In any case, attaining spirituality is a must; if we don't do it in this life, then we will do it in the next or in ten lifetimes. One must think what he is 'burning' his life on; every effort he makes in this work, every thought, all accumulate to the general account of his spiritual labour. When the amount of labour is sufficient, he receives a 'push' from above and enters the spiritual world.

Demanding Reward

Why do I need to study, work, live? Where should I ultimately come to? We should regard the Creator in our every act, always want Him and cleave to Him. We must constantly think and examine what He wants from us. That purpose should be right in front of us every single moment. If the goal is always clear, that will turn one into a Kabbalist and then he will begin to feel the knowledge found in the spiritual worlds. Learning more or less of the text is of little importance. We use the knowledge to connect with the material; the more I study, the greater my demand for the Creator becomes and the more intense the question: "Why have I still got nothing? Where is the result of my efforts? I have put in so many hours of work, lost a lot of money because I don't work when I learn, I don't give enough time to my family, I could have had more fun in other places" and so forth. All those arguments only increase one's egoistic demand of the Creator: "Why have I still got nothing?"

For that reason one must claim reward for every minute, every second that he puts into Kabbalah. He should not say: “I am here because I am an altruist.” He can be altruistic elsewhere, but in Kabbalah he should be completely parsimonious. Every minute given to Kabbalah must be questioned: Why? What for? Only then will one focus directly on the goal. If a person does not demand reward for every minute, it means that he does not need the next minute, that he has no demand from the study. If that is the case, one will be left empty handed.

Examination of the reason for our action every minute is our greatest asset. Our mind and body vehemently revolt against it. One would do anything: draw pictures, learn meticulously about the *Sefirot*, the worlds, write articles about Kabbalah, anything to escape examining the aim, the primary question of his connection with the Creator.

The entire egoism is in the exact point between man and the Creator. You will have to extinguish your egoism to the exact measure that you want to cleave to Him. The Creator can be felt only where the egoism is extinguished. That sums up our entire work, and that is precisely what we are forbidden to speak of to one another. We are forbidden to speak of the intent, the reasons for what exactly is it that I want and demand of the study. However, you can talk as much as you want about the study – the *Partzufim*, the *Sefirot*, as much as you want.

It is not important if your friend knows the material or not. Do not be afraid of being told something wrong, it is meaningless. The important thing is that you learned a little, and mainly that you did it with a friend. Therefore, if someone asks of you to tell him something, do tell him. Don't be afraid of being wrong because it's not important.

However, do not slight your knowledge. The knowledge is very important because the result of the study will be a unification of the experiences, the inner feelings and the feeling of the text being studied. You will begin to understand what a screen is, a desire, a light, pleasure; you will begin to see how it enters and how it leaves and pushes, you will begin to feel these acts inside you. That is why we have to learn, because in the end, the study, the inner work, and the feelings will unite to one big whole. But in the beginning, when the study is disconnected from your feelings, it is meaningless if someone knows more or less, if he is correct or not. However, when the study becomes something you feel – it is forbidden to pass it onto others! You might convey knowledge, but never feelings, emotions.

On the whole, only general topics should be discussed. Problems that relate to one's aim are personal problems, not a topic for discussion. One comes to me only if he is completely bewildered, but if he turns his questions to others, he harms himself and he harms them.

Man is born a little egoist. After labor, there is a little creature, made of sheer egoism, lying in bed and screaming. At this stage it is no different to any young animal. One develops using his five senses. He lives, attains things in this world, perhaps he is a scientist, he is happy and needs nothing more than that. He lives his life just like any animal.

There are, however, a few differences between humans and beasts: man wants to become rich, gain power and control, honor and knowledge. One doesn't need the Creator to attain these things, but if he is permeated with a little root of the future spiritual vessel from above, then he begins to seek what he can fill this vessel with. The Creator seemingly implants into his mind a little source of light, or a little need for light, which is in fact the same. Blood cannot fill the need for light and neither can wealth or power or honor. That need and its fulfilling do not belong to this world, but

to the spiritual world. In every degree there is a special desire and its fulfilling. If one is permeated with corporeal desires they can be satisfied in this world. It is not important if the filling is great or small, the important thing is that the filling exists in this world. If one is permeated with desires that are not from this world, then he begins to search. One can search anywhere with this desire and still not satisfy it. There is no worldly satisfaction for this need. It is given from above, and therefore that is where its satiation must come from.

One occasionally succeeds in shutting this desire off inside him, goes into a coma, which is how most of people live. But something will still bother him; what can he do? If one cannot confine this desire inside, he begins to search and ultimately will find his way to Kabbalah. From the moment one begins to study Kabbalah, problems begin too. It takes work to fill a desire with pleasure. Let us say that in order to gain a certain amount of money, one must work hard for a certain number of years. But if one wants fame he must add another 20-30 years. It all depends on the level one wants to attain. Any achievement requires effort. The efforts that one makes in our world, along with the pleasures and desires that shine for him in the future, all appear to be on the same line – the more I do, the closer I become to what I want to get. Another month, another year, another ten years, it is not important. I am headed toward it, I can see the picture clearly, and I can even say when I will accomplish my goal.

In Kabbalah there is also a desire, but for what? That is something we don't know. The pleasure is in a higher level than our own. It is like giving a certain animal a desire for knowledge, like a cow suddenly wanting to become a college professor. And this is even much closer than the desire we are given, because a cow and a college are still in the same world, whereas the desire that we get is from a different world altogether, from a higher world.

When one is permeated with a spiritual desire, he doesn't realize the kind of efforts he will need to make to realize it. One does not see the final outcome of that desire, and he cannot even see what he needs it for. He only feels his soul is restless, but if he is asked what he wants it for, he cannot quite say. He only knows he feels bad because he cannot satisfy himself.

It gets even worse when one begins to try and realize this desire – he immediately gets the opposite result of what he'd hoped for. He doesn't see any connection between the efforts he makes and the goal he wants to attain. Normally, the closer one comes to the goal, the clearer he sees it, but that is not the case in Kabbalah. Things that were once clear suddenly become confusing, a good nature suddenly turns into a bad temper and nothing seems certain anymore. He thinks he is taking the right path and expects to receive greater things in return for the pleasures of this world that he relinquishes. After all, if his desire is that great, then so should be the pleasure. One agrees to work more than he does for this world, but in the end he must still see what it is that he is coming to, what he will receive.

But Kabbalah works the exact opposite. One constantly gets bad responses; he becomes depressed. He thought that everything would work out for him, but nothing does. He thought that he would find his destination in Kabbalah, but instead he finds that he either completely vanishes, or that it becomes insipid for him, confusing and strange.

This turmoil is necessary in order to go from the level of the desires of this world to the level of the desires of the spiritual world. Man must become completely detached from any self-interest in the outcome of his work – this is true altruism. That is why

one must experience a phase of complete discrepancy between his efforts and the results he sees.

His corporeal egoism has now been instilled with spiritual egoism, a spark of light inside his egoism. The egoism abides by different rules in the spiritual world. For the spiritual egoism to be fulfilled one must reject his current level of egoism and ascend, so to speak, to the level of that spiritual desire. When one is given a spiritual desire, he is not given any other feeling besides the absence of pleasure; it is the vessel in its purest form. For that reason, all the operations, all the efforts are only possible with the help of the body. It is the body that awakens one early in the morning, takes him to bed only late at night, and read and occupy his mind. He works with a body that belongs to this level and it is in this level that the body wants to be rewarded. It immediately begins to present just and natural claims – “What have I got for all my trouble?” Perhaps one has advanced in the spiritual level, but that is not an answer for the corporeal body, it cannot feel it. For the time being, it cannot even feel anything of the spiritual desire that was given from above. The bottom line is that one works, progresses, learns, but feels no concrete results in his mind or in his soul. That naturally brings the body to a state of depression, perplexity, and a lack of justification or reasoning that will somehow enable him to continue.

Sensations And Emotions

When one comes to that point, he feels pain; he is tormented. The pain is given deliberately; if one overcomes them, he will come closer to the truth. Overcoming means that even under the most unbearable corporeal pain, one must try and find the contact with the Creator, the source of everything, and the one who can fulfill him. These painful situations are crucial. They can become turning points in one’s way. After all these immense efforts one is really rewarded, but then it is a real reward!

There is only one reward: the sensation of the truth. If one wants only that, and cares nothing of his physical pains, or the fact that he hasn’t received anything spiritual yet, and instead he focuses on attaining a greater sensation of truth than before, if that is his satisfaction, that person can progress and finally become a Kabbalist.

The road will be a hard one, you can be sure of that. Work, family, something will always go wrong, a feeling that everything is bad and a future that holds no promise. That feeling is given from above deliberately, for one to try and overcome these situations through the group and the books. There are times when one does not need to read books, but take another book, listen to music, or read Psalms (that is very helpful).

In those moments, it is most important to simply keep oneself on track. What the mind can’t heal, time will. One must be very strict with himself: “I cannot see a thing, I cannot hear a thing, I feel bad, but all that doesn’t matter. I attend class like an automatic machine, but I do.” This effort will bear the greatest spiritual fruits. There are situations when one is ‘revived’, when the light begins to shine on him a little and he understands that he has found the real point, the one that gives him the real answer, though from a distance. Then he increases his efforts, gets rewarded and becomes depressed. He doesn’t understand what is happening to him, there is nothing in the world that pleases him, yet he has nothing of the spiritual world too. This seesaw continues back and forth.

We must understand that the reward that we get for our efforts in this world is the sensation of truth; it is not the pleasure that we are used to receiving. That is how the

Creator accustoms us to love the truth more than anything, to go forward until we want to reject the entire corporeal egoism in favour of the truth.

Then one will be able to ascend to the degree from which he was given the spiritual desire. From this moment on he will begin to receive spiritual knowledge, pleasure and satisfaction from that degree. He will become a Kabbalist and be born into the spiritual world. Therefore, if one chooses the sensation of the truth over the corporeal reward, he will become a Kabbalist.

One cannot control his thoughts; they are sent to him deliberately from above. We can only try and react to them correctly. But what does reacting correctly really mean? A student came to me not long ago saying he did not know anything anymore, he could not see anything, he felt bad, hesitant, nothing was working out for him. He wanted me to calm him down, pat him on the head and tell him that there was a shining light in his future. But I cannot tell him anything about his future. Any answer in these situations is like a theft of what he is being given from above. I have no right to extinguish the desire in him, I am forbidden to even soothe his disappointment a little. On the contrary, all this is good; it is necessary and desirable. It is forbidden to help such a person. The only recommendation I could give him was to keep doing what he was doing mechanically as he was doing it when he was in the good situation. You cannot be inside these books with your soul, but you should nonetheless try and see how repulsive it is to you.

One gets all kinds of thoughts when he's at home, at work or with his family. Sometimes these thoughts obstruct his work. When that happens, one must disconnect himself from the thoughts about the purpose of creation and himself. When I asked my rabbi the same question, he replied: "You see, that is why I was a construction worker, then a shoemaker, and always tried to be a simple worker. I would rise at 1:00PM and begin to study Kabbalah before work. When I was a clerk for the government, the truth is that sometimes I would fall asleep at work and spoil a report that I was working on, but what could I do? I was offered executive offices, but I knew that in a higher office they would take away my mind and my soul. For that reason I kept choosing jobs that kept me to myself, though I could have earned more money. I have been poor my whole life. I kept trying to find a job that would keep my mind clean on the one hand, and would secure my future on the other, a job that would give me the minimal wages."

We live in a world where it is sometimes very difficult to choose the kind of work we want to do. Besides, man is a creative creature that tries to find sparks of creativity in what he does. Sometimes the understanding that one is occupied with unnecessary things is taken away from him, and then returned, and he suddenly asks: "What was I thinking of?" But these situations are given on purpose, so that one will see his actual situation, his real nature and degree. He must see what he must detach himself from and where he should go. He should acknowledge the nothingness of his own strength and thus need the connection with the Creator in order to save himself.

You will probably forget everything I am saying now in just a little while because it can only be absorbed through personal experience. I only want to stress one point: if you learn by the right books, whatever happens with you will always be a step forward. We are forbidden to know everything in advance, but we must know this: I was told to read these books, that's it!

Our desires come from above. If there is some spiritual affect to this desire, then one begins to feel the upper force of the Creator controlling him. He begins to feel the entire reality and the one who controls it.

Sensations do not have a language. We just call them by names, such as sour, bitter, pleasant or unpleasant. We cannot clearly define each of these sensations. Moreover, we cannot compare the feelings of different individuals. That is the problem with psychology and psychiatry. We are unable to compare what we feel, duplicate them, repeat and compare them between different people. That is why everything that concerns our feelings is considered science, because feelings are basically Light.

As we've already said earlier, only routine and persistent work without caring for our inner feelings ultimately produces spiritual results. Baal HaSulam writes a story about it in item 133 of the Introduction to the Study of the Ten *Sefirot*: **There was a king who wanted to choose his most loyal and loving subjects in order to surround himself with them. He sent messengers throughout his kingdom to declare that anyone who wanted to work inside the king's palace in a special work, was to come to the palace.** Explanation: it is like a person who gets a certain desire to draw nearer to the Creator, although he still doesn't understand that desire. He only begins to search. It cannot be said that there is even a single person in the world who never asked himself at least once about the purpose of his life. The answer to that question is the attainment of the spiritual world, meaning the attainment of the Creator. Going back to our story: **In order to find who really loves him, he placed guards on the roads leading to the palace to deliberately confuse and mislead the people who came there.** Their job was to scare them and explain to them that it was not worth it to work for the king. **When the people heard about the possibility of working for the king, they immediately began to move toward the palace.** This is like people who want to attain apparent greater pleasures instead of the little or no pleasure they have today. If there is nothing that can satisfy your new desire it means you need a greater pleasure. When that happens one will agree with making all kinds of efforts that he would not make to satisfy other desires, he might leave a good office, some future progress, wealth, and all that in order to attain spirituality.

The guards rejected the people who came to the king's palace, but many still managed to come close to the palace and would not listen to the scary stories of the guards that it was not worthwhile to work for the king. Our inner ego convinces us that it is not worthwhile to serve the Creator. The Creator does it on purpose, because this is how the new vessel is built, precisely through these inner problems and observations. This is very important, and that is why these things must not be spoken of outwardly with others. Even the rabbi is forbidden to explain anything to the student about these situations. The student must experience this on his own, inside, however difficult it may be.

The guards at the gate were even crueler. They would not let anyone approach the gate. They rudely rejected anyone who tried to come near. The truth is that in the last phases before the entrance to spirituality, one feels rougher and rougher rejections despite the accumulated experience. But this experience does not disappear, it is not taken away. One falls once, twice and a third time; it accumulates. After some time one gets used to these falls. He no longer regards them as unbearable, because he understands the need for them. He is even happy about the pain in those situations, because it brings with it an opposite feeling – that there is truth in it.

Only the most persistent of all continued to try and approach the king. They retreated under the pressure of the cruel guards and then struck again trying to approach the king. And so the attempts to reach the king and retreat under the influence of the cruel guards that told them that it was not worthwhile to work in the king's palace lasted many years, until they weakened and were let down.

Only the strongest among them, whose patience endured, who kept trying (patience, not any knowledge or philosophies) **defeated the cruel guards, opened the gates and were immediately honored with seeing the king himself, who gave each of them his rightful office.** That is precisely what Baal HaSulam writes: “**them, whose patience endured defeated**”, meaning those who kept studying patiently. Nothing else helps because this is the only way to accumulate experience in the physical body.

Everything that happens in our world is done especially for us and we have no control over what happens. However, we must always think that we can choose our future act. Here is where one should say to himself that he does have the freedom to choose. After he rises to a higher degree he sees that in fact, he had no freedom of choice whatsoever.

In other words, as long as one is in a state where he must choose between things, he must resolve whatever problem he is facing by himself, and not say that it is the Creator’s job to do this, that it is His problem, not mine. That problem was given to me by the Creator, true. Do I really have a choice in any of it or is it done by properties that the Creator permeated in me, or by social influence? All that should not interest me now. I must see what is ahead of me and resolve it with the means at my disposal.

One should always try and work out his problems by himself, and only afterwards, regardless of the result, should he think that all this came to him from the Creator and that the resolution was preordained. The contrast between the beginning and the end creates a great confusion in our feelings.

We cannot understand how to relate to all that because we are enwrapped by concepts such as past, present and future. As long as we are confined by the boundaries of this world, and until our consciousness works by the principle of cause and effect, we will not be able to understand what eternity is in our animate degree, where nothing ever changes. Thus, as long as we are in that state, we must behave as though we know nothing, as though we own the situations and must do everything by ourselves.

If I Am Not For Me, Who Is For Me?

It is written: “If I Am Not For Me, Who Is For Me?” On the other hand, it says, “I do nothing and everything done not by me but by the Creator.” These sentences seem to contradict each other, but when we examine them closely we will see that they can and even must exist under one roof.

Baal Shem Tov, a great Kabbalist from the 16th century, wrote that one should get up in the morning and go to work as though there is no Creator and he is on his own, as though there is no one above to help him. And although he believes in the Creator, he should say that the Creator doesn’t affect his behavior. Meaning, he should say, “I am the master of my own future.”

There can only be one master to the world, Man or the Creator. In a place where I can choose, I am also the master; the Creator is not in it. This is how one should operate during the day. But in the evening, when one comes home with his earnings in his hand, he should never say that it was he who earned it and it was he who was fortunate, absolutely not! The Creator planned it all in advance, and even if he’d been laying all day long in bed, he’d still have everything he earned.

But our mind cannot understand it and unite these two apparently contradicting terms. Only after the acquisition of spiritual properties can one unite these two primary, yet contradicting concepts.

The next day he should do the same. The next day, meaning the next moment. When one is faced with a choice he must relate to it the same way: “It all depends on me.” After one’s choice is realized without expectations and faith in God, however it turned out, he must say: “It was all done by the Creator.” There must be a clear separation as though these are two different people, one who believes and another who does not, before and the decision and after.

It is written in the Torah that at the beginning of the year, we are registered above in a special book. It says what is going to happen to each person during the year – who will live and who will die, who will win and who will lose, who will marry and who will divorce etc. If everything is determined in advance and we are told about it, then why do we have to do anything in this life, why do we need to make an effort? Can one change what the Creator has done?

Only Kabbalah can answer these questions. Philosophy and science do not deal with these questions since they are a consequence of the human mind. One’s reward for one’s efforts is the right approach to what happens.

In Kabbalah we examine questions that revolve around keeping *Mitzvot*, not about tradition. One should have a clear understanding of what he needs for his spiritual progress. After that it will be his own free choice. Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag writes in the Introduction to the Study of the Ten *Sefirot* that Kabbalah deals with directing one to have the right intention, not with how to observe *Mitzvot* mechanically and without any intention in it. He even adds that Kabbalah has two parts: the “flavours of Torah” – the revealed part, which every one must study, and the “secrets of Torah” – which are not to be revealed to an ordinary person.

Chapter 4.2 – The Beginning of a Kabbalist’s Way

A Talk for the Beginning of the Month of Shevat

When I first came to Rabbi Baruch Ashlag he sent me to study with Hillel, his senior disciple. Before that, I tried studying with many other teachers but never received explanations that satisfied me. However, I was very pleased with studying with Hillel, because his explanations made sense and were clear and rational. At first it all seemed very clear to me: I thought that all I had to do was memorize the six volumes of *The Study of the Ten Sefirot* and that would be enough to take part in the upper leadership of myself and the entire world.

Then came the time when Rabbi Ashlag summoned me to participate in his classes. From that moment, everything I thought I understood became completely incomprehensible. New questions came up and remained unanswered. Not only did studying with Rabbi Ashlag not help me understand the text, it led me to recognize the fact that I understood nothing to begin with.

It took me a long time to realize that Rabbi Ashlag first provided theoretical knowledge to his students and only afterwards instructed them on how to take part in the leadership. Since the passage to active participation in the upper leadership is not a rational process, and each person must attain it by himself, that situation created an atmosphere of complete misunderstanding.

The rabbi did not teach his students for the purpose of accumulating theoretical knowledge of the names of spiritual concepts, or for the purpose of philosophizing without understanding the nature of things. Instead, he wanted to bring his students to a state where they would **feel** these concepts. This is an entirely different method than a theoretical study. In that method, the purpose is not the quantity of knowledge that the student acquires, but its quality, meaning, the extent to which the things the student hears help him approach the things he reads about by himself.

The rabbi did not teach beginners. Instead, he would send them to other students and monitored their progress. Students that were willing and diligent were summoned to study with him.

The human desire to understand, manage and control is a very positive desire, because it makes additional desires add to one’s original desires. However, the only key that we should really acquire in order for one to enter spirituality is the screen and the returning light.

Baal HaSulam wrote *The Study of the Ten Sefirot* deliberately so that the more it is delved into, the more questions arise. It is necessary for one to be able to labour in something while maintaining a certain aim. The labour comes from below, from man, but the aim is given from above, from the Creator. However, the aim does not come before one feels that he has already tried everything and has nowhere else to turn, that he is completely cornered. Only then does one sincerely asks of the Creator to help him, and then his prayer is answered.

The most important thing in the spiritual work is to maintain determination and patience. One’s prayer is defined by the state he is in and depends on the presence or absence of the sparks. Before one attains spirituality, he thinks that the less he strains himself, the better. But after he attains spirituality, one regrets having done so little to attain it.

The way to attain spirituality involves an act of restriction that one makes. But what does it mean to restrict? Let’s take for example people who are interested in losing

weight: these people understand that the pleasure that they will derive from losing weight is greater than the pleasure they derive from the food. There are cases where the food actually becomes an 'enemy' for them, to the point of real hatred. For them, maintaining a strict diet is about restricting the desire. The most important thing for restriction is the recognition of evil. That is what we are given the Torah for. It contains within it that wondrous power that enables us to understand who is the enemy and the obstacle on our way to attain spirituality.

One must overcome many difficulties in one's life, to the point where he feels that there is no purpose to his work, as long as he does not understand where the truth is. As long as one does not make that restriction he cannot even begin to know where the truth is. However, once he attains spirituality, he is in good hands, and he no longer needs the explanation, because he can see everything for himself.

Before one receives the right aim from above, he must labour in physical actions, even if for himself, hoping to change his situation. But the effort is not needed in and of itself, because the goal of creation is pleasure, and effort means pain, or the absence of something. If we could switch to the aim to bestow to the Creator, or receive spiritual pleasure without any effort that would be wonderful. There is no necessity to look for hardship in our world.

However, if the effort is pleasurable, it stops being an effort. It is like a mother who feeds her baby and enjoys it. If the effort to think of the Creator was first laborious and false, suddenly becomes enjoyable, vital and important, from the moment it becomes a pleasure, no effort is required. The effort is only needed in order to cross that spiritual barrier.

When one begins to practice spirituality, his work changes also and receives a different kind of reward, though people around him will not notice it. If, for example, spiritual music were to be performed by the best musicians, they would make it sound like any other music. People who do not practice spirituality might lower a spiritual composition to the degree of nice but ordinary music.

We must not regret the past or blame ourselves for not doing the right thing or living the right way. It is all done in the best possible way and happens just as it should have happened; everything comes from above. This fact will become even clearer to everyone in the future. The deeper we go into spirituality, the farther the past becomes. Yesterday appears to be a year ago, and morning and noon will feel a week apart.

The past is gone and the future is concealed and does not depend on us. We must live only in the present, in this very moment, the border between the moment that has past and the one that is to come.

Chapter 4.3 – From a Kabbalist’s Table

Talk

My rabbi used to write everything he’d heard from his father. When I came to study with him I began to ask the questions that had been bothering me all along, but he kept avoiding answering me. And then one day he let me read the manuscript so that I would find in them what was important and interesting to me. He added that these writings will support me for the rest of my life, even when he is gone, and that I will understand what it is I must understand when I read them.

The year was 1981; he gave me a notebook that I made a copy of, and then read it and used it for the next ten years. In 1991, a day before he passed away, he gave me the original manuscript. He said: read it, it’s for you. He asked me to come earlier the next morning to help him put on his *Teffilin* (a portion of the Pentateuch written on a piece of parchment and put into special boxes that religious Jews put on their heads and arms every morning except on Saturday and on holidays). He knew what was going to happen in advance, but I did not, and when I arrived it was too late. He was already semi-conscious and perished right before my eyes.

The essays and the writings that he’d given me are priceless. Every time one reads them, one seems to learn something new. One’s perception of the words grows deeper every time he reads them, and his understanding of his inner state depends.

These essays were written from the highest spiritual attainment possible. Anyone can find his own inner state inside themselves, what he must do at any given moment and what the author wanted to tell him right that minute. I recommend reading these essays or even a few lines of them every day before going to sleep. Rabash used to open the notebook for just a few seconds every night; that was enough for the expansion of the light in the soul.

One of the deepest and most important articles of the rabbi is entitled, “There is None Else Beside Him.” It is one that must be on the desk of every person who wants adherence with the Creator. It contains the entire teaching of Baal HaSulam, his approach to creation, and everything one must always feel and keep in mind. This article is the first in the book “Shamati” (I heard) that I published after his demise.

“It is written that “there is none else beside Him”, meaning that there is no other power in the world with the ability to do anything against Him. And what man sees, namely, that there are things in the world, which deny the household of above, is because He wills it so.

And it is deemed a correction, called “the left rejects and the right adducts, meaning that which the left rejects is considered correction. This means that there are things in the world, which from the beginning aim to divert a person from the right way, and they reject him from holiness.

And the benefit from these rejections is that through them a person receives a need and a complete desire for God to help him, since he sees that otherwise he is lost. Not only does he not progress in his work, but he sees that he regresses, and he lacks the strength to observe Torah and Mitzvoth even if not for Her name. That only by genuinely overcoming all the obstacles, above reason, he can observe Torah and Mitzvoth.

But he does not always have the strength to overcome above reason, that otherwise he is forced to deviate, God forbid, from the way of the Creator, and even from not for Her name. And he, who always feels that the shattered is greater than the whole, meaning that there are a lot more descents than ascents, and he does not see an end to these predicaments, and he will forever remain outside of holiness, for he sees that it is difficult for him to observe even as little as a jot, unless through overcoming above reason, but he is not always able to overcome. And what shall be the end of it all?"

Explanation: We can see from the beginning of this essay, that the Creator is the sole ruler of creation. He created man with certain properties, gave him all the necessary forces, and placed him under the optimal circumstances for progress toward the purpose of creation. But the Creator doesn't help us. Quite the contrary, He confuses us with all kinds of entanglements: discharge from work, disease, domestic problems and all sorts of failures. Furthermore, He does it in concealment, without us knowing that it is He who stands behind all that. An individual must go through quite a long period of time of being treated that way by the Creator. One has no choice but to go through them, gain experience that will enable him to eventually attain completeness, eternity and adhesion with the Creator.

That time comes to its end when **"he reaches the decision that no one can help him, but God Himself. This causes him to make a heartfelt demand of the Creator to open his eyes and heart, to bring him nearer to eternal adhesion with God."**

The desire of the Creator is that when one ascends in the spiritual worlds, he will acquire all the properties of these worlds, and become like the Creator in each and every world, and replace Him. However, this is impossible to accomplish without the help of the Creator. We are unable to do anything by ourselves. All the pains and troubles that we experience happen because our properties-desires are opposite to those of the Creator, meaning they are opposite to the light.

That oppositeness of form makes us perceive a reality that doesn't really exist. It is only a consequence of the reflection of our properties on the upper light. We only see our own properties. When the light comes from above one doesn't feel the light, but only his own corrupted properties. In order to feel the light, he must first rid himself of his egoism, the obstructions in the way of the light.

When one cries to the Creator for help, he suddenly finds, **"that all the rejections he had experienced had come from the Creator."**

That means that the rejections he had experienced were not because he was at fault, for not having the ability to overcome, but because these rejections are for those who truly want to draw nearer to God. And in order for such a person not to be satisfied with only a little, namely, not to remain as a little child without knowledge, he receives help from above so that he will not be able to say that Thank God, he observes Torah and performs good deeds and what else could he ask for?

And only if that person has a true desire, will he receive help from Above. And he is constantly shown how his faults in his present state; that is, he is sent thoughts and views, which work against his efforts. This is in order for him to see that he is not one with the Lord. And as much as he overcomes, he always sees how he is found in a position farther from holiness than others, who feel one with the Lord.

But he, on the other hand, always has his complaints and demands, and he cannot justify the behavior of the Creator, and how he behaves toward him. And

it pains him that he is not one with the Lord, until he comes to feel that he has no part in holiness whatsoever.

And although he is occasionally awakened from above, which momentarily revives him, but soon he falls into an abyss. However, this is what causes him to come to realize that only God can help and really draw him closer.

A man must always try and cleave to the Creator, namely, that all his thoughts will be about Him. That is to say, that even if he is in the worst state, from which there cannot be a greater descent, he should not leave His domain, namely, think that there is another authority which prevents him from entering into holiness, and which has the power to either benefit or harm.

That is, he must not think that there is a matter of the power of the Other Side (*Sitra Achra*), which does not allow man to do good deeds and follow God's ways; but he should think that all is done by the Creator."

The Creator sends us troubles in order to bring us back to the purpose of creation. Normally, if someone is happy, he doesn't even care if the Creator exists or not, but it is in the 'good' situations that it is important that one will adhere to the Creator. That is why He sends us troubles, so that we remember Him. If one feels bad he is compelled to think of the Creator. Thus, our work is mainly to think of the Creator when we feel good, not when we feel bad.

Kabbalah speaks of man's most subtle feelings. We never expect the blow; it always comes unexpectedly when one is disconnected from the Creator. Providence operates individually on each and every one of us, even when we don't remember about Him. He sends us special messages to remind us of Him. That is why we are told that we must always aim our thoughts at the Creator. That is all that's needed.

"...he who says that there is another power in the world. Namely shells, is in a state of "serving other gods", that it is not necessarily the thought of heresy that is the sin, but if he thinks that there is another authority and force apart from the Creator, by that he is committing a sin.

Furthermore, he who says that man has his own authority, meaning that he says that yesterday he himself did not want to follow God's ways that too is considered to be committing the sin of heresy. Meaning that he does not believe that only the Creator leads the world."

There isn't even a single thought in us that does not come from the Creator. That is how it was predetermined in the design of creation and there is nothing we can do to change it. So who am I then? "Self" am the one that feels what comes from above. In the beginning, we are confused by the thoughts that come to us from above. It is the result of the instillment of spirituality into the corporeality.

After some time things begin to fall into place and take affect. One begins to understand that in fact, it cannot be any other way. An ascent is one's consent with the Creator's doing. In that state one feels himself complete, full and eternal, separated from his body and connected only with spirituality.

"But when he has committed a sin, and he must certainly regret it and be sorry for having committed it, but here too we should place the pain and sorrow in the right order: where does he place the cause of the sin? That is the point he should be sorry for.

And a man should then feel sorry and say: "I committed that sin because the Creator hurled me down from holiness to a place of filth, to the lavatory, where the filth is". That is to say that God gave him a desire and a craving to amuse himself and breathe air in a place of stench. (And you might say, as it says in the

books, that sometimes a man incarnates in the body of a pig, that he receives a desire and craving to take livelihood from things he had already determined were litter, but now he again wants to revive himself in them).

And also when a man feels he's in a state of ascent, and tastes some good flavor in the work, he must not say: "Now I am in a state where I understand that it is worthwhile to worship God. Rather he should know that now the Lord has fancied him, and for that reason He draws him near, which is the reason why he tastes a good flavor in the work. And he should be careful never to leave the domain of holiness, and say that there is another operating force besides the Creator. (But this means that the matter of finding favor in the eyes of the Lord, or the opposite, does not depend on man himself, but everything depends on God. And man, with his external mind, cannot comprehend why now the Lord likes him and after that He does not.)

And likewise when he regrets that the Creator does not draw him near, he should also be careful not to be sorry for himself, for having been distanced from the Creator, for by so doing he becomes a recipient for his own benefit, and he who receives is separated from the Creator. Rather he should regret the exile of the Divine Presence, meaning, for inflicting sorrow upon the Divine Presence.

One should take as an example when some small organ of a person is sore. The pain is still felt mainly in the heart and mind, which are the generality of man. And certainly the sensation of a single organ cannot resemble the sensation of a person's full stature, where most of the pain is felt.

Likewise is the pain that a person feels when he is detached from the Lord, since man is but a single organ of the Divine Presence, for the Divine Presence is the soul of Israel in general. Therefore the sensation of a single organ does not resemble the sensation of the pain in general. That is to say that the Divine Presence regrets that there are parts of it that are detached from it, which she cannot provide for.

(And that might be the meaning of the words: "When a man regrets, the Divine Presence says: "It is lighter than my head"). And if man does not relate the sorrow at being distant from God to himself, he is saved from falling into the trap of the desire to receive for himself, which is the separation from holiness.

The same applies when one feels somewhat closer to holiness, when he is happy at having merited favor in the eyes of the Lord, he must say that the core of his joy is that now there is joy in the Divine Presence, from having being able to bring her private organ near her, and not send it away.

And man rejoices at having been endowed with the ability to please the Divine Presence. And this goes by the same token, because joy that an individual feels, is but a part of the joy that the whole feels. And through these calculations he loses his individuality and avoids being trapped by the Other Side, which is the will to receive for himself.

Although, the will to receive is necessary, since that constitutes a person, anything, which exists in a person apart from the desire to receive is attributed to the Creator. Nevertheless, the will to receive pleasure should be corrected to a form of bestowal.

That is to say, that the pleasure and joy, taken by the will to receive, should be intended to bring contentment above, because there is pleasure below. For that was the purpose of creation, to benefit His creations. And this is called the joy of the Divine Presence above.

For this reason, man must seek advice as to how he can cause contentment above. And certainly, if he receives pleasure, contentment shall be felt above. Therefore, he should long to always be in the King's palace, and to have the ability to play with the King's treasures. And that will certainly cause contentment above. It follows that his entire longing should be for the sake of the Creator.”

The Creator is benevolent with us, but we feel His goodness as cruelty when it comes through our egoism. It is expressed in disease, stress and other tragedies. One cannot be thankful to the Creator when he feels bad. If we'd only know how bad the Creator feels that His benevolence is turned into the opposite, or how happy He is when we are, then we would operate entirely differently.

In other words: all our thoughts, our every act, and anything that happens should always be directed at the Creator. That is the only way to exit the ego and attain spirituality.

Chapter 4.4 – Questions and Answers

The Study

Question: Why do Kabbalists describe the upper world for us?

Answer: In order to help us begin to feel them. The purpose of man's creation is to feel the upper worlds. In other words, it is to feel the Creator. We, who cannot see the beginning of creation, the reason for it, are unable to see its end and ultimate purpose. Therefore, we are also unable to understand the meaning of our lives.

If a researcher from another world were to examine a day old lamb and a day old human infant, he would determine that the human infant has very little prospects of evolving successfully, whereas the lamb, which can already walk and understand its surrounding is certainly headed for a brighter future. The alien would assume that nature gave it everything necessary for life and therefore it would evolve much more successfully than the infant.

That is what any alien would think of our world. It would reach that conclusion because it would not be able to see the final state, after the completion of the development of each species. It would miss the part when the human infant makes the breakthrough and reaches far beyond the evolution of the lamb. If we do not (as is our current situation) see the final goal, our purpose, if we stay confined to our own world, we will continue to believe that our lives begin and end in this world.

That is why Kabbalists repeatedly mention in every book that even if one does not understand what he is reading, but seemingly 'just' reads, by that he unconsciously extends the spiritual light that surrounds us. That light gradually purifies us and prepares us to feel the spiritual powers, until at a certain moment, first unaware and then aware of it, one begins to feel the spiritual world, and see and understand the information he receives about the reasons for his life, the evolution of his soul over the generations, and in addition, he receives new spiritual powers in order to learn how to ask for additional spiritual powers from the Creator.

Q: Can anyone become a Kabbalist?

A: If a person studies with a spiritual teacher and with the right method of study, he will in time become a Kabbalist. One becomes the vessel over which one performs his experiments. He represents the model of the Creator that he is studying.

One can feel spirituality to the extent that he equalizes his form with that of the Creator. There are two phases to the spiritual progress: the first is the attainment of spirituality, a process called the "construction of the screen", the second indicates how to use that screen. In order to build and utilize these two formulas, one needs a rabbi (teacher), a group, and the right books to study from.

Q: Psychiatrists believe that the sixth sense is a kind of disease. They classify it as a hallucination. Can you clarify that point?

A: All the stimulus that our senses receive come to our brain. They are processed by a fixed program imprinted in the brain, and the final outcome is expressed in our emotions and sensations. The brain can even send out signals based on past memories. If the mind begins to create imaginary feelings and hallucinations then whether or not one is aware of it, it is a defect in the system, meaning a disease.

However, in the wisdom of Kabbalah you feel your surroundings and at the same time you are capable of examining reality from the side, because you learn how to feel both yourself and the origin of your feelings, meaning the Creator. It is a personal

understanding; there is no one who can testify to its correctness or describe it accurately. But the wisdom of Kabbalah is the most practical science there is. All the knowledge is acquired through experimentation.

The direct contact with the Creator is what enables one to see and understand the actual reality, and its negligible part that we can perceive in the limitations of our world.

Q: So where is the difference between a Kabbalist and a medium?

A: A person who discovers the Creator sees for himself that there is no other answer. The concealed becomes evident only for the one who can understand.

Q: So how can one see if he is wrong?

A: If he is in contact with a real Kabbalist, he will begin to see that his feelings are not founded on actual knowledge, a system and a control mechanism, which are the constituents that together form the wisdom of Kabbalah.

The ability to study reality systematically, through scientific observation, to assess the results with other Kabbalists, who also went through a process of making the concealed evident, the continuity and the scientific observation and experimentation, all those differentiate the wisdom of Kabbalah from mental disease and hallucinations of mediums.

In the 19th century, humanity was looking for redemption in art. In the 20th century it was power and scientific advancement. Today people find that their lives depend on guidance from above, and if they want to participate, they must reach its root in the upper world.

We will begin to feel the need to understand the upper root of life. Our own lives will compel us to seek redemption and capability to affect the processes in the world. Mankind will find that it is impossible to exist without the ability to intervene in the upper guidance. Thus, the collective law of reality will compel us to evolve spiritually, because it is man's nature to be lazy and egoistic, and pain is the only way we can be motivated for action.

The wisdom of Kabbalah enables us to reduce or altogether avoid the suffering, and be cured before we feel the illness. The study of Kabbalah renders one with spiritual forces, an understanding and the ability to know what to do in this world. Thus, one is able to avoid problems, disease and other tragedies.

Q: How can you explain the fact that despite the bliss and divine pleasures of Kabbalah, there isn't any 'Kabbalah rush'?

A: The fact that the coarsest souls descend to our world in this generation does not necessarily imply that they are aware of what they need for their correction. Every generation consists of layers of all the souls in previous generations. This is the reason the public is still passive. An ordinary person does not want to live in dreams about the future because the body only feels the present. The ordinary person aspires for no more than animate pleasures. No one is in a hurry to take upon himself the laborious work of the spiritual correction. However, if one realizes that this is the only way for redemption, he will not be able to abandon the study of Kabbalah.

Even if humanity does find one of these days that there is a means to attain spirituality, every person will relate to it differently, depending on his or her kind of soul. Some will begin to take an occasional interest, some will begin to learn on their own, some will study with Kabbalists every now and again, and some even regularly. But only a few will devote themselves to the study of the wisdom of Kabbalah

because their soul demands it. It makes no difference which route we take, the important thing is that each and every one of us must know that it exists, that it is available and we must be aware of its purpose.

Kabbalah appeals to a wide variety of people: there are many who seek blessings from ‘sages’, some study the Torah as history, and some look for secrets in the letters, like treasure hunters. But within the wisdom of Kabbalah, there are people who are closer to the ‘center’, to the desire to cleave to the Creator, and there are people who are farther from that goal. The latter kind studies it like a science and seeks knowledge in the Kabbalah. It is like the circular ripples that formulate around a stone thrown in the water. Any person who hears about the wisdom of Kabbalah will find his own approach to it, in a position that matches the desire of his soul for correction. Those who have not come to Kabbalah yet, have not come to it because their time hasn’t come.

Q: Is it okay for adolescents to take Kabbalah classes?

A: Yes. I recommend the articles from the book *Matan Torah (The Revelation of Godliness)*.

Q: What is our attainment based on?

A: Our attainment is based on sensations, contact! This is the best way to research for the purpose of attaining spirituality in our world. That is because all the senses are expressed in the sense of touch. The other senses – sight, sound, smell and taste – are incomplete and are a consequence of the *Bitush* (beating) of the surrounding light against the screen. It results in the five vessels of the *Partzuf: Moach, Atzamat, Gidin, Bassar* and *Or*, which are (respectively) *Keter, Hochma, Bina, ZA* and *Malchut*, uniting in a single vessel, meaning one attainment of the light. When the direct light comes straight from above downward, from the degree of *Keter (Moach)*, through the degree of *Malchut (Or)*, it strikes the screen and raises returning light back to the degree of *Keter*. That means that if the light reaches the degree of *Or*, all the *Sefirot* in the *Partzuf* become one, resulting in all the senses being filled with light, meaning information as well. Because they operate from a distance, as opposed to the sense of touch, they are not filled with the entire amount of knowledge, and are therefore not completely real and do not reach all the way to *Malchut*.

Q: How does Kabbalah relate to coercion?

A: There is a spiritual law that states, “There is no coercion in spirituality.” Any kind of coercion, or even a command, that might rob someone, directly or indirectly, of one’s freedom of choice, is wrong. Coercion robs one of the most important thing the Creator gave him in order to understand his essence and draw near the Creator by correcting it. Therefore, coercion is against the true nature of creation.

Q: During the study, one sometimes encounters situations when one has no answers to the most essential questions, but at the same time, he is unable to formulate any questions. Why does that happen?

A: It happens when one does not feel the text inside him, when he has not discovered it in his senses. In these cases, one does not respond to what he hears.

Q: What is the difference between knowledge and faith?

A: The only thing we need in this world is faith. Faith is a situation where one clearly feels the Creator. The sensation of the Creator is called faith.

Knowledge is something that appears to be outside faith for someone who is still unable to feel the Creator. For that reason, knowledge is a limited vision of the world,

whereas faith is complete. When one refuses to take the path of knowledge and uses only his egoistic vessels, he begins to feel spirituality, and that feeling is called faith.

Q: What can you say about a person who wants to study Kabbalah, but whose course of life is quite ordinary?

A: The meaning is that you have been chosen from above. It can also be the consequence of pains that you suffered during your former cycles. In any case, it is all a question of pain.

Language

Q: Are there letters and words in our feelings?

A: We have to have some means of expressing our feelings. For that purpose we have a certain code – a language. We can do it anyway we like. The world of *Ein Sof* is described using only four letters *Yod* (י), *He* (ה), *Vav* (ו), *He* (ה). These letters are the four *Behinot* (phases): *Aleph*, *Bet*, *Gimel*, *Dalet*. Over the course of their descent to our world, they unite and form the letters, the words and their combinations, until they become an entire language in our world.

Q: Is there any power to the letters?

A: All the words were built by forces that are marked by letters. However, we cannot say that the letters have some power of their own. It would be more correct to say that the letters symbolize power. All the fundamental forces, the properties with which the world was created, are marked by the twenty-seven letters of the Hebrew alphabet (twenty two basic letters and five final letters). Each power has its own unique attribute, and when they join together they formulate the active force of reality. In the essay about the letters in the *Zohar* there is an elaborate explanation about the combination of two lights, the two properties - *Hessed* and *Hochma*. In other words, the consequence will be the same anyhow, there is no contradiction. Everything begins with the letter *Yod* (י) because that is the point from which all the letters are drawn, and in fact, any drawing begins with the letter *Yod*.

Q: Is Kabbalah the only way to attain the Creator, and if so, does that mean that everyone must learn Hebrew?

A: It doesn't matter which language one speaks as long as one wants to attain the Creator by correcting himself through equalizing with the properties of the Creator. The knowledge he receives does not come in words, and is completely understood, because it penetrates all the senses and the consciousness. That knowledge is spiritual and does not come in words or sentences. That is the way Kabbalists convey information among themselves.

The Daily Routine

Q: Do Kabbalists run an ordinary way of life?

A: The wisdom of Kabbalah necessitates every person to take an active part in this world: work, raise a family, learn and teach. In addition to the normal routine, one must also attain the purpose of creation – a spiritual contact with the Creator. The Creator created this world and everything in it precisely as it is, in order to assist us in learning how to reach the spiritual degree of the Creator, based on the existing reality. That is why the wisdom of Kabbalah does not rely on fasting, abstention or self-deprivation of any sort. There is no coercion and no punishments in this world or in the next. My rabbi, and I as his successor, do not take students who wish to pay us for

the study instead of working. The wisdom of Kabbalah does not support that form of study. It is a phenomenon from the time of the exile when the people refrained from working, and rich Jews supported the poor so that they could study Torah.

Rabbi Yehuda Ahslag (Baal HaSulam) sent his children to work right after they finished their formal studies (around the age of 18). My rabbi worked many years as a construction worker, and in road works and other hard labours. The purpose of creation is to turn it to resemble the Creator in its properties. It is therefore obvious that in the external sense, nothing is going to change and we will continue to work both physically and mentally.

Q: Every now and again we run into questions that concern the right way to bring up our children. How does Kabbalah regard this matter?

A: There are many ways to educate in our world, but none of them is perfect, because twenty or thirty years pass before we see their consequences. In most cases, it is then too late to change patterns of behavior. The entire process of education in Kabbalah is based on the transformation of the system for each person passively, without pressure, while continuously giving extensive explanations about the system, and what spirituality is good for. It is essential to emphasize that this system leads to proper behavior and enables one to see the consequences of the acts beforehand and thus prevent wrongdoing. We can only lead our children to understand what Kabbalah is by personal example; this is the only way we can teach them what they can attain should they want to study it. The choice to study or not study is theirs alone.

Thoughts

Q: How does one's thoughts affect his environment?

A: Contemporary science has reached an idea that the will of the experimenter affects the results of the research. Among other things, astrophysicists have begun to internalize the idea that the entire universe is in fact, a single thought. That stems from the fact that the Creator did not create anything but the egoistic desire to receive and feel His light, which is felt as pleasure. The light itself fills the entire reality evenly. The way one feels this reality depends on nothing but the desire itself, just like a hungry person will find the most wonderful flavours in even a slice of bread, whereas a satiated person will not be impressed with even a banquet fit for kings.

There are many implications to one's subjective approach toward a certain subject. For example: if we look at a cup of juice from an egoistic perspective, the pleasure embedded in the cup bears an egoistic nature, because he uses it to sooth his thirst. But if he understands that the juice only gives him a limited amount of pleasure, which was actually given to him so that he could receive it for the Creator, by that one turns the egoistic pleasure to a spiritual one. The light of the Creator would be expressed in a corporeal object.

And so it is with every thing in our world: if one regards every thing in this world through corrected desires, he will be able to see the spiritual objects around him reflected in corporeal objects of this world.

This ability depends solely on man himself: if his egoistic properties have been corrected only as far as the world of *Assiya*, he will only be able to see the world of *Assiya* reflected in the world around him. If he has corrected his selfish desires to the degree of the world of *Yetzira*, he will be able to see it reflect in our world too, and so on. In the end, one begins to see and feel all the spiritual worlds like round spheres, with him in the middle; where outside the system there is the source, the Creator.

That is why it is said that all the words were created for man and all the worlds are inside man. Outside us there is only the Creator. We cannot feel anything outside ourselves, only what is inside us, meaning our own reactions to the operations of the Creator around us. We refer to these reactions as worlds. Thus, worlds are actually degrees of sensation of the Creator.

We denominate, “This Word” or “Our World” a state where we have no feeling of the Creator as a source, but only see His material reflection. That sensation of the Creator is the most distant and detached from spirituality. There are five degrees of sensation of the Creator, five worlds. They begin with Our World – the zero degree – and end in a complete attainment of the Creator in the world of *Ein Sof*.

The only way for one to feel anything outside it is to equalize in form with it, as with the example of the radio receiver. Hence, the degrees of the sensation of the other, meaning the Creator, testify to the degree of one’s equivalence of form with the light.

If one feels his environment only through the senses he received at birth, that sensation is called “This World.” If he succeeds in changing, correcting his desires to match those of the Creator, he begins to feel Him to the extent of his correction. The measure of that sensation is called one’s spiritual world, or one’s spiritual degree.

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Part Five: Religion, Prejudice and Kabbalah

Chapter 5.1 – Religion or Science?

The Science of Kabbalah – A Science or Religion?

Kabbalah is often associated with tradition and even with religion. In most cases, this is a result of the difficulty in finding the logic in the old customs and the various prohibitions in the *Mitzvot* (commandments). It is a difficulty that is expressed directly or indirectly by antagonism toward religion. This is the reason for the important need to clearly distinguish between Kabbalah and religion.

Every religion relies on a certain prophet, a person who was connected with spirituality and circulated his knowledge among people. This argument is at the basis of every religion, meaning that everything begins with the sublime truth, the revelation of the Creator before the prophet, the founder, be it Judaism or any other religion.

The wisdom of Kabbalah is a method to attain the Creator that is available for all. It allows any person to come by himself without any mediators, to a spiritual contact with the Creator. People, who have attained spiritual attainment, described the way they went through step by step so that one might follow them and reach these attainments by himself. One's spiritual connection with the Creator is based on one's own discovery of Him.

Though the wisdom of Kabbalah does not deal directly with studying this world, it is still the basis of every science in our world. The study of Kabbalah imparts one with the ability to see how spiritual forces find their expression in this world, how they climb up and down to and from our world with a variety of forms we call phenomena and physical, chemical and biological processes, as well as moral and other conceptual processes. Because of our inability to learn all those processes as one collective, we study them as separate sciences, divided to specific sciences. However, the truth is that everything is connected and interdependent on every other force and element of nature. After all the subject matter is one, and we just dissect the research to pieces to make it easier on us.

The wisdom of Kabbalah ties all these phenomena of spirit and matter together. This means that from the point of view of Kabbalah, music, astronomy, biology and medicine form an external expression of a unique law of the inner makings of nature. A Kabbalist who feels the upper world finds that there is only one law, expressed in many different ways in our world.

The wisdom of Kabbalah contains all the necessary components of every science: it's got researches, records of the results of the experiments, continuity and consistency, repetition of the experiments and accumulation of knowledge. It is a science that deals with the study of the universe, the study of reality we live in. It is a science that studies nature's only law. Today, we are capable of perceiving only a negligible part of the collective law of reality in the degree of our world. We call that negligible part "This World."

Chapter 5.2 – Kabbalah In Our Lives

During the six thousand years of its existence, the souls descend to our world by a certain order, and clothe the physical bodies of our world, which is the lowest degree of creation in the universe. There is a clear and accurate order of the descent of the souls, from the finest, with the least amount of egoism, to the coarsest most egoistic souls.

The first souls to descend are the ones with the least amount of egoism, whose mere existence in this world is enough to correct them, and they do not need any external influence to guide them. After that, the souls begin to come with a need for a guidebook, which we know as the written Torah.

Although we have received the four parts of the Torah, with its entire spiritual scope, meaning including the wisdom of Kabbalah, over the years it has been used in many ways. At the same time, varying circumstances were organized from above to keep the *Mitzvot*. For example: the ruin of the temple eliminated the possibility of keeping many of the *Mitzvot* that are connected with the temple and the land.

Although the souls that come to our world grow coarser and need further correction, the number of practical *Mitzvot* decreases. That is because these souls cannot be corrected by mere mechanical performance of *Mitzvot*. These souls need a different guide, a guide to the wisdom of Kabbalah, because this is their final correction. These are souls that were purer in the past, but have sunk deeper and deeper into the egoism over the cycles. Therefore, the last correction should end in an exit from this world to the spiritual world. The exit from this world to the spiritual world is only possible with the help of changing the internal properties of humans from egoism to altruism, not by any mechanical acts.

It is said: “A *Mitzva* without an aim is like a body without life.” It is only the aim that determines the worth of the operation. A mere mechanical act, an aimless one, is also a lifeless one. It does not produce any spiritual influence and brings no result.

However, maintaining *Mitzvot* mechanically is still necessary for everyone because it preserves the identity of the people from generation to generation and prepares all the souls for their personal correction in one of the future cycles, for the realization of the aim *Lishma* (for Her name). Keeping the *Mitzvot* in the physical body purifies the spiritual ‘still’ of man. Man’s soul consists, as any part of creation, of four parts, which correlate to the name of the Creator: still, vegetative, animate and speaking. A person who keeps *Mitzvot* physically is turned from an ‘ordinary still’ to a ‘holy still’. It is absolutely forbidden to underestimate the level of this spiritual degree. It is that which keeps us a nation. Its keeping is also the keeping the will of the Creator!

A person in that degree is in fact in the first degree of his correction, though he is unaware of it and does not feel the spiritual world, just as a stone cannot feel spirituality. Rabbi Zidichev wrote in his book about the verse (Psalms 34, 15): “Depart from evil, and do good,” that without understanding the wisdom of Kabbalah, man is like an animal: he keeps the *Mitzvot* automatically, just like an animal eats its food. Even if he is proficient in every detail of the *Mitzvot*, he must still give some time to study the Kabbalah, which is the core of the Torah, and without it one is like an animal.

Just as everything comes from the ground, so from this degree it is possible to attain higher degrees. That is why Kabbalists do not object to keeping *Mitzvot* in the physical body, but maintain that it must be accompanied by a spiritual intent, an aim

that gives one the ticket to the spiritual world. However, it is only according to one's altruistic aim that one can rise to higher degrees in the spiritual worlds.

Although we have received the entire Torah, its hidden part, the Zohar, which was written at the time of the Talmud, was only discovered in recent generations. The Talmud was necessary for the purpose of keeping *Mitzvot* and was therefore immediately publicized, whereas the Zohar, because of the absence of necessity on the part of the public, was concealed by the Kabbalists until they decided it was time to expose it. Because souls of a different kind descend to our world in every generation, they also require a different kind of 'leader' to correct their souls. The Creator sends a number of Kabbalists in every generation, which by being simultaneously in this world and in the spiritual world, create the necessary conditions for the correction of the souls of that generation.

That is the reason for the coming of the soul of the Holy Ari, the great Kabbalist of the 16th century to our world. He was the Kabbalist who wrote the contemporary interpretation to the Zohar, thus creating a solid foundation for a clear and understandable study of the Kabbalah for every person. Rabbi Yessaiahu Halevy Ish-Horovitz (known as the Holy Shlah) said about the books of the Ari, that their appearance is tantamount to the giving of the Torah to the nation of Israel.

Rabbi Avraham Azulai writes in his book, "Ohr Chaim" that, "The concealment of the wisdom of Kabbalah from above so that not everyone could practice it, was done for only a limited period of time, until the year 5330 (1570 by the Gregorian calendar). But since that year, the concealment has been lifted and it is permitted for everyone to study the Zohar." It also says that, "only if the masses study the wisdom of Kabbalah the Messiah will come, and not as a result of anything else, as others think..."

The Zohar itself mentions more than once that only the lessened value that we ascribe to the study is the cause of all our anguish and that of the last generation. It also says that this is the reason for our spiritual exile. However, the truth is that the only reason we are suffering is that we are not correcting ourselves through the wisdom of Kabbalah, and that is why we are marching on the path of pain.

Chapter 5.3 – Uprooting Prejudice

Nothing is created in vain in this world. Everything is created in order to attain the purpose of creation. The true picture of the world is one of completeness and fullness, with nothing that is redundant, not even a single thought or operation.

Everyone is doing precisely what he or she is meant to be doing, and at the same time they are realizing the purpose of creation. The vast majority does it unconsciously, but a few do it consciously, after making a free choice between their egoistic and altruistic operations and having decided in favour of the latter. The task at hand is to reach an agreement with the design of creation and carry it out consciously and willingly. We shall all come to that over the course of our reincarnations.

If we had been aware of our previous lives, and the possible combinations of the souls and their divisions, we would have been able to calculate and determine for ourselves what the right combination of the parts of the collective soul should be, what the ratio should be and which parts they should be combined with in order to correct them. We would see and understand the reason for everything that happens.

Kabbalists see the collective picture either fully or partially. For example, the Ari explains about reincarnation in his book *Shaar Hagilgulim* (The Gate of Reincarnations). He not only saw the entire picture of the cycle of correction of the souls, but also was given permission to describe it. The only sign by which it is possible to determine if one is permitted to study Kabbalah is his desire for spirituality, his genuine desire. The study of the Kabbalah is not meant for any magic or witchcraft; it is also not intended to turn one into a great rabbi, or a sage. Its purpose is to promote one's spiritual development and attain the upper worlds, through hard labour. The consequences of one's efforts will be measured by his ability to dedicate his every ambition to bestowal upon the Creator.

When speaking of physical performance of *Mitzvot*, it is important to mention that it can only be performed in this world, because that is where we perform physical acts without a spiritual intent, without any intent. *Mitzvot* with a spiritual aim mean *Zivug* (spiritual reception of lights) with the upper light and the reception of the lights into one's altruistic vessels that operate in order to bring contentment to the Creator. Only a Kabbalist can reach that, and hence his name – he can receive (in Hebrew Kabbalah means reception) the upper light.

Therefore, it is the duty of every individual to realize that the true performance of *Mitzvot* is the spiritual performance. That is what we all aspire for. One who settles for a mechanical observation of *Mitzvot* corrects himself only on the level in which he keeps them, meaning the level of our world. For that reason such a person is called “holy still”. He is called “still” because he has no desire for spiritual development, and “holy” because he still keeps the *Mitzvot*, even if it is with egoistic intentions, meaning under the limitations of this world. Yet he still follows the Creator's will. That is why Kabbalists never object to the keeping of corporeal *Mitzvot*, but only emphasize that mere physical performance is not enough to attain the purpose of creation. Furthermore, spiritual operations should be performed in order to assist the reception of the upper light. Those are called the commandments of the Creator. But here arises a problem: one is capable of performing only those operations that he thinks will yield personal gain. If he is not certain of the reward for his efforts, his egoism will not allow him to make even the slightest effort.

That is why there is such widespread objection to the wisdom of Kabbalah, because it argues that they perform the *Mitzvot* in an incomplete manner. Therefore they claim

that Kabbalists object to keeping the *Mitzvot*, when in fact Kabbalists claim that they should indeed be kept, but not merely on the physical level, but the intent must be added.

Kabbalists say just one thing: “Start learning of the wisdom of Kabbalah!” Through the study of the soul of the Torah you will begin to understand which is essential for us, and what we were created for.

Chapter 5.4 – Questions and Answers

Kabbalah and Science

Question: Are there certain habits or customs in the study of the wisdom of Kabbalah?

Answer: The wisdom of Kabbalah does not practice any customs or any ritual external activities. Any drawing of a picture of the worlds, *Sefirot*, or Gimatria, is no more than aiding material. The essence of the wisdom of Kabbalah is an individual sensation of every person of the Creator and the spiritual world.

The wisdom of Kabbalah is not mysticism. It is a science that explores the entire reality, unlike all other sciences, which suffice to exploring our world.

Q: Does modern science accept this perspective?

A: A science that studies the senses, including the theory of relativity, maintains that everything that is perceived by our senses is only valid with respect to ourselves. But our picture of the world is relative because the concept of time and space does not exist. That is because they too are relative. If we did not have these terms inside us, we would perceive them differently. We might say that man is like a little box, much like the black box in a plane. It is a closed system. We only perceive what reaches this box, what we feel and sense. We call this combination of sensations “Our world,” or “This World,” or simply “world.” We cannot perceive anything that might or might not exist outside our borders, outside this box. We cannot even imagine that there is anything outside it, meaning outside our senses.

Q: But is there reliable knowledge as far as Kabbalah is concerned?

A: Of course, but that is not all. Kabbalah not only gives us reliable knowledge of the construction of all the worlds and their laws, the history of mankind and other things we cannot even begin to imagine, but also allows us to put this knowledge into practical use. It is written in the Torah: “There is not a blade of grass below that has not an angle above.” Meaning, every thing in our world has a spiritual root. If we understand these laws and how the spiritual worlds are built, we can influence what happens in our world. This knowledge requires immense perception of knowledge, but without it we are unable to accurately define what we need. We would lack a certain kind of information that we would want to receive.

Q: Scientists maintain that the world has existed longer than just a few thousand years. What does Kabbalah has to say about it?

A: Kabbalah does not say otherwise. I have written in my book (Interview with the Future) about global warming and cooling periods that lasted thirty million years each.

Q: How does Kabbalah relate to the “Big Bang” theory?

A: In the 16th century, the great Kabbalist the holy Ari wrote in the Tree of Life: “Behold, that before the emanations were emanated and the creatures were created, and the upper simple light had filled the whole existence. And there was no vacancy, such as an empty atmosphere, a hollow, or a pit, but all was filled with simple, boundless light.” Thus, the “Big Bang” theory was known to Kabbalists long before the astrophysicists learned about it.

Q: Will science be able to cope with understanding the sixth sense in the future?

A: While in his five senses, one is completely limited in his feelings. He is so limited that he is simply unable to picture that there might be another sense. He will never be

able to imagine it, much less create it, because he will never feel a desire for something that is not already in him, just as we never feel the need for a sixth finger on our hand.

That is why all the tools man builds and all the research systems only enhance our existing sense but under no circumstances can they yield new ones. Our sensory organs provide us with everything we need for that purpose, and because other sensory organs mean another creation, whereas we are limited by the physical boundaries of our creation, therefore we can never imagine it. We will never be able to picture what is it exactly that we are missing so that we can feel and perceive our environment differently than we feel it with our current senses. Regardless of how advanced our technology becomes, we will still be unable to break the boundaries of our creation. Our five sensory organs create a clear framework of understanding, and because our fantasy is in fact the figment of our imagination, it is based on those five senses, and we will never be able to imagine something that is not like us or the world around us. If I ask of you, for example, to describe to me something that is like nothing that exists in our world, as though a creature from another world, you will still comprise it from elements that exist in our world. Though our space is only a substance we can feel in a certain manner, there are other worlds and other creatures that we cannot feel though they exist in the same dimension as we do. I am deliberately using the term dimension, in our limited understanding, to demonstrate how incapable we are of feeling what our sensory organs are not meant to understand. In fact, even the dimension is meaningless. In a different sensation the dimension also becomes something completely different. For example, if you try to imagine what we would see instead of the ordinary universe if we could see with X-ray eyes. This demonstrates what a drastic change can a single alteration in our senses produce on our picture of the world.

Q: You always write that it is time that the wisdom of Kabbalah became known to everyone and stopped being secretive. Why is it that you are now so preoccupied with it, and isn't there a danger that every person who discovers the wisdom of Kabbalah will misuse it against people?

A: Kabbalah is a science, but it is not a science for the experts alone. Anyone can utilize it just as we utilize the results of every other science. The difference between Kabbalah and science is that everyone needs the Kabbalah. If one does not practice this science, he does not receive from life its single most important asset, the one thing that will remain with him forever. Everyone must know what is that science and what is the source of the power of that knowledge. They must know just how able Kabbalah is in changing our concepts of the construction of the world, man's purpose on earth, the evolution of the creatures and man's unique role in it. It renders a complete and fundamental knowledge of the world. The goal of the Kabbalists is to bring as many people as possible into Kabbalah, because if humanity continues to follow erroneous and experimental roads, and keeps fumbling in the dark, it is headed toward horrendous disasters. When a child puts its finger in the fire he cries bitterly in pain. He or she immediately feels that this is something that should not be done. But in the end the burning heals. By the same token, it is not necessary that we burn our planet in order to understand that it was not worthwhile to put our finger in the fire.

Humanity was created in such a way, so that it would come to know the Kabbalah as a science and not through experimentation. Kabbalah reveals before us the fact that there are forces and connections in nature and which consequences each act yields.

Humanity

Q: When will mankind be able to understand the uniqueness of Kabbalah?

A: Humanity is always pushed forward by total disillusion. Any technological progress, medical or any other kind of progress stems only from the fact that humanity is suddenly disappointed with past methods. When a certain amount of anguish is accumulated, mankind is forced to understand that these methods cannot be a solution to any problem. I think it's obvious. Why must we go on searching?

Let us take an example from our own lives: over the past several decades, the number of psycho-analysts has increased many times over, but the number of patients increased even more, and so did the number of suicides. It is like a new trend that will soon pass, giving way to bitter disillusion.

We are trying to prepare for that time, develop various kinds of methods for those that are already aware, or that will soon be aware of the necessity of Kabbalah. They should have enough material to enable them to change themselves through it. Any one who marches on the right path should help those along the way and prevent them from taking dead-end roads by circulating books of real value, audio and video files and cassettes. However, one should be referred to Kabbalah only to the extent that he is actually interested. Whatever you do, do not force or compel any person, because people must first be ripe for it.

Judaism

Q: What kind of connection exists between Kabbalah and the role of the Jews in realizing the goal you spoke of?

A: There is a pyramid-like division in this world: still, vegetative, animate and speaking. The same division exists in our souls as well. The Jews are considered to be the chosen people because they were given the opportunity to reach spirituality before the other nations. It is not that Jews are any better than others, it is simply that they are the first to be obligated to attain the spiritual world in the whole of mankind. There is a certain type of soul called "Jewish", from the Hebrew word *Yehudi* – meaning unique, or unified (with the Creator).

The Kabbalah maintains that this is the most egoistic type of soul. Not unintentionally the Jewish people are described as "stiff-necked" and insubordinate.

The collective spiritual vessel (soul, *Adam*) broke into pieces because it is easier to correct small egoistic parts than the entire egoism all at once. The first parts to correct are called "Jews". Afterwards the other parts mingle with them and reach nearness with the Creator. In the end, all the parts merge into a single vessel filled entirely with light, which is why there is no such thing as a "Jewish nationality." If a person feels a genuine need to draw nearer to the Creator and attain spirituality through Kabbalah, he can do it, and then he will be regarded as a Jew. This means that the name "Jewish" correlates to one's natural desire, not to his birth nationality. This is how it was in the past, and only later on came the determination of who was a Jew.

Q: Why was the Torah (including Kabbalah) given only to the Jewish people?

A: Our world is divided to certain groups of people called nations or peoples. All the worlds are built according to a single principle, namely the "pyramid principle". Because there is the law of the "Opposite value between lights and vessels," the Torah was given for the purpose of correcting the stiffest part of the world – the Jews. In the

Torah they are regarded as “stiff-necked”, the most egoistic of all peoples. That is why the Torah and the wisdom of Kabbalah were given to them of all nations.

They are to be the first among the nations to correct themselves, and the other nations are to follow in their footsteps. That is why it is said that the Jewish people should become the carrier of the light for the other nations, and in that it is chosen. The hatred of the nations toward the Jews stems from a spiritual root that demands of them to correct themselves first.

The correction of all other nations and their physical and spiritual peace and well-being depends on the success of the correction of the Jews. It is written in great detail in the [Introduction to the Book of TUZohar](#) (item 66 through the end).

Q: How is the perception of the Creator among Kabbalists different to the perception of the Creator among religious people?

A: A religious person believes that there is a superior force that governs him and determines for him all the laws that he must follow. Kabbalah is different in that it adds to the above, the opportunity to feel the Creator. It certainly does not object to keeping religious laws!

God

Q: Where is God in the wisdom of Kabbalah and what is His function?

A: Reality consists of two elements: the Creator and creation, or as we normally say – the soul. The purpose of the existence of the soul is complete unification with the Creator. Man’s desire is to receive pleasure from the Creator. Every property of the soul is defined by a specific term. Kabbalah utilizes technical terms in studying the collective law of the universe. In Kabbalah we do not use the word God because we use those technical terms to study creation, but the meaning still refers to the supreme force, the upper light, meaning the Creator. Every degree that is higher than another is regarded as the “Creator” of the lower degree, because it creates, controls, develops and influences the inferior degree.

It is enough to open any Kabbalah book in order to see the nature of the Creator-creature relationship. A creature has a clear, concise and well-defined sensation of the Creator, and he partakes in His operations. Eventually, the creatures attain the same spiritual degree as the Creator and become His partners.

Other Religions

Q: Are there parallels to the wisdom of Kabbalah in other religions?

A: There is no parallel to the wisdom of Kabbalah in other religions because the wisdom of Kabbalah is simply not a religion, but a science. It is not related in any way to religions, faiths, and clairvoyance of any kind, not even to Judaism. Any believing Jew, when asked if he is proficient in Kabbalah would reply that he is not, and sees no need to be. And he is right. One does not need the wisdom of Kabbalah for the purpose of performing religious commandments. Besides, the study of Kabbalah increases one’s egoism; they increase one’s desire for knowledge, and rely on self-discovery and understanding of the spiritual world, whereas religion relies on self-restriction, coercion and settling for the limitation of desires.

Q: Do other religions also have ways to attain the spiritual worlds?

A: All other religions speak of internal psychological processes, or processes that relate to one's animate body and the power that revive it. Animals too have a body that operates according to certain laws, and their bodies are not that different to our own. Animals too can, to a certain extent, predict the future, and even more so than people. They can also feel the other.

If there is anything that relates to attain spirituality in other religions, it is only what has transferred to them from the Torah. The primary questions that all religions ask is how to use man's intent in order to improve one's animate and social properties, and our lives in this world and in this life.

Q: What does idolatry means?

A: Idolatry means using egoistic desires. There are only two ways to use the desire for pleasure that the Creator created: either for the Creator or for oneself. It is not only impossible but also unnecessary to change the desire to enjoy. The only thing that must be changed is the intention of that desire. The aim of the utilization of the desire must be changed. The changing of the aim is called the correction of the desire, and it is our goal and the only purpose for our being in this world, the lowest of all worlds (meaning states of being). One can either work for the Creator or for himself; there is no in-between.

Part Six: Genesis

Chapter 6.1 – The Seven Days of Creation

General

What does Genesis speak of?

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. Now the earth was unformed and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters. And God said: 'Let there be light.' And there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day” (Genesis 1, 1-5).

This is how the book of Genesis begins. Every one of us, when hearing these verses, is moved in some way. Over the years we have been exposed to various interpretations of the verses of the Torah on the ‘literal’ level. However, we rarely settle for such simplified interpretations that leave many questions open. We want to analyze the Torah scientifically, logically. What does the Torah really talk about? And most importantly: What for?

All the holy Scriptures speak of one thing only – the upper world and how it was created. They tell us how our world was created by the upper world. It doesn’t just say what one finds there, but also teaches one to see that world. The gradual revelation of the upper world is called man’s “spiritual ascent”, or the degrees of one’s spiritual rise. The books tell us of the spiritual worlds in several languages. The wisdom of Kabbalah is a science that teaches the structure of the upper world. It utilizes for that purpose the language of *Sefirot*, *Partzufim*, drawings and schemes. The Torah describes the upper world for us in an ordinary language.

Besides the Kabbalah, there is also the language of legends and the language of *Mitzvot* (commandments, precepts). Let us try and translate the language of the Torah to the language of the wisdom of Kabbalah. The Torah describes for us the process of the creation of the upper world, its structure, the design of its development, and after that it depicts the process of the man’s creation. However, the Torah does not refer to a person of our corporeal world. Rather it refers to the creation of the will to receive, called “soul” or “Man” (*Adam*) for the purpose of fulfilling this desire, this creation, with total, eternal and complete pleasure. The desire for pleasure is the only creation. Besides that there is only the Creator. Thus, everything besides the Creator is no more than various degrees of the will to receive pleasure. That is also the situation in our world: the difference between all creatures and objects is only in the different levels of their will to receive pleasure, and that is what determines the properties of each and every creature.

The desire to receive is divided to five sublevels, marked as:

1. The tip of the letter *Yod* (י), which correlates to the *Sefira* of *Keter*.
2. The letter *Yod* (י), which correlates to the *Sefira* of *Hochma*.
3. The letter *He* (ה), which correlates to the *Sefira* of *Bina*.
4. The letter *Vav* (ו), which correlates to the *Sefira* of *Tifferet*.
5. The letter *He* (ה), which correlates to the *Sefira* of *Malchut*.

Together these letters form the word *Yod* (י) *He* (ה) *Vav* (ו) *He* (ה) and that is also the name of the Creator, because creation feels the Creator inside it and names Him accordingly. The five parts of the desire are called *Sefirot*, and their names are: *Keter*, *Hochma*, *Bina*, *Tifferet* and *Malchut*.

The Creator wishes to fill creation with pleasure ‘to the rim’, to the full sensation of perfection and eternity, because that is the state of being of the Creator. That means that what the Creator wishes to give us is His own state of being. He is perfect and unique and because of His perfection, He wants to give His state, meaning His perfection to creation. Hence, the purpose of creation is the attainment of the perfection of the Creator, and the ability to receive what He wants to bestow.

The seven days of creation are felt by humanity as seven thousand years. The first six stand for the six days of the week, during which humanity corrects itself unconsciously at first and finally consciously, through great efforts. In the end it reaches the seventh millennium, or the seventh day, the Sabbath, which is a state where the light of the Creator fills the corrected properties with bounty and delight.

The number seven itself bears a great meaning in Kabbalah. The system that manages our world consists of seven parts. That is why things in our world are divided by seven or seventy: the seven days of the week, the seventy nations of the world, man’s soul, which also consists of seventy parts and the length of a human’s life, lasting approximately seventy years.

The entire path of mankind consists of six days, representing the six thousand years of correction. We have now entered the year 5764 in the Jewish calendar. The conscious correction of the world began in the year 5755 (1995), meaning only nine years ago. In the years we have left before the end of the six thousand years, the Jews and the whole of mankind must complete the correction, and in the seventh millennium we will receive the reward for our world.

When you read these lines, you must wonder if there is a way to shorten our way to the purpose of creation. Well, we not only can, but we must intervene in the process that was meant to last seven thousand years and accelerate it. Those who can reach this process individually will reach the upper world and the sensation of the complete and sublime reality before the others. But even during the process of correction, if we go through it consciously, through our own efforts, we will feel it as a creative process, as a romantic desire, and not as perpetual beating and torment.

The first day of creation

“And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness” (Genesis 1, 4). In the process of creation, one must equalize himself with the operations of the Creator. Hence, the first operation one must perform is to divide his thoughts to good thoughts – heaven, and bad thoughts – earth. This process is called, “The recognition of evil,” meaning the understanding of what is evil. One begins to analyze which of his properties belongs to spirituality and which to corporeality, using Kabbalah books and the environment of a group of Kabbalists.

The separation of these properties forms the first step toward correction. That is the first day of man's creation within himself.

The second day

After one separates the egoistic from the altruistic properties within himself, he must begin the job of correcting his egoism. That is done through a special light of the Creator. There are two kinds of light that stem from the Creator: the light of wisdom and the light of mercy. When one uses the property of the light of wisdom (earth), the egoistic property of reception, he absorbs everything inside him. After all, that is our nature. However, in the property of the light of mercy, called "water", one acquires the attribute of bestowal. The water (bestowal) permeates the earth and generates in it the ability to cultivate life. The property of bestowal corrects the egoism and enables one to use it correctly, for his own good as well as for the good of others. Through the corrected egoism one begins to feel the upper world and the Creator. He sees his former lives and his path toward the purpose of creation. It is only within an eternal soul that passes from body to body that one can see his past lives. One who has not corrected his soul cannot see anything beyond the boundaries of our world

The third day

The water gathers over the heaven and the earth is exposed. A part of the earth appears under the water. After the correction performed through the water, the earth becomes suitable for evolution of life on it. It combines the properties of the water and the earth.

Life cannot be when there is only water, just like it cannot exist in a completely dry land. The correction of one's soul and utilization of the properties of the Creator and the creature inside us is built through finding the right combination between the altruistic and egoistic properties of "heaven" and "earth".

That correction is denominated "the middle line". Our primary egoistic nature is called the "earth line", or the "left line". The "right line" designates the property of the Creator, water, altruism, and the attribute of bestowal. The middle line is what one must create in order to 'choose life'. This means that one must take the exact amount of water, and water the earth in such a way that the two lines will complement one another and create something new. The combination of these two properties will produce the "Tree of Life". A spiritual individual feels the entire creation and lives in all the worlds simultaneously, eternally and happily. Such a person sympathizes with his eternal soul, not with his transient body. He feels himself as a soul, and his body as clothing. This transition from sympathizing with the body to sympathizing with the soul is a totally psychological transition and occurs to the extent that one acquires the property of *Bina*.

The fourth day

On the fourth day the planets appeared: the earth, the sun and the moon. This means that the phases of correction were created – the days, months and years. The correction occurs in both the collective creation and in each and every specific particle. Creation itself is called "soul" or "*Adam*", and its specific particles are called

individual souls, or people. Each individual soul goes through the same phases of correction that the collective soul experiences.

The fifth day

“And God said: 'Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let fowl fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.' And God created the great sea-monsters, and every living creature that creepeth, wherewith the waters swarmed, after its kind, and every winged fowl after its kind; and God saw that it was good” (Genesis 1, 20-21). The Zohar describes every day in creation as *Heichalot* (halls). The *Heichalot* are emptiness, desires. They are filled up gradually to the extent that the egoistic properties of the soul are corrected to altruism under the influence of the upper light. People that have been through a clinical death experience feel a certain measure of this upper light. Afterwards they speak of a sensation of fantastic peace and joy, a heavenly feeling. The gradual filling of this emptiness brings all the souls to the degree of the end of correction and completeness. There is no dimension of time in the upper world. It vanishes because all the situations are complete. In the stories of the Torah the division to certain times is also absent and every story is related to another only by an order of cause and effect. For that reason we can see that *Adam* who was created on the sixth day lived only a few hours before he sinned and fell to the lower world, and along the whole world fell along with him.

The sixth day

“And God said: 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth” (Genesis 1, 26). What does it mean to create, “man in our image after our likeness?” It is said in the Torah (Genesis 1, 27): “in the image of God created He him.” Image (*Tzelem*) is a part of *Bina* that descends from it into the soul and gives it the properties of the Creator. In other words, *Partzuf Bina* is the mechanism of providence in charge of all the souls that need correction. In order to correct *Malchut*, *Bina* produces a special mechanism that permeates *Malchut* and enables it to perform the correction. That aiding device that every soul in *Malchut* receives from above is called “image”. The image is in fact, the collection of the properties of the Creator.

Without the knowledge of the design of creation, without feeling as part of creation, meaning the sensation of the spiritual worlds, we do not know how to behave, and where to turn. We do not even understand what it is that we are demanded to do. In order to have these properties, which are necessary for spiritual progress, *Bina*, the highest spiritual degree must teach us and demonstrate what we must do and how. That is the mission of the image, the aiding mechanism of *Bina*. This mechanism clothes our soul and produces all the necessary corrections. That is why it is said that through this image man is created within us.

The seventh day

“And the heaven and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished His work which He had made” (Genesis 2, 1-2). Our work revolves around the acquisition of the trait of *Bina*. One corrects himself through these properties and thus ascends higher. *Adam* performed these corrections six times within him. These corrections are named: *Hesed*, *Gevura*, *Tifferet*, *Netzah*, *Hod* and *Yesod*. These gradual corrections are referred to as six days or the six thousand years of creation. *Malchut*, the last *Sefira*, is unable to correct itself. However, once it receives the properties of the six higher *Sefirot*, it is able to adopt their traits. Hence, the essence of the seventh day is that everything that accumulated during the previous six days enters *Malchut*. The Sabbath is a special day because on that day the souls fill with the upper light. The only condition is that we must ‘stay out of the way’ in this process. That is expressed symbolically in the rules of the Sabbath.

Chapter 6.2 - Abraham the Patriarch

Radio Talks

“Now the LORD said unto Abram: 'Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse; and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.' So Abram went, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him; and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan” (Genesis 12, 1-5). “And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said: 'Unto thy seed will I give this land'; and he builded there an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him” (Genesis 12, 7). “And there was a famine in the land; and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was sore in the land” (Genesis 12, 10).

Does the Torah speak of immigration to a better country, meaning Egypt, and does the Creator Himself compels Abraham to go there? Why did the Creator choose Abraham? At that time he was the same as all the other people who lived in the area that spread from east of Syria to Mesopotamia. Abraham did not go to Egypt right away. Rather he first went to Beit-El, sacrificed a sacrifice to the Creator, and that seemed to soothe his mind. It is written that after that there was a famine, and only then he went down to Egypt. A question comes to mind: was it the famine that made him go to Egypt, or was it the Creator?

If we relate to the Torah as a historic tale, we will see that it is not that different to the history of other nations. But the Torah does not deal with the past, rather it deals with **us**. It deals with each and everyone of us; with who we are and what we are and what we must do with our lives. The Creator appeals only to people, to each and every person. That is how the Torah explains the entire system of creation. Man contains every thing that exists in all the worlds inside him, including our own world. Besides man, there is only the Creator. Man is the representative of creation and of all the other worlds.

The Creator turns to Abraham, meaning to a specific attribute in us, which is like all other properties (“Nations”) in man (the name Abraham means the Father of the Nation in Hebrew – *Av Ha'am*) and tells him: I now separate this specific trait in you, which is called Abraham, and you must leave your country, meaning your situation, all the desires that you are currently in, from your homeland, and break free from the desires you were born with. In other words, you must exit your original state, the state you were born into. It is neither good nor bad, but you must leave it, leave the home of your father. The Creator is inside your primary egoistic desires and you must leave them and go to the land that I will show you. There is where you will find Me. The words, “that I will show thee” mean desires that the Creator will show and in them He will appear. The Creator only appears before Abraham in order to compel him to take the path at the end of which He will appear before him in completeness. In that state,

the entire creation will appear before Abraham and he will obtain the opposite properties: eternity and completeness, and the degree of the Creator Himself.

The Creator appears before every single one of us. We all feel or felt even if only once in our lives, an inner voice, an inner power and desire to live in a different way. To think more of timeless, meaningful things, leave all the petty dealings and routine life and slowly rise above them; somehow leap out of them.

As for Abraham: there is no interest whatsoever in speaking of him as a person who lived 5,000 years ago, who was picked out by the Creator. Rather I would like to focus on the property of Abraham that is in each and every one of us. How does the Creator turn to it and use it to attract us? Saying: "Leave your desires, the substance you were created in and have been immersed in, and go to another desire, one that I will show you." The Creator does not show us that we must ascend spiritually. Rather He says that we must first go down to Egypt, meaning to the gutter of our darkest and fiercest egoistic desires. These desires are so egoistic that they are like the Egyptians in our world, who knew how to use the egoism so perfectly, that they could mummify their bodies and preserve them virtually forever. They made idols of their dead and were tied to their bodies.

The Creator does not say to Abraham that he must aspire upward in order to cross to the other desire, that there is where he will find the Creator and there is where He will fill him. That means that the most perfect state is when Abraham has already been through Egypt. He doesn't even say that he must go through Egypt, He simply tells him to go there. It is an unreasonable commandment. After all Abraham is an ordinary person who lives his daily life in the bosom of his family, a shepherd. Suddenly he is compelled to experience terribly low situations in order to attain the spiritual state, and those situations are called Egypt. One never wants to go down to Egypt. He builds an altar and thanks the Creator for having noticed him and remains in his place. Though Abraham goes to Beit-El, he thinks that there he is closer to the Creator, but the truth is that the Creator drives him away from there.

Abraham goes as far as Beit-El. It is like a person who attains spirituality, and begins to be attracted to the books that concern that subject. He reads them, perhaps even begins to study Kabbalah, and thinks that this is the house of the Lord (Beit-El). When he sacrifices to the Creator, and when he begins to examine what life really asks of him, what the Creator and his inner voice want him to do, he suddenly begins to feel hunger. That hunger is so intense that it drives him off to Egypt. Meaning, during the preliminary reading of the books before him, one begins to feel ever-growing pains, accompanied by a greater still spiritual hunger. He begins to see himself through his innermost feelings as lower and lower and meaner than ever. The world appears so petty, that this feeling is the same as when one feels when he goes down to Egypt, meaning to his lowest desires.

The phase when one feels himself is the best and most vital for one's progress. The intensity or quality of the sensation is of no importance; it can be good or bad, uplifting or depressing. One cannot obtain the correct desires, under the direct instruction of the Creator, without being in Egypt. Our initial desires are very small, and even if we stretch them to the limit they can only bring us as far as Beit-El, meaning practice the ordinary Torah and feel as one who has already entered the house of God, and the Garden of Eden and the next world is ready for him. But in fact, this is not the case! The Torah should bring one first to the recognition of evil, to

the feeling that he is a complete egoist, and that all his desires are completely opposite to spirituality. If he experiences that state, if he understands and internalizes it, not only because that is what the books say, then he accepts that that is also his own situation. Man's recognition of his ego must be an emotional, tangible experience. To the extent that he feels it this way, he begins to want to correct himself. Therefore, the recognition of one's ego as evil is a very long phase.

The exile in Egypt is not intended for Abraham, but rather for Jacob and his family (Josef and his brothers), who went down to Egypt. The exile was to be 400 years long, but in fact it lasted less than that. Baal HaSulam writes that because they did not complete the 400 years, the entire nation that left Egypt was forced to experience another exile, the one that has been ongoing for the past 2000 years.

In order to feel who you are and what your properties are, you must feel at least a little bit of what spirituality is like. One must experience these feelings to the fullest, and examine them in every way. When the process is completed, he is granted with the exodus from Egypt.

Abraham is only the first phase. When one begins to study the wisdom of Kabbalah, he begins to feel that he is much worse than before. However, this feeling passes. It is a small entrance to Egypt. Afterwards Abraham returns to Beit-El. On the second time he goes to Egypt he takes his family with him. Meaning, once he has accumulated a substantial amount of desires, and has already acquired a clear notion of the way he must go toward spirituality. At this stage, he is already in a certain degree of spiritual development, and has already absorbed it. Only after that he is granted the second descent to Egypt.

Abraham immediately went there, but only reached as far as Beit-El. That is because one can only be pushed ahead by pain.

One is indeed immersed in his egoistic desires. The, "thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house" are one's entire being. He cannot exit these states, at least he thinks he can't, because it is one's nature, and one cannot imagine a different way of thinking, much less a different way of action. We cannot imagine what is not within us to begin with, what we never felt, and even what our fathers and our forefathers never felt. Because of that, it is only possible to bring us out of that state and throw us into the state of acquiring new desires through spiritual immense hunger. That hunger can only be developed and amplified in a group with a teacher and some very special books. If one reads these books in the wrong order, it is very easy to be misled and deviate from the right path, which means a temporary halt in spiritual evolution. One must always maintain a careful watch and examination, verifying he is on the right track. But in fact, if he stands, but at the same wants spirituality, then the Creator Himself pushes him using that hunger.

Abraham is a spiritual property that seems to be the basis of all our properties. It is a general spiritual attribute that is the first to be approached by the Creator. People don't come to the wisdom of Kabbalah because they were sent here, but because the Creator approached them first. He begins to haunt them and make them hungry, and only then they come. One will never chase something without a reason or if he feels no special need for it. Only the sensation of hunger pushes us out of our country. Love and hunger rule the world, meaning the sensation of the absence of something is the only thing that pulls us. That sensation is called Abram, and it is him that the Creator turns to and says: Do you really want to fulfill you feelings and attain the truth? If you do you must leave this feeling altogether and move onto another feeling called Egypt.

That means that you really must see who you are and study your egoistic desires from within. If you correct them, you will attain Me; I will be revealed to you in **them**. The Creator appears precisely in those desires we call Egypt. Only after that they are corrected.

Let us take this Abraham. In a different degree we might have referred to him as a prophet. A prophet is a person who has attained such a degree that he is now in direct contact with the Creator. There are prophets that only speak to the Creator, meaning they attain the level of spiritual speech. Naturally, they do not hear any horns blowing in the sky, as the Torah writes, and the voice of God does not sound off from Mount Sinai from gigantic speakers to the whole of mankind. It is the inner voice of one who obtains an evident contact with the Creator. There are prophets that see and hear, and there are those that only see and hear afterwards. The books of the prophets demonstrate how versatile the connections of the prophets with the Creator are, and how and when He appears before them, meaning in which degree one can reach which prophet. The prophecy degrees, as all other degrees of our forefathers, are inside us. Each of us must experience them all. We must go the entire way while being in our corporeal world. Everything that the Torah speaks of must be attained by us from beginning to end. Only then does one find himself completely united with the Creator and reaches the final point of his development, which constitutes the purpose of creation and its preliminary design. In fact, the Torah provides us with this entire plan, but tells us about it in a special way. The Torah can be perceived as a historic tale, or as pictures from people's ordinary lives, both are of course completely incorrect. Our Torah is holy; it is not just another novel.

Is the book of *Yetzira* that Abraham wrote studied equally with the *Zohar*?

The book of *Yetzira* that Abraham wrote, was written in précis, as though in brevity. The book writes simply: "This world was created in apparent, semi apparent and concealed form, in 32 paths of wisdom." It takes years to understand even the first sentence properly. This book was written in brevity, as though according to a certain code. It is written for a person in the same spiritual degree, or close to it but lower, but it is not meant for us. The rest of the Kabbalists, especially the more contemporary ones, address us directly. The farther the generation is from the time a certain Kabbalah book was written, the more it is has the right to be discovered in our time. Since the Ari, there is a direct directive from above to open everything and teach everyone. As a result of that spiritual commandment, the books are written in a language that is much easier to understand, so that the need for interpreters decreases. However, we still need a teacher. Without a teacher it is impossible to understand anything, although the material itself is already processed sufficiently.

If the Creator turns to you, you feel it as that unique property called Abraham. That inner voice that you feel addresses you is called the Creator. The effort to understand it, the voices and indeed yourself, that is what the Torah aspires for, nothing more.

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Part Seven: The Inner Meaning

Chapter 7.1 – Prayer

A talk at a banquet in memory of Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag, Baal HaSulam marking the 40th anniversary of his departure

It is written in the Torah that prayer is the ‘work of the heart’. This refers to desires that come from the heart and one cannot control. We are built in such a way that in most cases, we are unable to expose and know precisely what our desires are. Our own prayers are concealed from us.

The words written in the prayer book describe situations that one must go through on one’s own in his requests. If one works on himself in order to correct his thoughts and desires, he will be able to reach the same desires and pleas as those of the members of the great assembly, the authors of the Jewish prayer book who published it some two thousand years ago, in the beginning of our long exile.

There are dozens of phases of recognition of evil that we must go through if we want to equalize with the desires of the members of the great assembly. We will have to understand its makings, and that we are all made of egoism and that that is the root of all evil. We must not only understand it, but feel it in our every bone.

But for that we need the revelation of the Creator. That is because every thing is learned by comparing it with its opposite. The gap between the properties of the Creator and our own will enable us to feel our insignificance compared to the greatness of the Creator. We must perceive and feel who He is and that everything depends on Him. It is not enough to point to the heavens and say, “I believe”, because faith is the sensation of the Creator inside me, my presence inside the Creator.

There are several states to the soul:

1. Before we come into the world.
2. When we receive additional egoism, something the souls feel as clothing in a corporeal body. Because of it, all the worlds of the soul contract to the dimensions of “our world”.
3. When the souls feel themselves and the entire spiritual world after the end of correction.

The situation the souls are in before they descend to our world is called the world of “*Ein Sof*”. In that state, the soul receives the unlimited light of the Creator. Afterwards it receives additional egoism which weakens the contact between the soul and spirituality until it is finally clothed in a human body. Now it no longer feels spirituality and therefore does not believe that it exists, meaning one does not feel the Creator. In other words, the soul no longer feels something that not long ago was its entire world.

“This world” is the sensation of the current state we are in. This name refers to that part of reality, of the system of creation and the Creator that I now feel through my egoistic feelings.

The next degree is higher because it is attained by correcting my senses, and therefore the perception of reality is wider in my next degree from the degree that I have attained thus far. Because of that this degree is denominated my, “Next World”. When I reach tomorrow, I will feel myself again as being in this world and name the degree I have now attained, “This World”. And I will name what will appear as my tomorrow regarding my present state, my, “Next World”. There are a few letters of Baal HaSulam that one must study and memorize until he remembers them by heart, so that

at the right moment, he will be able to remind himself of them and identify his situation and see them merge and blend into one:

- The Creator is the source that we all aspire for.
- The Torah is the light that feels man right this minute.
- Israel is man himself, the desires that he aims at the Creator.

We must ask then, how can these three terms, which seem completely disconnected, be one and the same thing? The purpose of creation is to bring man to a state where he is in his corporeal envelope and in this body, and at the same time attains complete adhesion, sameness and likeness with the Creator. Or to be more precise, that all the worlds will combine inside us to a point where we and the Creator will form one reality, merging and uniting with Him; taking His paths and keeping His commandments.

In order for one to attain that perfect and eternal state, meaning the purpose of creation, we are given the Torah in this world. That is why the Torah was only given to man after he came into this world, after he has sunk into the egoism, into his corporeal body. The Torah was given to people, not to angels. Because all the creatures consist of evident and total egoism.

If one takes upon himself the path of Torah, he will eventually be able to neutralize his egoistic body, meaning his desires, in a way that they will no longer stand between him and the Creator. Then he will become one with the Creator just as it was before his soul came down to this world and received the egoistic addition. Furthermore, by correcting the egoism and precisely because of it, one will climb up the spiritual ladder and reach the degree of the Creator. All creations except Man haven't any egoism in them, and therefore have no tools for climbing. As a result, they remain in their preliminary state.

Precisely for that reason all creations except Man are regarded as "still". Even angels, which are forces operated by the Creator through which He governs creation, are not independent forces with their own desires, but only forces that carry out His will. It is Mankind's egoistic desire that enables it to reach the degree of the Creator by changing the form (intent) of the will to receive.

The soul is a part of the Creator within each person. Once one is wrapped in the egoistic shell, he can no longer feel spirituality, much less the Creator, because his every sense is immersed in egoism, the opposite attribute of spirituality. Replacing the egoism with altruism is as though one takes off his 'egoistic coat' and begins to feel the entire creation, until not a single property or egoistic desire separates him from the Creator. In that state, the three terms, Creator, Man and Israel, unite.

Our purpose is to extinguish the egoistic obstacle that stands between our souls and the Creator. Of all holy Scriptures, the Kabbalah is the most efficient in attaining that goal. It is the study with the most powerful spiritual light that shines during the study.

There are no movements in the spiritual world. The difference between two worlds is only in my inner feelings and what my inner coating allows me to see. One never feels anything but the Creator, but he always feels Him behind his filters, meaning across from his egoistic properties. One's feeling of the Creator and creation will intensify to the extent that he can extinguish these filters. The measure, or degree of egoism that we remove from ourselves, or the extent of our correction, are called the degrees of the "spiritual ladder", or the "worlds". Thus, the worlds are in fact, the measurements of the sensation of the Creator.

An egoistic obstruction in the sensation of creation exists only inside us. There are no obstructions from the perspective of the Creator. He treats mankind with perfect benevolence; He does not hide Himself. It is only we who feel or do not feel that concealment. We hide the worlds from ourselves as though behind an egoistic veil. The revocation of the egoism does not happen all at once. Rather the Creator first gives one periods of time called, “life in this world”, which are lives that are opportunities for ascent. Other than the initial ‘awakening’ to spirituality, the rest is up to us. Any new life helps us remove some of our egoistic nature and draw a little nearer to the Creator. These periods repeat themselves until one finally corrects himself in a way that his desires (named *Guf* in Kabbalah) will no longer be a hindrance between us and the Creator, until we cleave to the Creator with our every trait, regardless of the world we’re in.

After the physical death (something that Kabbalah regards as one’s separation from the egoistic cover), there is a rebirth in our world from the corrected parts of the collective soul. They blend and merge in a new order because they are all parts of the collective creature and all the covers are in fact egoism. The egoism, *Adam HaRishon* (the only creature), broke into many pieces, or separate souls, in order to make the correction of the collective soul possible. That is because it is easier to correct each part separately then to correct the entire body. That is the reason for the reincarnations in the world and their unique order of correction.

At the end of correction, all the souls will regroup into a desire, a single collective soul that will receive the entire light of the Creator, and thus perfection will appear.

In order to help the process of correction, the Creator brings down to our world special souls in addition to the ordinary ones, which do not leave our world after they complete their correction, but rather stay and continue their spiritual work in both worlds in order to support us in the process of our correction. These people, which are the representatives, or messengers of the Creator, write books, lead and tutor students.

Once their task is accomplished, they depart to the spiritual world, but the possibility to connect with them and ask them remains. They can continue to advise and answer questions. It is even possible to feel how they ‘clothe’ a person and act through him, depending of course on one’s spiritual degree.

Anyone can feel within him the connection with these righteous people. These states are defined as “the impregnation of the soul of the righteous”. We feel them even now, indirectly, because we are following in their footsteps and learn by their books.

In fact, the only world (spiritual state) that actually exists is the world of *Ein Sof*, a world of absolute adhesion with the Creator. All the other sensations we feel, are but sections of that complete, unlimited and eternal feeling, denoted the world of *Ein Sof*.

One of the sections of the world of *Ein Sof* is called “*Adam Kadmon*”, after that comes a section called “*Atzilut*”, then comes the world of “*Beria*”, then “*Yetzira*” and finally “*Assiya*”. The smallest section of this sensation is, “This World”. The world of *Ein Sof* grows narrower in the process of its perception by the egoistic senses of the creature down to the degree of our world. I can therefore define my progress and the spiritual world I am in according to the expansion of my sensations. It all depends on the ‘band width’ of my sensing abilities.

Every thing we learn is relative to the attaining person, beside which there is only the world of *Ein Sof*. There are a great many corrections that *Malchut* of the world of *Ein Sof* (the creature, or the soul) must perform. There is nothing in our world that was

created without a reason. Baal HaSulam brings a tiny insect in the wood that spends its entire life in search of food and no one pays it any heed as an example. And not only every insect, but every single atom of that insect bears a tremendous value to the attainment of the collective end of correction.

The Creator did not create anything in vain, and everything happens only according to the nearing to the ultimate goal. Events happen with or without our consent, and regardless of how we view them. But whether or not we understand what happens and why, things still move toward the completion of the design of creation, and the revelation of the full purpose of creation to the creatures in this world.

Just as there are different people, different nations and nationalities, so the various parts of *Malchut* of *Ein Sof* differ in their measure of desire (and in that alone), thus creating the various degrees of nature: still, vegetative, animate and speaking. Everyone is interested in the difference between men and women in terms of the correction they must perform, but no one wants to know what is the correction that a stone must perform. But after all, even the stone was created in our world, and it too must reach the goal of creation. The correction of the entire nature depends on the correction of mankind. It is the work of man that ‘brings life’ to nature toward the end of correction. Animals and plants were not given the Torah because they have no free choice and their egoism is not under their control, so it is not for them to correct it.

And as for people: not all were given the same measure of practical laws of the Torah in our world. The nations of the world were given seven *Mitzvot* (precepts), while the Jews were given 613 *Mitzvot*. This refers to the physical performance of the *Mitzvot*, meaning in the degree of the spiritual still. Different people perform the *Mitzvot* in different ways, depending on the number of corrections each soul must perform in this world. There are no prerogatives to one who was born a Jew or a Gentile. It is simply that one must perform more corrections, and the other less.

Men and women also have corrections to perform that correlate to the origin of their souls, but the inner pull toward the Creator does not depend on one’s gender. Many believers and non-believers alike never ask a single question about creation, correction and the purpose of creation. These people haven’t received a desire for spiritual change from above and only perform the operations they were taught to perform mechanically. There are differences between Jews and Gentiles in the mechanical operations, just as there are differences between men and women and children under thirteen years of age, or older than thirteen.

However, when one attains the spiritual world, he clearly sees that the only difference between people is that one wants spirituality, because the Creator gave him that desire and because it is his time to grow spiritually, and the other has not been given this desire.

Thus, it is forbidden to classify people by any external signs such as nationality or gender. The question if this or that person should study Kabbalah is irrelevant. Those who were summoned from above, meaning those who feel a desire for Kabbalah, study.

An angel is like a robot that performs a certain task in the spiritual world. It transfers something from one place to another and that’s it. It doesn’t ascend or descend in spiritual degrees like people; it doesn’t even ‘grow’ in the spiritual sense. It is simply a spiritual force that operates on every spiritual degree.

The degree of prophecy if reached through spiritual work; it is a reward for an effort. All there is in the world are the Creator, the creature and the way in which the creature draws nearer to the Creator, namely the Torah. Everything around us – society, family and friends, are only a coating, clothes that separate between the individual and the Creator. The Creator influences people through these clothes, and puts them in complex, sometimes unbearable situations and disappointments.

How do we come to the world? It is as though the Creator takes a tiny part of Himself and adds egoism to it. After the complete desire that the Creator created is broken into tiny egoistic particles, they are gradually corrected and create the upper worlds: *Atzilut*, *Beria*, *Yetzira* and *Assiya*. The finer the fragments, the higher worlds they comprise. The soul of *Adam HaRishon* consists of the most egoistic desire, the core of every creature, the *Malchut* of the world of *Ein Sof*. That soul also breaks into tiny particles, which are our souls.

A person who begins to study Kabbalah and asks himself, among other questions, “Does everything depend on the Creator or on me?” and, “Is He the doer or am I?” tends in the beginning, to define the private and collective providence erroneously. Before one begins to act he must be certain that everything really does depend on him. But afterwards, he must tell himself that everything depended only on the Creator. If we keep to this thought, we will take the right path.

There are things that can only be felt, but cannot be explained, since it is impossible to express in words how spirituality is clothed in corporeality. It is, however, possible to explain the corporeal science and the spiritual science, but not how one world clothes the other. All Kabbalistic explanations end in the explanation of the breaking of *Adam HaRishon*. It is not that Kabbalists do not want to explain more elaborately, it is simply that one can feel and attain these things, but not understand them. It is also not possible to convey in words a feeling that was never felt by another.

The egoism is a very powerful spiritual force, and it is all that we can feel. We haven't any idea what it is that we are trying to rid ourselves of. In order to come to know ourselves, we must look at ourselves from the outside, feel something different than ourselves and compare ourselves to something external, objective.

The only reason we can see other objects in this world is that they too consist of the same egoism. Otherwise we would not be able to feel them. The egoism consists of many types and degrees, and its tiniest and simplest part is that which feels only itself. That is precisely how we originally feel ourselves in the world. We are such small egoists, that we feel absolutely nothing but ourselves, just like a little child. When we grow and mature a little, our egoism will reach beyond the limits of our world, and we will feel the Creator. That kind of egoism will be denominated, “spiritual”. At that stage we will stop wanting the petite and petty pleasures of our world, called, “minute light”, and crave only the spiritual desires of the light of the Creator. We will want the Creator Himself and nothing less!

One's actions follow one's desires whether one is aware of it or not. The mind serves only as an aid for the purpose of analysis and examination of our desires, that is why it cannot exceed them. Man actually follows his desires and emotions. That means that one first acts, and only then ‘perceives’, meaning analyses intellectually.

The Creator implements His providence through one's actions. This is how we can understand and analyze our actions and act in the future according to the conclusions we draw. Whether I remember what I did and act more wisely in the future or learn

through pain, depends only on the Creator. He teaches us every single moment, but we are unable to make any corrections. We must only understand that we are comprised of pure, unadulterated selfishness that we will never be able to resist. Everything else beside this comprehension the Creator does for us. The further one advances in spirituality, the worse he feels about his own nature. The more evident the Creator becomes, the more one perceives his egoism compared to Him. This is the process of spiritual advancement.

If, for example, one corrects 99 percent of himself, he still sees the one remaining percent as if through a magnifying glass that makes it look as big as the 99 corrected percent. He perceives that tiny grain as a horrible sin. Such a person is called “righteous”. The greater the light that shines on us, the more we can perceive the bright and the dark inside us. Meaning, when we do some work or when we study, we attain both the Creator and ourselves. If all that one can feel is his own baseness he despairs. That is because he cannot feel the Creator and his entire world grows dark before his eyes. But when these desperate states are over and one perceives their spiritual origin, meaning the Creator, he already has a spiritual contact with Him. Now he can ask and even demand of Him, or be mad at Him, because he understands that everything comes only from Him. When one feels the Creator in addition to himself, he no longer despairs, because he knows his situations are given from above, that they pass and that they are necessary for his spiritual growth.

The Creator does not mind how we turn to Him. It is only important that we recognize His existence and that He is the one who sends us all these strange desires. He does that so that we will constantly feel different things about Him, and consequently evolve.

Baal HaSulam wrote in one of his prophecies that the Creator told him that a new world will be built through him, and that from that moment he, Yehuda Ashlag, will begin to carve a new road through his books, for people to reach the Creator. As a result, Baal HaSulam began to write his book, “The Study of the Ten *Sefirot*”. He understood that he would not be able to write anything if he were not connected with the ‘ground’ because of his sublime spiritual degree, though physically he was no different to any other person. For that reason Baal HaSulam pleaded before the Creator to lower him to a level from which he could write to people, and the Creator granted his wish.

The Study of the Ten *Sefirot* begins with describing the four phases of direct light, meaning the four phases of the creation of the initial desire. It is a description of the situation that preceded creation. In a different place, Baal HaSulam writes that he did not write anything that he did not fully attain. This tells us what his actual spiritual degree was.

In one of his letters, Baal HaSulam writes that the soul of Rabbi Shimon Bar-Yochay, author of the Zohar, the soul of the Ari, and his own soul, are one and the same soul that keeps returning to our world, in order to make the method of the study of Kabbalah suitable for its time. This is needed because every generation a new type of souls comes down to our world, which needs a new system of correction. There are high souls that descend to this world in order to correct it and show us the way to the purpose of creation. These special souls are sent to our world in order to save us, and this is how we should relate to the great Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag, as the personal messenger of the Creator.

Chapter 7.2 – The Meaning of the Jewish Holidays

Over the years we have been presented with a number of interpretations regarding the meaning of the Jewish holidays. Some were easier for us to accept, and some seemed less acceptable to our rational understanding. In this chapter we shall attempt to briefly explain the significance of some of the holidays from the perspective of the Kabbalah.

All the holidays represent specific phases in one's path of discovery and understanding of the upper world, the Creator, leading to the state of complete unification with Him. *Pesach* (Passover), for example, represents one's exit from the sensation of the material world to the sensation of the spiritual world. It happens when one begins to feel an external, broader world on top of our physical world. He begins to see how forces arrive from the spiritual world and determine the course of the physical events and processes in our world, both personally and globally.

Pesach is the only holiday that is still connected with our material world, or to phrase it more correctly, to the exit from it. All other holidays signify a process of discovery and understanding of the spiritual world, far beyond our own. In order to advance toward the spiritual worlds, one must be well versed in their rules that govern them, because progress in the spiritual world is only possible to the extent that one understands its rules.

The holiday of the giving of the Torah (Pentecost, *Matan Torah*) stands for the acceptance of the 'guide book', the laws by which the spiritual ascent is performed.

During the holiday of *Rosh Hashanah* (the Hebrew New Year) and the ten days that follow until *Yom Kippur* (Day of Atonement), one builds within him a new *Sefira* out of the ten each day, thus creating the vessel of the 'soul'. Afterwards, during the holiday of *Sukkot* (Tabernacles Feast), this vessel fills with the upper light. This vessel is empty at first, and that produces a feeling of absence and lack. Over this period of the ten days we ask for pardon, examine ourselves and draw conclusions about our progress thus far. This process finds its expression in prayers.

So what in fact is the meaning of the Hebrew New Year (*Rosh Hashanah*)? From which point do we begin our count? *Rosh Hashanah* is the day of the creation of *Adam*. The Creator created the soul and called it *Adam* in order to grant it with eternal delight. The Creator did not create anything but that desire to receive pleasure. The Kabbalah named this desire, "the will to receive delight and pleasure".

Thus, all that exists is the Creator and the desire to receive pleasure that He created. But pleasure from what? From the Creator! The creature's sensation of the Creator is pleasure. In Kabbalah it is denominated "Light", and the desire to receive the light is called a "Vessel".

600,000 rays stretch from the spiritual object called *Adam*. Each ray produces a tiny soul at its end, and we are all interconnected through the soul of *Adam*. This spiritual object was created on *Rosh Hashanah*, hence the great importance of this holiday, it is our birthday.

The creation of the world began on the first day and extended over the next five days, or we can also say, over the next five spiritual degrees. *Adam* was created on the sixth day. *Adam*, who was at the highest spiritual degree on the sixth day, did not wait for the seventh day (Sabbath) and received the entire light of the Creator into its inner vessel (described as the eating off the forbidden fruit). His soul tried to attain the purpose of creation all at once, but failed and consequently broke into 600,000 parts.

The parts continued to break and split into thousands of even smaller parts, all of which exist in souls, meaning inside people living in our world. Each of these particles must complete its individual correction through many cycles. Then these particles will unite into one collective soul, an enormous spiritual structure called *Adam*.

The autumn holidays stand for the process of the unification of the soul with the Creator. First, during *Rosh Hashanah* there is a process of complete detachment of the soul from the Creator. This process is entitled “Sawing” (*Nesira*), from the word saw, because this process seemingly saws this entire system in two.

Over the next ten days until *Yom Kippur*, the soul that was separated from the Creator receives its ten *Sefirot*: *Keter*, *Hochma*, *Bina*, *Hesed*, *Gevura*, *Tifferet*, *Netzah*, *Hod*, *Yesod*, *Malchut*, and gradually begins to adopt the properties of the Creator. The word *Sefira* comes from the word sapphire, meaning sparkling.

After that, on *Yom Kippur*, all ten *Sefirot* gather into a collective soul. After *Yom Kippur* begins a process called “Sweetening” (mitigation), a process of correction. It is done by changing the egoistic attributes of creation to the altruistic attributes of the Creator. Because the properties of creation become identical to those of the Creator, He begins to fill the ten *Sefirot* of creation with His light, which the soul experiences as immense pleasure.

That process occurs during the holiday of *Sukkot*, though only a portion of the light can enter the soul before the end of correction. As a result of the filling of the soul with light, creation attains the spiritual degree called *Simchat Torah* (Rejoicing in the Torah). That day is also called *Shmini Atzeret* (the eighth day that stops). That is because it is forbidden to receive light for more than seven days before the end of correction. Filling creation with light is executed according to the extent of correction it has attained, meaning the extent of sameness with the properties of the light it has acquired. When creation becomes completely identical with the attributes of the light, it is filled with it completely.

The process of the creation of the soul begins with having completely opposite properties to the light’s. Then the vessel of the soul is gradually corrected so as to finally adopt a completely altruistic desire, identical to that of the light. The more alike the soul and the light become, the more light it receives, and the holidays symbolize this process in our world.

The Day of Atonement (*Yom Kippur*) is also considered a holiday, and the ten days between *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* are not days of mourning. Quite the contrary, the, “terrible days” are days of thought and contemplation. During that time many uncorrected desires are collected and then corrected and filled with light. Therefore, these are good days, and must be met with joy, corresponding to their spiritual purpose.

Yom Kippur completes the process of creation of the ten *Sefirot* of the soul, and renders it capable of receiving the light of the Creator. This means that the soul is now prepared, yet still empty. This emptiness is symbolically consistent with the five prohibitions of *Yom Kippur*: eating and drinking, bathing, wearing perfume, wearing leather, and performing sexual intercourse.

These prohibitions are joined with the ordinary Sabbath prohibition. The reason for them is that the soul/vessel is as yet not ready to receive the light of the Creator. On the Sabbath the soul climbs to the world of *Atzilut* by the power of spiritual forces that come from above, not by its own strength. Because it reaches such a high level of

spirituality, but not by itself, the soul must refuse to receive the light that fills that world, if it wants to extend its stay. That is the symbolic reason for the prohibitions of the Sabbath.

The soul rises on *Yom Kippur* to an even higher degree than it does on the Sabbath. Accordingly there are five additional prohibitions, because the soul consists of five parts (*Sefirot*): *Keter*, *Hochma*, *Bina*, *Zeir Anpin*, and *Malchut*, and each *Sefira* has its own limitations in the world of *Atzilut*.

Yom Kippur designates the completion of the creation process of the soul. It then becomes capable of receiving the Creator's light. On that day we reach a spiritual degree where the vessel can receive the entire light of the Creator, meaning at this stage it is ready, but still empty.

The days between *Yom Kippur* and *Sukkot* are days of detachment from the previous situation. The surrounding light begins to gradually enter the soul on *Sukkot*. It is called surrounding light until the holiday of *Sukkot*, because it remains outside the soul. But once inside it is regarded as inner light. These are special days, when the light of the Creator enters the soul and fills it completely on *Simchat Torah*. All during the seven days of the holiday, the seven *Sefirot* of our soul fill with light. Filling means good days, happy ones. A soul that has been completely filled with light matches the spiritual degree of the holiday of *Simchat Torah* (Rejoicing in the Torah). The entire upper light that is to ultimately fill the soul is called Torah. When that process is carried out, the spiritual degree of a soul that can perform it is called "*Simchat Torah*".

When we read these lines, we must ask: "Why does it take seven days to fill the soul, and not five, or ten days for example?" Where did this division to seven parts, or *Sefirot*, come from? This division is a consequence of the fact that the filling of the soul with this light is as yet only partial. The final correction and fulfillment of the soul will only occur at the end of correction. Because the *Sefirot* that are to receive the light of wisdom are as yet inoperative, the number is only seven.

During these holidays a very powerful spiritual light comes from above. It surrounds our entire universe and our souls. It is called "surrounding Light" and it yields a spiritual ascent, protects, raises and cleanses us. That is why these days are also called "Days of good will", meaning the Creator regards our actions favorably on these days, provided we use them to advance toward Him.

The actual reception of the light is postponed until *Sukkot* and *Simchat Torah*. These are two contradicting situations of creation: on the one hand there are the holidays of *Rosh Hashanah*, *Yom Kippur*, and the, "terrible days", when the real desire for perfection and spiritual growth evolves. On the other hand, there are the holidays of *Sukkot* and *Simchat Torah*, when the corrected soul is filled with the upper light. It is recommended to read Kabbalah during this time, because there is a very strong light that shines from above.

It is written in the prayer of *Rosh Hashanah* that, "Prayer, almsgiving and repentance cancel the punishment". That means that even if one is meant to suffer pain, anguish and torments, these three operations prevent the punishment. Such an operation cannot be in the spiritual world as it can be in ours, when one asks and receives an answer. An operation in the spiritual world relies on the correction of the intent, and only afterwards one receives the reward. Therefore, all our requests should focus on asking for help in the process of correction, and not in requests for personal assistance in this or that inconsequential issue. The request for spiritual strength must be in order

to be able to correct his intention and thus draw nearer to the Creator. Thus, it all depends on directing one's spiritual efforts in the right direction.

We can now understand that prayer is in fact, the creation of the spiritual intent in the soul. Almsgiving is called "a screen" in Kabbalah, meaning limiting the use of the egoism. It is called almsgiving when there is a screen that can direct this spiritual intent only toward spiritual ascent (altruism) and not toward greed (egoism). Repentance is when the intent and the screen are used for spiritual ascent, progress toward the light, and a return to *Ein Sof*. It is a return to the Creator. By that, one extinguishes all the barriers, the misery and steps into the realm of the upper light. All the phenomena and the events we now perceive as negative, the anguish we experience, happen only because of the absence of the light of the Creator around us. Therefore, if we reach a higher spiritual degree, we will naturally be able to feel and receive the upper light, and thus avoid the judgment of the Creator.

The *Sukkah* stands for the zone, or vessel of the soul, its structure and attributes. We must create that spiritual system called *Sukkah* within us. This system will reflect our interrelations with the light that surrounds us. The soul cannot receive the upper light before it is corrected, and it therefore remains outside it in the form of surrounding light. The wisdom of Kabbalah helps us to gradually correct our soul and induce the gradual permeation of the light into our soul.

In order for the light to be able to permeate the soul, it must acquire identical attributes to those of the light. Spiritual sameness of the properties of the soul with the light is physically expressed in the rules of construction of the *Sukkah*. Constructing the *Sukkah* is a very meticulous process, especially with regard to the thatch that covers it.

The wisdom of Kabbalah teaches us the external appearance and the measurements of the *Sukkah*, as it teaches us about all other *Mitzvot* – the laws of the upper world we carry out in our world as a reflection of the spiritual laws. When Kabbalists perform these *Mitzvot* in the spiritual realm, meaning in their souls, they feel the holidays as sublime, eternal and whole form of existence.

The upper light can only permeate the soul when our spiritual desires correlate to its properties. Just like a radio receiver must tune its inner frequency to match a specific wavelength in order to find a specific station.

Turning the 'button' of my transmitter toward the light of the Creator is a little more complex than that. First, one must want to feel the spiritual world. That desire must be extremely powerful. This spiritual desire does not appear all at once; it often takes many years to prepare and cultivate its every detail. It is only possible to feel the light of the Creator in a vessel that was created by specific rules in a unique, concise and clear method. The wisdom of Kabbalah elaborates on that method in great detail in the most significant book that Baal HaSulam, the greatest Kabbalist of the previous century left us, "The Study of the Ten *Sefirot*".

There is no contradiction between the fact that the vessel of the soul is created between *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* and that now we say that it may take months or years to prepare. That period of time only represents the creation process of the vessel of the soul in our world. We can describe our entire existence during all the cycles from the first to the last, as one year, at the end of which we are equipped with a spiritual vessel of identical attributes to those of the upper light and filled with light.

The creation process of the soul begins with a spiritual degree called "*Rosh Hashanah*". The next correction correlates to a spiritual ascent to a degree called

“*Yom Kippur*”. Five days pass from *Yom Kippur* to the beginning of *Sukkot*, during which the preparation of the five parts of the upper light – *Nefesh, Ruach, Neshama, Haya, Yechida* – are performed. The upper light permeates the soul during the seven days of *Sukkot*, because the vessel of the soul consists of seven *Sefirot: Hesed, Gevura, Tifferet, Netzah, Hod, Yesod, Malchut*.

The upper light can only permeate the soul (*Malchut*, represented by the citron - *Etrog*) when it is connected with a superior spiritual object (*Zeir Anpin*, represented by the palm branch - *Lulav*) and the origins of the light – *Netzah* and *Hod* (represented by the myrtle and the willow – *Hadas* and *Arava* respectively). Just as there is a need to tune the radio receiver to receive the outer wave, so the soul must be attuned internally to match the properties of the light, the Creator, and only then it will permeate and fill it.

In order to direct the soul toward reception of the upper light, the receiving vessel (*Malchut*, the citron) must be connected with the giver (*Zeir Anpin*, the palm branch), which symbolizes the Creator. The myrtle and the willow stand for the attributes of the Creator that the soul must acquire.

If the correction of the soul is completed, and it adopts the properties of the Creator, meaning if the soul places itself under the surrounding light of the Creator through a series of spiritual actions, it is influenced by it in a special way called “embrace”. There is a “left embrace” and a “right embrace”. The Song of Songs writes about it (2, 6): “Let His left hand be under my head, and His right hand embrace me.” This state correlates to the preparation of the vessel to be filled with light before *Sukkot* (“Let His left hand be under my head”), and after that the spiritual unification with the Creator and the fulfilling with the light on *Simchat Torah* (“and His right hand embrace me”).

Our body is a protein reflection of spiritual forces and connections. Just as one force influences another in the spiritual world, so these forces express themselves in our physical body parts. Each part of the body has its appropriate properties, and the interconnections with other parts, just like in the spiritual world. *HBD, HGT, NHY* – these three parts of the spiritual ‘hand’ seemingly embrace the soul, and surround it from three sides: the arm and the forearm, which are of equal length, designate the two long sides of the *Sukkah*, and the third, short side of the *Sukkah* is like the palm of the hand. All the properties and measurements of the *Sukkah* derive from the properties of the surrounding light and the soul, which must be completely identical if they are to unite. Thus, the light will fill the soul entirely and they will unite, a state called spiritual *Zivug* (mating). We denominate that state *Simchat Torah*.

The *Sukkah* no longer exists on *Simchat Torah*, because the light has already entered the soul and filled it entirely, hence the complete feeling of joy expressed in this joyous festival. This holiday (spiritual situation) occurs when the soul is filled with joy for the reason that it fills the Creator with joy.

On *Pesach* and *Sukkot* Kabbalists are especially meticulous and keep even the most strict commandments, because these two holidays symbolize the two most crucial moments in the evolution of the soul and the attainment of the purpose of creation, meaning the process of the discovery and reception of the upper knowledge – the Creator. It is the essence of the wisdom of Kabbalah. These two moments (*Pesach* and *Sukkot*) symbolize the beginning and the end of one’s spiritual way, hence their special significance. This is the reason why Kabbalists are so careful about keeping the *Mitzvot* that correlate to these holidays.

Chapter 7.3 – The Reception of Light on Holidays

What is a Holiday?

Any increase in the light is a holiday. All the souls that attain spirituality receive the light from the world of *Atzilut*. Its power depends on the degree of the soul. The ordinary level of light is called a “weekday”. The next degree of intensity is called “*Rosh Hodesh*” (the first day of the month). Each weekday designates a different kind of light.

On *Rosh Hodesh Partzuf ZON (Zeir Anpin and Nukva)* of *Atzilut* rises to *Partzuf YESHSUT (Israel Saba VeTyuna)*, meaning it climbs one degree, and illuminates a completely different quality of light. The next level up is called *Shabbat* (the Sabbath).

Every minute and every hour bears its own unique shade in spirituality. The influence of the light on the souls in our world is a perpetual state. As a result, there is an ongoing process of correction and movement. Without the constant change and influence of light, the vessel would remain immobile. A vessel moves under the influence of affliction, which is the consequence of the absence of light in the vessel, or the permeation of light into it.

ZON of *Atzilut* determines the movement of all the souls. There is constant abundance coming out of *ZON*, which the souls perceive deformedly due to their egoism. The purpose of the correction of the souls is to change the bad feeling into a good one, meaning to correct the vessels from egoism to altruism. The more correct the soul is, the more it perceives the Creator as the absolute goodness.

One cannot perform independent corrections. He must realize what kind of enemy his egoism really is, and then ask for help from the Creator. The revelation of the Creator brings one to a higher level of quality. The change in perception of reward and punishment will make the punishment feel like pleasure.

If we were to detach the sensation of pain from the body, we would not know if a disease was spreading in our body and would not do anything to cure it, because we would not feel the symptoms that indicate it. Sometimes it is worthwhile to endure pain for the purpose of future benefit. If one realizes that the bitter medicine is a necessary means to health, the medicine will not taste bitter but sweet.

Any ‘low’ spiritual or mental feeling indicates a malfunction in one’s soul, and must be cured. Neutralizing the sensation of pain will produce harmful results because the body will be denied of an alarm system to warn of a deteriorating mental state.

The month of *Adar* is a special month. It is the month of the holiday of *Purim*, the greatest of all festivals. It is customary to drink on *Purim* to complete intoxication and absolute detachment from reality, until one stops feeling any concern or worry. It comes to remind us of our future state of absolute pleasure and wholeness when the mind is disconnected and only emotion remains active. But why do we need to disconnect the mind in order to feel whole? What happens to a person when he is filled with delight? Is there any room left in him for thoughts of, ‘cold reasoning’?

Most of the people who turn to Kabbalah come from the middle class of society, whether in terms of their socioeconomic state, or education. A college professor, for example, who devotes himself entirely to scientific research, does not need any

religious coatings. He believes in himself and in his logic. For him science *is* religion. In that, he is more fanatic than the fanatic religious.

We must teach people to look inside and discover the ten *Sefirot* inside them. The first, *Keter*, is the attribute of the Creator. The other are measurements of exposure of the Creator to the creature, meaning *Malchut*. One must be taught to differentiate between these properties and himself, the black egoistic point that takes the properties of the upper nine *Sefirot* inside it.

As *Malchut* corrects itself, it increases its ability to resemble itself to the upper nine *Sefirot* and contain itself in them. Consequently, it (*Malchut*) will eventually cleave entirely to the Creator.

When a cell in the body stops ‘thinking’ of the body and begins to function independently, and ‘chew’ everything up without giving the body what it must, it is considered a cancer cell. Every cell in the body knows what it is destined to become when it matures. If something goes wrong inside them, they know how to restore their functioning to normal; they are connected with the collective system of the body.

If one behaves that way toward the Creator, the universe and mankind (which are in fact one and the same thing), he will function correctly and his health will be in order. Otherwise, he becomes like a cell that thinks only of itself, thus turning from a healthy to a cancer cell.

When one begins to study Kabbalah he is told to start in a state of *Lo Lishma*. We approach such a person with kind and gentle words, because we are turning to a person in state regarded as “women, children and slaves”, meaning with egoistic properties. The “women” state signifies the will to receive, the “children” state signifies wanting to perceive everything unconsciously and the “slaves” state represents the pursuit of pleasures (slaves to pleasures). (Translator’s note: The states described above are internal states that every person goes through, regardless of one’s gender, age, or religion. That is because every person possesses all the spiritual states inside him and must therefore experience and correct every single one of them). When one begins to acquire independent wisdom and understanding, even if he is still immersed in egoistic properties, he can already observe himself from the side. At that point he is being gradually introduced to the real meaning of bestowal (altruism, giving) and what really lies behind the term “for the Creator”, also called “in order to bestow”.

The only way to liberate a person from his egoism is to bring him to a state where he cries to the Creator. Otherwise, his Pharaoh will not let him out of Egypt. Every situation must be meticulously analyzed, until one understands precisely how to operate his reason in order to analyze his feelings. If he does not do that, these situations will repeat themselves until he understands that and cries to the Creator to take anything He wants if only to set him free from the one and only enemy that prevents him from approaching the Creator, namely his own egoism.

Both situations – deep depression and extreme pleasure are extreme situations, which do not allow one to analyze his situation correctly. One must try and do it independently, while asking himself: “Why was I given this situation?” “What can I do about it?” If one delves deep into the thought that these situations were given to him by the Creator, the anguish will cease to be a torment and will turn to pleasure. It

depends on one's perception of the greatness of the Creator. There is nothing more that he should think of!

Chapter 7.4 – A Holiday as a Means For Correction

A Banquet on *Sukkot* 1995

All the corrections in *Partzuf Zeir Anpin* of *Atzilut*, which is our root, occur in a spiritual process entitled *Sukkot*.

Man, meaning the soul, or the spiritual vessel, is a simile of *Zeir Anpin* of *Atzilut*. The origin of the light that the soul receives is the interactions between *Bina*, *ZA* and *Malchut* of *Atzilut*.

All the operations that *ZA* must perform are connected with the *Mitzvot* that relate to the *Lulav* (palm branch) that symbolizes it, and the *Etrog* (citron) that symbolizes *Malchut*. One must combine these properties inside him. This inner work happens entirely inside the *Sukkah*. The *Sukkah* is the surrounding light of *Bina* that surrounds *ZA* and that is where one absorbs the inner light.

Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag explained that there are two different terms that relate to the *Sukkah*, namely “Clouds of Glory” and “Clouds that Hide”. The hiding clouds are those constituents that comprise the thatch, made of remnants of plantation and branches. One who can build a thatch inside him, to protect against the pleasures that come from above, will begin to see the clouds of glory instead of the cloud that hides him from the Creator, meaning the revelation of the Creator.

One’s work during the erection of the thatch symbolizes the erection of the spiritual screen, so as to filter the pleasure that comes from the sensation of the Creator. This type of work is called *MAN DeIma* (*MAN* of *Ima*), meaning a prayer to receive the light to resist the egoism. If one’s request is granted, this force permeates him and renders him able to receive the upper light (of wisdom) using the screen.

This light contains extensive knowledge about one’s place in the world, what happens with him and around him and the name of his current degree. When one attains the properties of a certain spiritual degree, he is called by its name. When he attains a higher one, his name will change accordingly. As one climbs higher in the spiritual degrees and as his name changes accordingly, he acquires new attributes and exposes himself to increasing amounts of sublime abundance. That is why people sometimes think that if they change their names artificially, they will be influenced by a better and higher spiritual abundance.

Each and every soul that descends to our world has but one destination: to reacquire the spiritual degree from which it declined to our world and materialized in a biological body. It is for us to attain the root of our soul while we are still in our physical bodies, during one of our lifetimes. We must reach the same spiritual degree from which our soul came, despite the obstacles and the obstructions that stand before our bodies.

Some souls are obliged to attain their previous degree and nothing more than that. They rise through the 6,000 degrees called the “6,000 years” and stop there. That is why it says that after six thousand years the world will come to its end. However, there are special souls that after they attain their degree, must rise even higher, along with the worlds of *BYA* to the level of *Partzuf SAG* of the world of *Adam Kadmon*. This degree is called the 7,000th, or seven thousand years. There are also souls that must attain the degree of *Partzuf AB* of *Adam Kadmon*, called “8,000 years”, or that of *Partzuf Galgalta*, called “9,000 years”.

There are also very special souls that attain the degree called “10,000 years”, meaning transcend in their emotions and attainments to the world of *Ein Sof*. Such a soul

comes to our world once every ten generations (or more). There are only a few such souls in the history of mankind. Only the greatest among the Kabbalists belong to this type of souls.

Performing *Mitzvot* that relate to the *Sukkah* signify one's adhesion with the Creator in the highest degree. How does that happen?

Zeir Anpin, which consists of six *Sefirot* defines six directions: north, south, east, west, up, and down. *Malchut* receives light from each of these *Sefirot*, which are the six properties of *Zeir Anpin*. That is why the citron is first attached to the palm branch and only then one voices the blessings. That is how the *Mitzva* of the *Sukkah* and the *Lulav* are performed.

However, it is absolutely forbidden to think that by performing this physical act, one performs a spiritual act as well! One cannot perform anything spiritual with one's hands and or lips. A spiritual act can only be performed by a person who acquired a screen over his egoistic desires and can receive the light of the Creator for the sake of the Creator.

The way to acquire that state is called the wisdom of Kabbalah and it can only be acquired under the strict guidance of a Kabbalistic teacher. It is impossible to become a Kabbalist by studying on one's own. Even the greatest Kabbalists had teachers without which they would not have attained their spiritual powers. Once the beginning Kabbalist receives the right direction from his teacher, and obtains preliminary contact with the Creator, he can intensify this contact to the point where he can even ascend higher than his teacher.

The holiday of *Sukkot* lasts seven days, the length of time it takes for the light to go from *Bina* to the seven *Sefirot* of *Zeir Anpin*. Every day represents a new spiritual state, a new light that permeates the corresponding *Sefira*. The seventh day indicates the transition of the light from *Zeir Anpin* to *Malchut*. The day of the reception of the Torah by *Malchut* is called *Simchat Torah* (the joy of Torah). This is because the entire light that *Malchut* receives descends to the souls, and this light is called "Torah".

This light is not a part of the *Sukkah* but rather a separate holiday. A *Sukkah* is a transition of light by means of the screen through *Zeir Anpin* during the seven days of *Sukkot*. *Simchat Torah*, however, is the permeation of the light of the Torah, meaning the light of *Zeir Anpin* into *Malchut* and their complete unification.

The night before *Simchat Torah* is called *Hoshaana Raba*. This is a special night, when all the surrounding light gathers around *ZA*, but because it is around and not inside *ZA*, it is considered a 'nocturnal state', before it is turned to inner light when it permeates *Malchut*.

Any operation performed with the intent to bring contentment to the Creator is a spiritual act. If the very same act would be intended toward self-gratification and the egoism, this act would be opposite to spiritual, meaning corporeal. A beginning student of Kabbalah finds it hard to perform the physical *Mitzvot*, something that every orthodox person does very easily, but he must still try to do them. The difficulty in performing these *Mitzvot* stems from the fact that the Kabbalist regards every act and every thought in terms of their impact on his progress. He evaluates them only according to their assistance in attaining the goal of bonding with the Creator. And since the connection with the Creator is attained through the intent and the inner effort that is directed against the egoism, it is hard for that person to do anything physical that is seemingly connected with spirituality. That is because the truth is that there

isn't even a single act that one can perform in this world that actually affects spirituality. One's contact with God passes only through one's heart. However, the physical performance of *Mitzvot* is a must, because that too is the will of the Creator.

There is, however, one type of effort that does help in advancing toward attaining spirituality: it is the effort to maintain the thought of the existence of the Creator during the study (of Kabbalah), and the effort to remember that the acts of the Creator are taught for the sole purpose of attaining the purpose of creation. The egoism allows one to make a movement only when it sees some benefit and gain in it, when the act produces pleasure. We need the prayer to the Creator in order to receive the strength to act against the egoism. That is the direct contact with the Creator, the only straight path to Him. That contact grows gradually more clear and solid. One begins to feel what happens to him and why, and what it is that he must do. At that point his efforts become a sort of springboard to attain the next degree.

What is the "secret" and what is the "Wisdom of the Hidden?" A secret exists only if one has not yet uncovered it. Today's secret, may be known tomorrow. But it is one's own work to unravel the secret, and the teacher's job is only to point one in the right direction and motivate the student for the search.

It is impossible to measure the effort itself, since it is a personal thing that relates to one's emotions, and we cannot describe feelings. Thus, it is impossible to feel something that another feels. In general, an effort is an egoistic activity, when one tries to receive his pleasures from this world. One unconsciously changes one's pleasures in an endless pursuit of tiny sparks of light that keep changing their dresses on him. And what is labour according to Kabbalah? It is when one tries to do something against one's ego, and fails. Then, after he has tried every possible option, and has seen that there is nothing he can do about it, that he cannot even move an inch from his starting point, only then is the demand to Creator formed in him, the real prayer for Him. That prayer is the one *true* labour.

It is the Creator alone who can deliver us from our egoism. One cannot do it for himself. If one still thinks that there is a chance that he might be able to attain spirituality by himself, even if it is the most remote possibility, it is a sign that he has not yet run out of options, and his egoism will not allow him to raise a real prayer, a heartfelt cry from the bottom of his heart for help. The egoism will not surrender itself under the mercy of the Creator before one is certain that without attaining spirituality he will simply die, and that is the only way to attain it is with the help of the Creator.

Kabbalah is like no other way, because it is impossible to predict the next step. It is always like stepping into total darkness, like a new revelation. Thus, one cannot build one's future steps relying on the past experience. That is because if we could do it, we would rely on our mind and reason, and not on the negation of the reason and the adoption of faith in the Creator in its place, faith above reason.

We can only see if we are directing our efforts in the right direction by constantly returning to the Creator with our thoughts. We must bear in mind that every new sensation is sent by the Creator because He wills it so. He puts obstacles on our way only to the extent that we can overpower them. It is different for every person, and cannot be compared, but the only thing we can arrive at is the "recognition of evil", the recognition of our own egoism. We can see the enemy face to face; we do not have to fight the windmills. This phase is general and everyone experiences it, but it is experienced differently by every individual.

There is no direct link between the intensity of the egoism and the length of time it must take to correct it. Even people who study and work in the same group have different desires. In one person they might grow, while in another they might stay the same, or even decrease, and no external interference will help. It all depends on the extent to which one can ask for help of the Creator. However, this is something that is very hard to do because the ego senses it as humiliation.

Still, there is no other way! Without His help, without the light that permeates the vessel, the vessel will not become altruistic. A vessel without the properties of the light is a completely egoistic will to receive delight and pleasure that cannot perform any spiritual movement.

When one has tried every way possible and failed, he will realize that his situation is hopeless. Only then his egoism will surrender and be willing to receive any help. In order to reach that state, one must constantly increase the importance of spirituality in his eyes, and make it more and more important compared to corporeality. He should do it even if in the beginning it comes from an egoistic purpose, meaning in order to get some benefit from spirituality.

We must use every tool at our disposal. Afterwards, when the egoistic desire decreases, we will implement ways that help us preserve the desire to study Kabbalah. Our incentive will first be the desire for honor, then for power, but in the end we will be left with one wish only - to see the Creator. After that it will become the most important for us to do everything for the Creator and finally it will not even be important if we actually did do something for Him, because the knowledge that we directed everything toward Him will be the pleasure.

We must not underestimate the forces and the means we have. We must keep in mind that the Creator works on us through the world we are already in.

Chapter 7.5 – Questions & Answers

Torah & *Mitzvot*

Question: What is the connection between *Mitzvot* and the purpose of our existence?

Answer: *Mitzvot* are rules, meaning properties of spiritual degrees. For that reason the number of *Mitzvot* that were given to Israel – 613 – and the nations of the world – 7 – indicate the sum total of spiritual degrees reaching from our world to the world of *Ein Sof*, from complete disconnection from the Creator leading to complete adhesion with His properties.

It is said that, “A *Mitzva* without an aim is like a body without a soul”. This relates to a spiritual altruistic vessel, to the sensation of a spiritual light, meaning the Creator. For that reason it is good that people will keep the *Mitzvot*, but it is certainly not a spiritual act. The only way to operate in the spiritual world is by corrected spiritual intentions, even without performing any physical activity.

However, man’s purpose is to combine the mechanical performance of *Mitzvot* with the spiritual performance so that all 620 spiritual degrees will be included in the mechanical performance. Thus one combines all the worlds within him, beginning in our world and ending in the world of *Ein Sof*. That is why that spiritual degree is called the “end of correction”.

The importance of Kabbalah is that it teaches how to create within him the right intent when he performs the *Mitzvot*. Kabbalah adds the spiritual aim to the mechanical act, but it by no means negate the physical performance of *Mitzvot*. The purpose of creation is not to ‘fly’ into the spiritual world, but feel the spiritual worlds by means of our world and be in all of them at the same time by adding the spiritual dimension to the mechanical operations we perform.

Q: What does it mean to fully keep the *Mitzvot*?

A: A complete performance of a *Mitzva* means keeping it at its root. In other words, it is the ascent to the degree from which the *Mitzva*, the spiritual property came, using the corrected properties. The ascent to the spiritual degree means that the vessel of the soul must be emptied from its previous filling in order to receive a new one. The beginning of a new spiritual degree happens through a process called “Impregnation”. The refining of the soul from its spiritual past is called the “stripping of corporeality”, but it does not refer to the corporeal past. Being emptied from the past is necessary because *Keter* of the inferior becomes *Malchut* of the superior in the transition from absence to existence (during the spiritual ascent) and vice-versa.

Q: Why must we perform all 613 and even 620 *Mitzvot*, if each of them is a law in a certain spiritual degree on the ladder between the Creator and me?

A: Each spiritual degree contains all the other degrees inside it. Each of the 620 degrees between man and the Creator consists of 620 parts and all of them must be corrected in every degree according to its spiritual level. The difference between the degrees is only in the intensity of their altruistic power.

Q: Why are there *Mitzvot* that appear senseless and detached from our contemporary reality?

A: Our reason is limited and cannot take into account all the interconnections in the system of creation. Our lack of understanding of the spiritual laws produces erroneous

thoughts that a certain *Mitzva* may be redundant. This is especially true with regards to prayers, putting *Teffilin* on and even circumcision.

Even if we take into consideration *Mitzvot* such as, “Thou shalt not kill”, or, “Thou shalt not steal”, we find that they have no specific social reasoning behind them. All the rules relate only to the spiritual world, not to ours. We try and act according to the spiritual world in our corporeal world, and that includes performing the *Mitzvot* on a physical level.

The Torah was given to us so that we attain the spiritual world, perform its rules and take the leadership of creation into our own hands. When one opens his eyes and looks straight upon the collective mechanism that operates the entire creation, one finds that it in fact consists only of *Mitzvot*.

Q: Why are there *Mitzvot* that were given hundreds of years after the giving of the Torah?

A: Moses, who was of course a great Kabbalist, told the people about the structure of the spiritual worlds. We know what he conveyed to the people to be the book of Torah. This book offers two options: the first is when one feels only our world and learns Torah, and especially the wisdom of Kabbalah. In that state he unconsciously extends light from the spiritual worlds, which gradually corrects him. The second is when he already perceives the spiritual world with his feelings. Then the wisdom of Kabbalah becomes a guide that shows him precisely what he should do next and how. It teaches him every operation system in the upper worlds. The growing coarseness of the souls that descend to our world during the six thousand years necessitates every generation to have its own Torah, one that suits the soul of that generation.

The Torah is the means to correct our egoism, as it says: “I have created the evil inclination, I have created for it the Torah as a spice.” For that reason, Kabbalists presented new *Mitzvot* in every generation in the form of customs and laws. They determined that the costumes of Israel are laws.

On the other hand, when there is no need to perform something in our world, we witness events that bear significance on our ability to perform them. Such events are the ruin of the first and second temples, exiles and other catastrophes. Their consequence was the inability to perform many of the *Mitzvot* that have to do with the temple or with the sanctity of the land.

Q: Can we talk about the construction of the third temple and what does it mean?

A: In every generation different kinds of souls descend to this world. The first souls to descend were the finest, purest, and consequently the simplest. These souls had such a small will to receive that they had no desire to evolve in the physical world. Consequently, it took many years for anything significant to happen. However, over the years these souls accumulated hardships and pain, which increased their will to receive and they grew coarser. The increase of the will to receive compels people to seek answers to questions and needs that awaken in them. This search produces the development of science, medicine, culture and technology. Our generation and the generations to come belong to a time generally entitled “the last generation”. It is the generation that precedes the collective correction of the souls. In this generation the egoism grows so intensely that it awakens needs not only for every corporeal thing that exists, but primarily to know and control the spiritual world. For that reason we are witnessing a growing importance and interest in certain mystical sciences. Bookstores are loaded with books, films and magazines about extraterrestrials and

other such supernatural phenomena. But these are merely midway-stations on the way to the ultimate question: “What is the meaning of my life?” This question was asked in the past too, but never as intensively as it is asked today.

The temple represents the corrected state of the soul because it correlates to the state of the temple. It is said that the temple will be built only when relationships between people will be corrected (altruistic). But why did the Creator do it that way? Why must man nullify his ego and think only of others and never of himself? Does the Creator need it? He doesn't need it whatsoever; we do! Doing that, we create a new sense, objective, outside ourselves and disconnected from ourselves. These are the only conditions that allow the building of a temple.

Q: What do the prayers and the blessings mean in terms of Kabbalah (for example the blessing for the food)?

A: The Talmud speaks of a big group of *Tana'im*, Kabbalists who buried their deceased teacher. After the funeral they sat by the river and had a meal of bread and salt. All of a sudden they realized they could not bless the blessing for the food without their teacher. Regrettably they did not succeed in learning this blessing from their teacher.

So what is the blessing for the food? The blessing for the food is the reception of pleasure in order to please the Creator. It is when there is mutual respect between the guest (man) and the host (the Creator). One who receives should do it with the intent to give pleasure to the Creator. Doing that raises him to a spiritual degree. If he does not take this intention into account and enjoys without thinking of the host he remains in the level of our world. This spiritual act (receiving in order to give pleasure to the Creator) is called the blessing for the food.

Q: So is it correct to say that the important thing is the intent with which you bless for the food?

A: Yes, but not only with regards to the blessing for the food. It is written in the Torah that, “A *Mitzva* without an aim is like a body without a soul.” This means that every act, every *Mitzva* that has no reciprocal connection with the Creator, a mutual giving, is tantamount to a body without a soul, a dead body, meaning one that has no spiritual content. However, keeping *Mitzvot* even on this level is still important because it is a preparation period, when one can keep the *Mitzvot* on this level until he attains the spiritual world.

Q: Which is more important: the sentiment, or the mistakes we might make when we pray?

A: The mistakes don't matter. If you take only a few lines from the prayer book and feel them deeply, that would be much better than any mechanical prayer.

Q: Why do we say *LeChaim* (“to life”, used when toasting like “cheers”) before we drink?

A: Wine symbolizes the light of wisdom, also called “the light of life”. We say *LeChaim* in order to emphasize that we receive this light through the screen, and so that the light comes to us will be for the purpose of spiritual life. We also do it so as to avoid incorrect reception of light, meaning reception in uncorrected vessels, something that would result in withdrawal of the light and spiritual death.

Q: Do things happen to us only by the will of the Creator, or are there other forces?

A: The Torah states clearly that, “There is none else beside Him.” This means that there is only one supreme force, namely the Creator. Everything we perceive as a struggle between opposing forces in nature stems from one guidance, the Creator that leads creation. The Creator is the sole ruler; He is one, unique and uniform.

Moreover, the concept that there are other forces contradicts the essence of Judaism. The concept that it is not the Creator who governs the evil forces is intended to justify ourselves. The Torah clearly states the heavy punishments that will befall the chosen people by the Creator if they do not follow the path of the Torah. Catastrophes have happened more than once throughout our history, and every time the Creator warned us about it in advance. The Talmud speaks of the foretokens of the ruin of the first and second temples before they actually happened. It is written in the Torah and in the Zohar that in order to reach perfection in a good way, we have to study Kabbalah.

Holidays

Q: What is the meaning of *Yom Kippur* (Day of Atonement)?

A: *Yom Kippur* is the day when the construction of the spiritual vessel is completed. Reality consists of light and vessel. The light is the Creator, the pleasure, and the vessel is the creature, the soul, or *Malchut*. The light is in complete rest and it never changes. The light’s only purpose is to delight His creatures, bring mankind to eternal bliss.

The entire process of the making of the spiritual vessel, from its current, the lowest of states, to the highest, eternal and complete, is expressed in this world in the “Ten Penitential Days” between New Year and the Day of Atonement. During these ten days, the soul, which originally consists of nothing but a desire to receive, begins to gradually acquire the attribute of the light, beginning in the first day of *Rosh Hashanah* (the first day of the year), until the Day of Atonement. The will to receive changes in ten ways, ten *Sefirot*, being the foundation of the correction of the soul.

At the end of those ten days, the soul completes its correction and is ready to receive the light. On the tenth day, the Day of Atonement, it is forbidden to display any desire to receive, being denoted by the prohibitions on eating, drinking and the other limitations on this day of fast. That day completes the final correction.

After the Day of Atonement begins the preparation of the reception of the light by the (by now) totally corrected vessel. The reception of the light is executed on the seven days of *Sukkot* by the performance of the *Mitzvot* of the *Lulav*, the *Etrog* and the other *Mitzvot* necessary to extend the light into the vessel. Finally, the holiday of *Simchat Torah* sums up the process and the light of the Creator fills the prepared vessel entirely. The Torah symbolizes the light of the Torah, and the *Simchah* (joy) symbolizes the reception of the light in order to bestow to the Creator.

This correction doesn’t have to be on these precise dates; in spirituality it can happen any time. We only denote this process in our world on specific times of the year.

Q: Whom does the Torah speak of?

A: The entire Torah, without exception, speaks of the individual. Each person is regarded as an entire world. There are rivers in this world, lakes, mountains and forests. There are people, nations men and women, children, slaves, stars, moon and sun. Every thing we can only think of exists inside this creature. He is the only thing that the Creator created; outside him there is only the Creator. Everything that happens to this person happens inside him. Everything he perceives with his five senses – sight, sound, scent, taste and touch – comes from the Creator who surrounds

him. Thus, the Torah speaks of each and every one of us; it is a personal guide to the perception of the Creator. That is why whatever we read in the Torah must be immediately ascribed to ourselves, our inner state. We must relate the characters to our properties, the events in our world are in fact the relationships between the hereditary, intellectual and emotional attributes. They were originally created by the Creator and we acquired them from Him and from no other, because there are no others! There are only different clothes that appear as different people through which the Creator works on each and every one of us.

Miscellaneous Questions & Answers

Q: What is *Eretz Israel* (the Land of Israel)?

A: *Eretz Israel* is an inner desire for spirituality. If one is also in the physical land of Israel, his physical body unites with his soul. This is the state of the end of correction. If one is not in *Eretz Israel* in the spiritual sense, but only physically, he feels uncomfortable in this country, it drives him off. That person will constantly face external enemies because he refuses to correct himself from within. But as one corrects himself from within, these external enemies immediately become his friends. We must act on the inner (spiritual) level, and on the outer (corporeal) level simultaneously. If something is dear to us, we will not give it up that easily, and if we still do not appreciate the spiritual land of Israel, it is because we haven't acquired it, and we are therefore unable to appreciate the corporeal *Eretz Israel*.

There is a tight link between the root and the branch in our world. If we knew the spiritual meaning of *Eretz Israel*, what it is connected with and what it is identified with, we would not even consider giving it away, just like a parent would not give up his child.

Q: War and peace – are they in the hands of the Creator?

A: It is a natural thing. It depends much a lot on our desires, then on the desires of the politicians. I am not referring to the Kabbalists, but to the desires of people in general. Their desires can change everything above, and politics will change accordingly.

Q: Is humanity headed toward unity?

A: Of course humanity is ultimately headed toward unity. In the end the whole of mankind will face the general problem that without that unity it will be impossible to lead a peaceful and secure life.

Q: Can writers, poets and composers call their works their own?

A: Yes of course, it's theirs.

Q: What is the connection between Judaism and the wisdom of Kabbalah?

A: Great Kabbalists were always isolated. Regrettably, the people did not have a sufficient desire for spirituality and was unable to understand the wisdom of Kabbalah. The situation often got so bad that Kabbalists were suspended from society and their books torched.

Q: Is a Kabbalist obligated to be respectful toward figures that other peoples consider holy?

A: Even the laws of the literal Torah, not only Kabbalah state that one must be respectful to everybody.

Chapter 7.6 – Talk

Introduction to the Book of Zohar (item 10): “Now we can understand the fourth inquiry: how is it possible that from His Holiness will emerge the chariot of defilement and shells, since it is at the other end of His Holiness and how can it be that He supports and sustains it? Indeed we must first understand the essence of defilement and the shells. Know, that it is the great will to receive, of which we said that it is the essence of the souls by creation. And because they are willing to receive the entire filling that is in the thought of creation, it does not stay in that form within the souls, because if it had, they would have had to remain eternally separated from Him, because the difference in form would have separated them from Him.

And in order to mend the separation that rests upon the vessel of the souls, He created all the worlds and separated them into two systems, as the verse goes: “One against the other God made them”, which are the four worlds of ABYA of holiness and opposite them the four worlds of the impure ABYA. And He imprinted the will to bestow in ABYA of holiness and removed from them the will to receive for themselves, and placed it in the system of the impure worlds of ABYA. And because of that they’ve become separated from the Creator and from all the worlds of holiness.

For that reason the shells are called “dead”, as the verse goes: “sacrifices of the dead (Psalms 106, 28)”. And the evil are attracted to them, as our sages say: “The evil are called dead when they are still alive”, because the will to receive imprinted in them in oppositeness of form to His Holiness separates them from the Life of Lives, and they are remote from Him from end to the other. It is so because He has no interest in reception, only in bestowal, whereas the shells want only to receive for their own delight and nothing to do with bestowal, and there is no greater oppositeness than that. You already know that the spiritual remoteness begins with some difference of form and ends in oppositeness of form, which is the farthest possible distance in the last degree.”

If there is complete detachment between the Creator and the creature, how can He support and safe keep it? The Creator created creation with opposite traits to His own, in order to assign them with the task of correcting these traits. In order to help them in the correction process, He built two opposite systems of worlds to serve the creatures. One who takes the right side, that of holiness, desire to bestow, is called “living” and “righteous”. He who takes the left side, that of uncorrected desires, meaning egoism, is considered “dead”, “evil”. All these states refer only to spirituality, when the light is either in the vessel (still, vegetative, and animate), or removed from it (only the still degree).

When we say “evil”, we refer to people that have already attained the revelation of the Creator, have entered the words of *BYA* and are now climbing on the 6,000-rung ladder toward the Creator. Though they are now working in order to bestow, they might still fall into reception in order to receive, into the egoism. These two situations must be experienced in every single degree. The “evil” state compels one to advance toward holiness and correct the attributes of the left line. But the more egoism he corrects in his current degree, the greater portion of egoism he receives in the next. Then he must perform the same operations in the spiritual degrees and correct the next lot of desire to receive. The situations are much more acute and profound in spirituality, but at the same time, the power one obtains to handle them is greater too.

We always choose the desire that gives us the greatest amount of pleasure in every situation. That conduct was imprinted in us from above and is unchangeable. But

what we can change is the intent, meaning invert the direction of the pleasure toward the origin, which the pleasure comes from. Thus, the focus should be on feeling that source!

The will to receive itself is not egoism. If I want to receive because the Creator gives me pleasure, and I please Him by receiving, it is considered giving, not receiving. If I don't care who gives me pleasure, even if I know that it comes from the Creator, but take everything only so as to derive the greatest possible amount of pleasure, then my desires are egoistic and corrupted. Our place is still far below the impure desires, meaning even below the corrupted desires.

The pure and impure worlds complement each another. They are both necessary for spiritual progress. The individual is in between them, in the middle part, *Tifferet*. That is the only neutral place. Above it there is holiness, and below it – impurity. There is nothing to correct in holiness, but at the same time, it is impossible to correct the impure forces. Only in the middle third of *Tifferet* is it possible to connect the upper and the lower parts, and thus correct them.