

LESSON FIVE FOUR WORLDS; FOUR LEVELS OF SOUL

TEXT ONE --- Isaiah 43:6-7

*Bring My sons from afar, and My daughters from the end of the earth; all who are linked to My name, whom I have created (**berativ**); I have formed him (**yetzartiv**); yea, I have made him (**asitiv**) for My glory.*

TEXT TWO --- Tikkunei ha-Zohar, introduction, end of p. 3b.

Blessed is He who clothes the king and the Matronita with the ten sefirot of **Beri'ah** (creation)...for on Shabbat and festivals He dons the garments of royalty, which are the ten sefirot of **Beri'ah**, and on weekdays He dons the ten groups of angels, who serve the ten sefirot of **Beri'ah**. For the king is within the ten sefirot of **Atzilut** (emanation); He and His essence are one there, He and His life are one there. This is not the case with the ten sefirot of **Beri'ah** (creation), for they and their life are not one; they and their essence are not one. And the Cause of all illumines the ten sefirot of **Atzilut** and the ten sefirot of **Beri'ah**, and He illumines the ten groups of angels and the ten spheres in the firmament, and He does not change anywhere.

TEXT THREE --- Tikkunei ha-Zohar, tikkun 6, 23a.

The upper mother nests in the Throne, among the three upper sefirot; the central pillar, which comprises six sefirot, nests in Metatron; the lower mother nests in the Wheel... For from the Throne came the **neshamot**, and from the **Chayah** (Creature) the **ruchot**, and from the Wheel the **nefashot**, and they are in **Beri'ah**, **Yetzirah**, and **Asiyah** (creation, formation, and making). On Shabbat and festivals there descend upon them **neshamot**, **ruchot** and **nefashot** by way of emanation, and they are the holy spirit from the ten sefirot.

TEXT FOUR --- Isaiah Horowitz, Shnei Luchot Ha-Brit, Toledot Adam, *House of Y-H-V-H*, sect. 22-24.

Although the ten utterances are the secret of the emanation of the sefirot, nevertheless the root of the building of the world depends on two **partzufim** (faces), **Tiferet** and **Malkhut**. *For God made six days* (Ex. 20:11): These are the six supernal days, the six extremities, **Tiferet**, which contains six sefirot that are its

pride. *From my flesh, I see God* (Job 19:26). It is like the body, which has its two arms and two legs and the organ of generation, which bestows (**shefa**) to the sefirah **Malkhut**. *God in His holy chamber* (Ps. 11:4), i.e., the chamber of God which receives the influx, and later empties it out below, bringing into existence the worlds **Beri'ah**, **Yetzirah**, and **Asiyah**...

...the Kabbalists gave **Chokhmah** and **Binah** the names Father and Mother, and **Tiferet** and **Malkhut**, Son and Daughter. *From my flesh, I see God*. The existence of the son comes from father and mother. Before the son was revealed, he existed as part of the father in great concealment, that is, as the seed sent from the brain, through the spinal cord, and later most discernible as the embryo within the mother. Afterward, when he emerges from his mother's womb, he is revealed to all.

However, there is an even greater degree of concealment than this one, in the will, the thought to arouse the coupling. We may say that the potential (existence) of the son was inherent in this will, in great concealment. Later, it was drawn from the brain, through the father's power, and bestowed upon the mother. Similarly the two **partzufim** first existed in the secret of the will, the thought, in the secret of **Keter**, which is called will. As explained in (Cordovero's) **Pardes Rimonim**, ***Sha'ar Ha-tzachtzacht*** ("Gate of Brightness"), **Keter** is absolutely concealed and **Chokhmah** is the beginning of revelation, in comparison to the deep concealment. This beginning of revelation is revealed by **Binah**. Then **Binah** is **BEN YAH**, **Tiferet** in its place. And its place of reception is **Malkhut**, along with him. For the emanation of the six extremities into their place occurred by means of bestower and receiver, **Chokhmah** and **Binah**. In the same way, when the extension of the six extremities above produce the worlds **Beri'ah**, **Yetzirah**, and **Asiyah**, **Tiferet** bestows and **Malkhut** receives this bestowal and actualizes it. Son and Daughter are comparable to Father and Mother, except Father and Mother are responsible for revealing the emanation of the six extremities and the effect (of what is enacted by the sefirot) is revealed by Son and Daughter.

With this introduction, you can understand how the Four-Letter Name of God includes all of the divine emanation. But another fundamental still needs explanation. The kabbalists, especially in **Sefer ha-Pardes**,¹ have already discussed at length the linkage of the worlds. For the upper and the lower cleave together. The upper bestows upon the lower, and the lower is a shadow of the upper. What is in one is in the other, even if the one below is material and the one above spiritual. It is always the case that one is parallel to the other. The entire **ma'aseh Bereshit** speaks of the lower worlds but alludes to the higher worlds. For

He, praised be He, brought all the worlds into existence and all the worlds depend on His great light. Although the light is revealed in a much more refined way in a certain world than in another, this is due to the process of extension. However, everything is from His great light. I will give you an example. The light of the sun casts its light on the moon. Afterward, the moon shines in the atmosphere of the world. From there, the light proceeds from the atmosphere of the world into a single room. The light progressively becomes coarsened because of the process of extension, but it is all one light. So it is with the extension of the worlds, **Atzilut**, **Beri'ah**, **Yetzirah**, and **Asiyah**.

The secret of the world of **Atzilut** is that it is like a flame attached to a coal. It is not something separate from it. For the (source of the) flame is in the coal, and in hovering over the coal, the flame is revealed and it is tightly bound to it. Similarly, (the world of) **Atzilut** consists of rays of light from the coal, which were concealed in perfect unity (within it). The light of emanation consists of supernal lights beyond comprehension. These lights were revealed in the secret of the verses, *And God said: let there be light! And there was light... And the spirit of God hovered...* (Gen. 1:3, 1:2) The secret alluded to by the hovering is the arising of the will to contract His light so that it could emanate. This involves no change in either the emanator or the emanation, according to the secret meaning of *And there was light*, which our Sages of blessed memory interpreted to mean that there was light already. Only, (the light) was completely concealed in its root and supernal source, as was said above. That is the secret of His divinity. For the **Ein Sof** is a soul to the soul of the sefirot. They are the souls of everything that would later be brought into existence. And the Cause of Causes is a soul to them, according to the secret of emanated divine essence.

Afterward, the world of **Atzilut** was extended by means of **Malkhut**, through the contraction of its light, and the world (of **Beri'ah**) came into existence. The world of **Atzilut** is a soul to the world of **Beri'ah**, just as **Ein Sof** is a soul to the world of **Atzilut**. Afterward, the world of **Beri'ah** was extended through the contraction of its light and the world of **Yetzirah** came into existence. The world of **Beri'ah** is a soul to the world of **Yetzirah**. Afterward the world of **Yetzirah** was extended through the contraction of its light and the world of **Asiyah** came into existence. All of this occurs through the power of the Cause of Causes, **Ein Sof**, which is the power of the world of **Atzilut**. And the power of the world of **Beri'ah** depends on the power of **Atzilut**. So the power of **Beri'ah** depends on the power of **Atzilut**, whose power depends on **Ein Sof**. This world of **Beri'ah** is the power of the world of **Yetzirah**. So **Yetzirah** is in the power of **Beri'ah** which is in the power of **Atzilut** which is in the power of **Ein Sof**. This world of **Yetzirah** is the power of

the world of **Asiyah**, only the light has become concealed and coarsened, according to the nature of the receivers.

Thus the world of emanation can be compared to a flame in a coal. The flame is revealed through the will, which hovers above and is tightly bound to the coal. The world of **Beri'ah** is like one who lights a torch from a flame. The light of the torch does not remain connected in perfect unity to the light of the flame from which the torch was lit. Nevertheless, its level is great. The torch contains a great light in which the light of the flame inheres. The world of **Yetzirah** is comparable to lighting a candle from a flame, and this candle illuminates a dark room.

And there was light. All the stages of the extension of the worlds are parallel. Only, one is secret, the next more revealed, and the next even more revealed. So it is explained in the *Zohar* and brought in **Pardes Rimonim, *Sha'ar Mahut v'Hanhagah***, chapter 11: “There are four elements in all the worlds.” But they are material in the world of **Asiyah**, while at a higher level, in the world of **Yetzirah**, they are spiritual. In other words, Michael is water, Gabriel is fire, Uriel is air, and Raphael is earth. Above, in the world of **Beri'ah**, they are more spiritual, the four **chayyot** (creatures) which bear the Throne (of Glory). Later, above, they become the four legs of the Throne. Ultimately, in the world of **Atzilut**, they are most spiritual. **Chesed** is water. **Gevurah** is fire. **Tiferet** is air. **Malkhut** is supernal earth. Each level contains the roots for the level below. Thus everything that exists in the lower worlds alludes to the upper worlds, and from the revealed we reach the concealed.

TEXT FIVE --- Mark Malachi, “From the Depths of Silence,” pp. 168-172

In terms of the Kabbalah, the Tree of Life can be viewed as the **Adam Kadmon**, or prototypical human body. It is comprised of ten sefirot, each a vibrating and pulsating vortex of energy. Each sefirah corresponds to an area of the human body. When one of the sefirot is underdeveloped, its spiritual gift is unrealized and/or negative action is perpetrated from that place, a blockage of energy occurs in the corresponding aspect of the person. This may manifest in a spiritual, mental, emotional, or physical problem, or any configuration of the above.

Just as a separate Tree of Life exists in each of the four worlds--**Asiyah**, **Yetzirah**, **Beri'ah**, and **Atzilut**, a Tree exists for each of the corresponding four bodies: physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual. Each body must be clear and pure, and the energy flow must be unobstructed and free for the most natural state of health

to exist. A blockage in the working of a sefirah on any of the four levels causes an imbalance and disharmony on all levels. The optimum state of health exists when each sefirah on each of the levels is in harmony with each of the other sefirot...Disharmony generally travels from the most etheric to the most dense, from **Atzilut** to **Asiyah**, from the spiritual through the mental and the emotional levels to the physical body...

The Four Worlds and the Four Bodies

| World | Aspect of | Qualities | Dimension |
|--------------------------------|----------------|--|---|
| Adam Kadmon | | | |
| Atzilut (Emanation) | spiritual body | pure being limitless light nothingness union with God | higher planes |
| Beri'ah (Creation) | mental body | grace discernment unconditional love detachment | 5 th and 6 th dimensions |
| Yetzirah (Formation) | emotional body | creativity imagery psychic phenomena dreams | 4 th dimension |
| Asiyah (Action) | physical body | material world world of illusion karmic events politics | 3 rd dimension |

TEXT SIX --- Zohar II, 141b-142a

The human soul is called by three names: **nefesh**, **ruach**, **neshamah**. All are comprised within one another, while their power appears in three places. **Nefesh** appears in the grave while the body decomposes in the dust, and she flits about in

this world to mingle with the living and to perceive their suffering. When they are in need, she pleads for mercy.

Ruach enters the earthly garden, where she is formed into an image of the body of this world, in a certain garment she dons there. She revels there in pleasures and delights of the radiance of the garden. On Shabbat, new moons and festivals, she ascends above, delighting there, and (afterwards) returns to her place. On this it is written: *The ruach will return to God who gave it* (Eccl. 12:7). *Will return:* precisely, at these times we have mentioned.

Neshamah ascends immediately to her place, to the place from which she came. Through her the lamp is kindled, shining above. This one never descends below; through this is encompassed the one who is encompassed from all sides, above and below. Until this ascends to be linked with her place, **ruach** is not crowned in the earthly garden and **nefesh** does not rest in her place. As soon as this ascends, all of them attain tranquility.

When inhabitants of the world are in need, when in their suffering they go to the cemetery, this **nefesh** arouses and she goes flying and arouses **ruach**, and that **ruach** arouses the patriarchs, and ascends and arouses **neshamah**. Then the Holy One, blessed be He, has compassion on the world, as we have established. Although these matters of the soul have been aroused in other aspects, they are all evenly balanced; this is clarity of the matter, and all is one.

When **neshamah** is hindered from ascending to her place, **ruach** goes and stands by the entrance of the Garden of Eden. But the entrance is not opened for her, and she goes roaming about, unnoticed by anyone. **Nefesh** goes roaming through the world, sees the body breeding worms and enduring the punishment of the grave, and she mourns over it, as they have established, for it is written: *Surely his flesh feels pain for him and his soul mourns for him* (Job 14:22). All suffer punishment until **neshamah** is bound in her place above; then all are bound in their places. For all these form a single bond, corresponding to the pattern above in the mystery of **nefesh**, **ruach**, and **neshamah**. All is one, one bond.

Nefesh has no light of her own at all. This is the one who shares in the mystery of a certain body, delighting and nourishing it with all that it needs, as it is written: *She provides food for her house and a portion for her maidens* (Prov. 31:15). *Her house* is that body, which She nourishes; *her maidens* are those limbs of the body, all of them. **Ruach** is the one who rides on this nefesh, controlling her, illumining her with all that She needs, and **nefesh** is a throne for this **ruach**. **Neshamah** is the

one who generates this **ruach**, controlling Him, illumining Him with the light of life; and that **ruach** depends upon this **neshamah**, and is illumined by Her radiant light. That **nefesh** depends upon this **ruach**, and is illumined and nourished by Him, and all is one bond.

Until this supernal **neshamah** ascends into the flow of Ancient of Ancients, Concealed of all Concealed, and is filled by it, since it is ceaseless, this **ruach** does not enter the Garden of Eden, which is **nefesh**--eternally, **ruach** rests only in the Garden of Eden, and **neshamah** above--and this **nefesh** does not settle in Her place within the body below. Similarly, all below separates thus in a human, although they all form one bond. **Neshamah** ascends above into the flow of the well; **ruach** enters the Garden of Eden, corresponding to the supernal pattern; **nefesh** settles in the grave.

TEXT SEVEN --- Midrash Bereshit Rabbah 14:9

The soul is called by five names: **nefesh**, **ruach**, **neshamah**, **yechidah**, **chayyah**. **Nefesh** is the blood, as it says: *For the blood is the nefesh* (Deut. 12:23). **Ruach** (is called this) because it ascends and descends, as it says: *Who knows the ruach of man, if it ascends [and the ruach of the beast, if it descends]* (Eccl. 3:21). **Neshamah** is the breath; as people say, his breathing is good. **Chayyah** (is called this) because all the limbs are mortal, whereas this lives on in the body. **Yechidah** (“unique”, from “**echad**”), because all the limbs are in pairs, but this is unique within the body.

TEXT EIGHT --- Vital, Sha'ar ha-Gilgulim (“Gate of Reincarnations”), beginning (p. 2)

We begin with what the rabbis wrote, that there are five names to the soul. From the bottom up, their order is: **nefesh**, **ruach**, **neshamah**, **chayah**, **yechidah**. Without doubt, these names were not attributed by chance or convenience. But know that the person himself is the spiritual force within the body, while the body is only a garment for the person; it is not the person himself. This is why it is written: *On the flesh of man, do not anoint* (Ex. 30:32), as noted in the Zohar I, 20b. (“The body clothes the soul”)

It is known that man connects all four worlds of **ABY'A** (**Atzilut**, **Beri'ah**, **Yetzirah**, **Asiyah**). Therefore, there must within him exist portions of all four worlds, and each portion is called by one of the five names **NRNChY** (**Nefesh**,

Ruach, Neshamah, Chayyah, and Yechidah), as we will explain. He does not acquire all of them at one time, but only according to his merits. At first he obtains the lowest of them, **nefesh**. Afterwards, if he merits further, he will also acquire the (level of) **ruach**. This is explained in several places in the Zohar... (including) II, 94b: “When a person is born, he is given a **nefesh**...”

TEXT NINE --- Vital, Sha’ar ha-Gilgulim (“Gate of Reincarnations”), beginning (continued)

...Know that every **nefesh** comes only from the world of **Asiyah**, every **ruach** is from the world of **Yetzilah**, and every **neshamah** is from the world of **Beri’ah**. However, most people do not have all five parts--**nefesh, ruach, neshamah**, etc.--but only the **nefesh** from **Asiyah**. But even this **nefesh** has many levels, and this is because **Asiyah** itself also divides into five **partzufim** (lit., “faces”). They are called: **Arieh Anpin** (“the long face”), **Abba** (“father”), **Imma** (“mother”), **Ze’ir Anpin** (“the short face”), and **Nukva d’Ze’ir Anpin** (“the feminine [consort] of **Ze’ir Anpin**”). Before a person can merit to attain **ruach** in the world of **Yetzilah**, he must be complete in all five faces of **nefesh** in **Asiyah**.

Even though, as is known, there are those whose **nefesh** is from **Malkhut** in **Asiyah**, and others who are from **Yesod** of **Asiyah**, still, each person must rectify the whole spectrum of **Asiyah**. Only after this can a person receive his **ruach** from **Yetzilah**, since **Yetzilah** is greater than all of **Asiyah**. Similarly, to attain **neshamah** from **Beri’ah**, one needs to rectify every part of his **ruach** in all of **Yetzilah**, after which he can then receive his **neshamah** from **Beri’ah**. It is not enough for him to rectify only the particular place where his soul-root is grounded. He must rectify all the aspects of each level, until...he can attain his **ruach** of **Yetzilah**. It is this way with all the worlds. The upshot of this (rectification) is that one must be involved with Torah and **mitzvot** which correspond to all of **Asiyah**, not only those corresponding to the specific place to which his **nefesh** is attached. Similarly, if one sins and blemishes a particular spot in **Asiyah**, even though it is not the place to which his **nefesh** is attached, he still must rectify it.

¹ Cordovero’s Pardes Rimmonim.